

Negotiation Quiz

Please check off on this sheet all of the situations below that represent a negotiation. (You may wish first to answer all those you find easy and then go back to the others.)

- Buying a rug in a West African market
- Soliciting a new source of venture capital
- Trying to capture/kill a warlord in a regional war
- Trying to injure or ruin a competitor
- Writing back and forth with someone you do not know on the Internet
- Meeting your potential in-laws for the first time
- Giving or receiving commendation and criticism
- Deciding how the dishes will get done
- Borrowing a wonderful piece of clothing from a family member
- Deciding whether to stay late at work to finish up a project
- Making up, or rebuilding a relationship with someone you love
- Picking a successor for the CEO of a company where you are on the board
- Getting a child to go to bed
- Getting into a class or training program with limited enrollment
- Courting your Life's Companion
- Laying off or firing someone
- Discussing the outsourcing of a business function with the manager of the function
- Deciding with a family member where to invest a small joint inheritance
- Soliciting a major gift from a major donor
- Soliciting bids for the new advertising campaign for your company
- Talking with your parent(s) this weekend
- Saying good-bye to someone you will not see for a long time
- Finding an advisor, or a mentor, or a counselor, or a new dentist
- Discussing with a recruiter the salary and benefits you feel you deserve
- Trying to get back to sleep when something is worrying you
- Trying to shake off a stranger on the street who keeps walking with you
- Getting an extension on a paper or a project
- Apologizing to someone whose property you unknowingly damaged
- Seeing someone you dislike and turning away at a party
- Interviewing a potential babysitter
- Accepting a bribe
- Turning down a bribe
- Getting another country to lower a trade barrier
- Talking anonymously about an unsafe workplace condition with a Hotline person
- Meeting a new teammate for the first time
- Struggling to stay on a diet or exercise plan or give up smoking

About this quiz: The quiz above was originally part of 15.667 Negotiation and Conflict Management, a graduate course at the MIT Sloan School of Management that was taught by Mary P. Rowe from 1985 to 2005. (You can find the entire Spring 2001 version of the course online via MIT OpenCourseWare, at <https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/15-667-negotiation-and-conflict-management-spring-2001/>.)

The correct answer to this quiz is that all of the situations listed are negotiations. Negotiation theory applies any time there are two or more points of view. And one can negotiate with oneself. People often find themselves negotiating with themselves when they have two or more points of view about a decision. We instinctively understand this when we "force ourselves to do something" that we don't want to do. Or reward ourselves for doing something really hard or even distasteful, which we felt bound to do. Or when we "flip a coin" between two outcomes. Or when we opt out of action altogether, in avoidance of having to decide. Or when we give in altogether to one choice, rather than trying to balance the choices. Or when we find some wonderful way to be able to meet the goals of both points of view.