
Guest editorial

Negotiations, defined as inter-personal decision-making processes in which at least two parties with at least partly different interests try to come to a joint agreement, play a crucial role in industrial markets. In supply chains, the exchange conditions often result from negotiations, which have a critical impact on the allocation of resources between buying and selling firms (Anderson and Narus, 2004; Fang, 2006; Brooks and Rose, 2004; Sharland, 2001). Unsurprisingly, companies are experiencing increasing performance pressures to achieve the best possible results in each of these interaction processes.

This special issue focuses on the topic of business negotiation. It acknowledges that negotiations are not only single episodes but also phenomena that can take place within both newly formed and well-established relationships. Thus, a firm's profits often depend on the skill with which these negotiators not only handle separate one-time deals but also succeed at maintaining desirable long-term relationships (Sharland 2001; Brooks and Rose 2004). Indeed, negotiations on business markets are often processes that do not have a beginning or an end and are multidimensional phenomena in which several processes of negotiation exist in tandem, both externally and internally. We hope you will agree that the present array of contributions addresses these and other negotiation concerns in a highly stimulating fashion. Broadly, the papers range from overviews of the literature and theoretical classification to empirical investigations of the processes, styles and sources of power that help negotiators succeed in their dealings, whether they are on their own or in teams and whether they operate in different cultures.

The first article, entitled "Two decades of business negotiation research: an overview and suggestions for further research" and written by Henrik Agndal, Lars-Johan Åge and Jens Eklinder Frick, is an introduction to the field of business negotiation research. The point of departure in this article is that the extant literature does not include a comprehensive overview of the field of business negotiation research. Such an overview may provide a more comprehensive picture of the state of the art of business negotiation research and, in particular, point to areas where future research may contribute.

In the negotiation literature, researchers often distinguish between distributive styles on the one hand and integrative or collaborative styles on the other hand as the opposite ends of a continuum, and there has been a tendency to analyze negotiation styles as mutually exclusive behaviors during the entire negotiation process. These different styles, and the ways that they can be deployed in a negotiation process, are the subject of the next three articles.

The second article, by Melanie Preuss and Per van der Wijst, analyze whether negotiators stick to one single negotiation style or whether their styles vary during the

negotiation process. The paper seeks to identify different combinations of phase-specific negotiation styles and investigates the relationship between these combinations and negotiation performance and satisfaction. The authors find that negotiators do not generally limit themselves to a single negotiation style and, instead, vary their style systematically in the course of the different negotiation phases.

The third article, again on how managers can mix different negotiations styles, is called: "The negotiation scorecard: A planning tool in business and industrial marketing". The authors David Fleming and Jon Hawes try to help business and industrial marketing professionals to "get it right" by introducing a new tool, the Negotiation Scorecard, that has been developed from a literature review and can be used to determine the appropriateness of using a distributive or an integrative approach in a particular negotiation situation.

The final article on negotiation styles is by John Graham and is entitled "A third theory: Inventive negotiation". Besides the traditional dialectic between competitive negotiation and integrative bargaining, this article introduces a third theory of negotiation called inventive negotiation. It emphasizes long-term, trusting commercial relationships as the key outcome of negotiation. The theory also posits negotiation as a creative process wherein innovations processes can play a central role.

Research about the negotiation process is an important part of negotiation research because a large part of the variance in outcome can be explained by the negotiation process (Olekalns and Weingart, 2008). Indeed, existing negotiation research has often been criticized for focusing on outcomes rather than the process (Brett *et al.*, 1998; Olekalns *et al.*, 2003; Weingart and Olekalns, 2004). In this special issue, four articles focus on the negotiation process; both studies emphasize the multidimensional aspect of the negotiation process.

The fifth article is named "Happy-Happy negotiation: Agreements beyond win-win situations" and is written by Lars-Johan Åge and Jens Eklinder Frick. This paper deploys a grounded theory methodology and suggests a general model of negotiation processes. The article also attempts to replace the concept of "win-win" with one that is not oxymoronic and is focused more on collaboration.

The sixth article, "The distributive knot" by Alain Lempereur and Michele Pekar, argues that at the root of all negotiations are the conflicting demands of at least two people. This article proceeds by exploring the fundamental negotiation structure as a demand/response dynamic. It also explores this negotiation structure in a complex business system, where a manager as a negotiator is confronted with multiple demands or pressures at different levels from a variety of external and internal stakeholders.

The seventh article is "Renegotiations – Empirical analysis of Impacts on Business Relationship" by Aline Lenzing and Markus Voeth which extends the process to an additional phase. In particular, the article takes the perspective that a negotiation is not finished when an agreement is reached. In particular, it examines the impact of renegotiations and provides practical advice regarding the optimal usage of renegotiations by analyzing potential renegotiation strategies.

The final article on negotiation process is the eighth article by Bruce Patton, co-author of *Getting to Yes* (1991) and author of *Difficult Conversations* (2006). In his article, "Why

you can't win by avoiding difficult conversations", he emphasizes that in a business setting, the failure to engage difficult conversations productively can prevent winning in the market. Whether the conversations are about compensation, performance, strategy or implementation, a failure to engage and learn from differences prevents a business from capturing vast potential value in the form of improved performance and morale, innovation, market insight, efficiency and the implementation of other process improvements.

In contemporary business markets, several people are often involved on both sides of the deal. Two papers in this special issue focus on negotiation teams and their composition. The ninth article, by Uta Herbst, Sina Stöhr and Hilla Dotan, examines gender differences in team negotiations and is entitled "Examining Gender Differences in Team Negotiation". The results of this study show that, on average, male teams of non-friends reached significantly better outcomes than female teams of non-friends. Interestingly, however, female teams of friends perform equally to male teams of friends. The tenth article, again on the issue of negotiation teams, studies the tactics teams tend to deploy and their effectiveness. The title is "Why Teams Achieve Higher Negotiation Profits than Individuals: The Mediating Role of Deceptive Tactics", and the article is written by Tayfun Aykaç, Robert Wilken, Frank Jacob, and Nathalie Prime.

One important theme in negotiation is the object that is under negotiation and how it is represented by the negotiation parties. Industrial marketers have long bundled their products and services to sell them as packages. To what extent should they? This question is addressed in "All in, one-at-a time or somewhere in the middle? Leveraging the composition and size of the negotiation package" by Uta Herbst, Birte Kemmerling and Margaret Neale.

As is well suited for an international journal like *JBIM*, two articles in this special issue address culture. The twelfth article on "Culture and negotiation strategy" is written by Jeanne M. Brett. The paper's starting point is how negotiating in a global environment benefits from a clear understanding of how negotiators' cultures influence their interests and priorities, as well as the strategies they bring to the intercultural negotiation table. The article presents three strategies to accomplish that objective. The thirteenth article, "Business Negotiations in Emerging Markets: A Brazilian Case", by Tony Fang, Josephine Schaumburg and Daniella Fjellström, again addresses culture and deals with what the authors conceive of as Brazilian negotiation styles.

Negotiators may have more or less influence in their dealings. The final and fourteenth article "The four horsemen of power at the bargaining table" in this special issue takes a step back and analyzes the concept of power in negotiations. Viewing power as a relative concept, Adam Galinsky, Michael Schaerer and Joe Magee identify and elaborate on four major sources of power in negotiations.

These 14 articles touch on different aspects of business negotiation. We hope that this special issue can be the starting point for seeing business negotiation as a field on its own

merits. We are convinced that managers and researchers alike will find practical advice and intellectual inspiration herein. We hope that the issue can contribute in a way that enables those who encounter these processes on daily basis to manage them with even better knowledge and, perhaps, manage them more effectively. To us as researchers, we hope that this special issue may contribute to negotiation being viewed as an important area in business research and marketing and thereby will help push this budding research field forward.

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Further reading

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