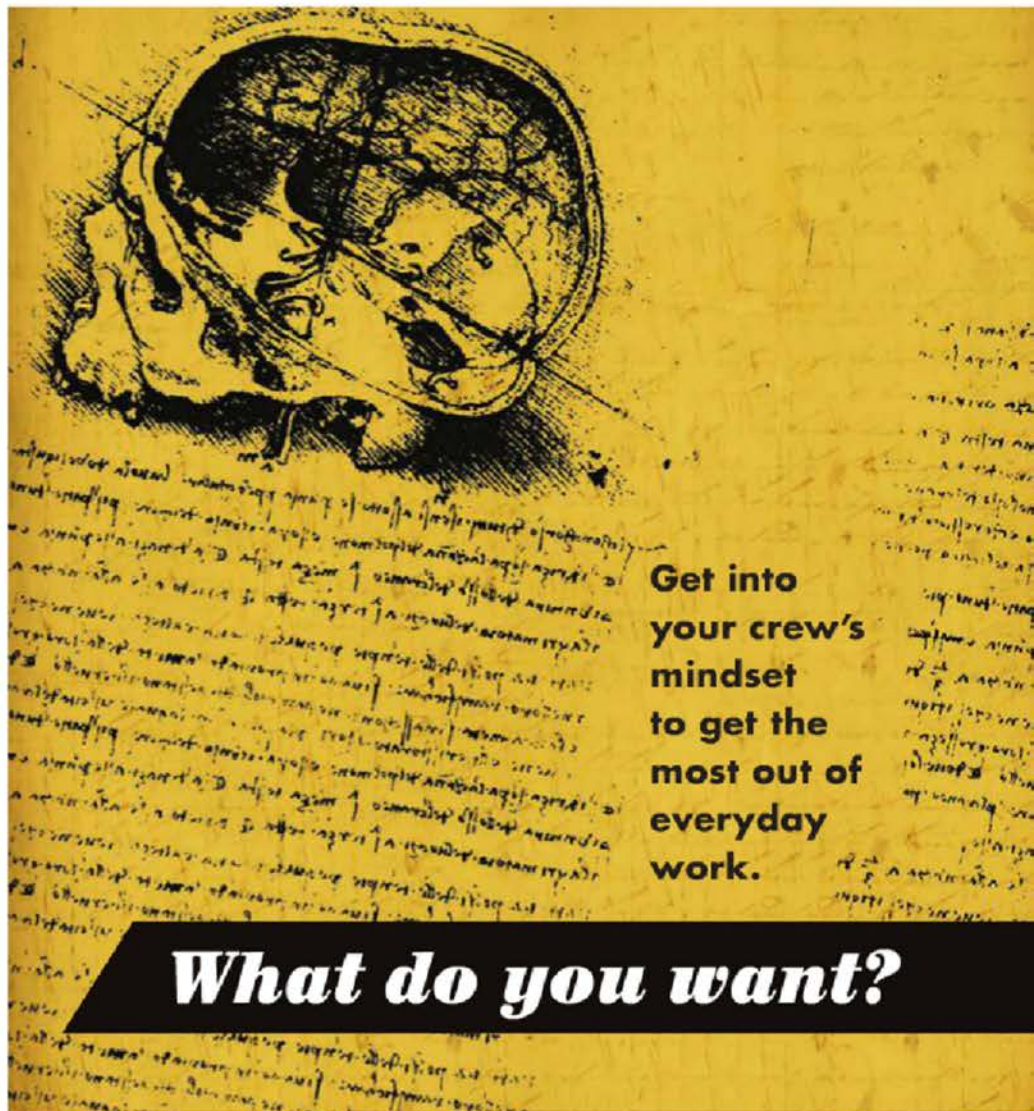


partner, you don't have to worry about getting a fair price and you can count on the fact that he will be there for you when it counts most. The strategic component of the procurement process will determine the success or failure of the supply side of your business. You would not want to pick a supply partner who is not willing or able to keep you competitive. You would not want to pick a supply partner you can't count on to come through when it matters most even if he puts the lowest price on the table. You would not want to pick a supply partner who will quickly let you know that he has more important customers than you to take care of.

For the superintendent, the key to successful procurement is in articulating in detail what it is that you expect from your supplier and then sticking to your guns, holding your supplier accountable for one hundred percent fulfillment. I call it "negotiating for results." Negotiating the price may very well be the easiest and least important part of this process. Nowadays, with the internet and the consumer blogs, there is so much price transparency that you have to be lazy or dumb not to have a pretty good feel for where your cost will be shaking out. And it is questionable how well served you are going to be when setting out to find where the bottom is. You may be wasting a lot of time and alienate the supplier who stands ready to service your true needs. "Negotiating for results" cannot be measured by a single price point; only by achieving a competitive price over the long haul with a supplier who meets all of your expectations, all the time.

The transactional component just deals with the detail, including price, payment terms, discounts, rebates, delivery conditions etc. The stuff that shows up on the P/O and the invoice. The transactional component should be routine, emanating from the agreement or understanding the superintendent has reached with his/her supplier and can typically be delegated to an administrative assistant. **GCI**

*Frans Jager is principal of Castnet Corp, a business consultant for the green industry and an executive coach. He can be reached at [www.castnetcorp.net](http://www.castnetcorp.net).*



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## ***What do you want?***

**By Kyle Brown**

**W**hen you're trying to influence an individual or a group to do something that is in both of your best interests, certainly there is negotiating at work.

But there's a certain amount of finesse to get people excited about doing their job well, says Amy Wallis, professor of practice in organizational behavior at the School of Business at Wake Forest University.

"As a supervisor, you can say to someone, 'You have to do this because I said so,' and they'll do it because you have a power dynamic," Wallis says. "But if you want to motivate them to do it well, you've got to think about 'How can I make this a win-win? How can I make this something that the person will be motivated to do well and see the value in?' And that becomes a negotiation. But even further, when you are talking with your employees about things that need to be done, how to get them done as efficiently as possible and how that will benefit them and the organization, you're negotiating with them to figure out how they're going to create the best possible outcome."

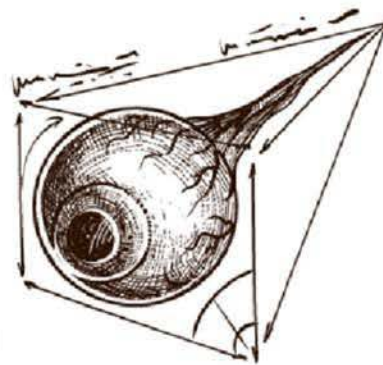
**WHAT CAN USING NEGOTIATIONS DO TO MOTIVATE YOUR CREW?** It can bring peo-



ple's highest potential to the workplace. Fundamentally, when you tell someone exactly what to do and how to do it, that old-fashioned model of supervision – here is your job, do it exactly this way – what you get is exactly what you're asking for and typically nothing more and hopefully nothing less. But if you can create a situation where people feel as if you are collaborating, figuring out how to create the best possible solution, then what you get is people who are willing to share their ideas with you, who might actually have a suggestion for how to do it even better than you might've come up with.

So the old-school model of managing people that says "I'm the boss, I'll tell you what to do and you do it," has the assumption underneath it that "I'm the boss, I know exactly how to do every job the perfectly right way." Rather than, "I know

"Don't kid yourself into thinking that you can treat your employees like employees for a year and then when it comes time to negotiate salary for example that suddenly they're going to be open to negotiating." – **Amy Wallis**



how to do your job, but I respect that you also know how to do your job and you may bring knowledge or skills or inside information to that job that I may not have access to." And creating an environment where people feel comfortable negotiating creates an environment where there is openness to having that kind of conversation. It's creating the best possible result rather than just creating the result you wanted.

#### HOW CAN YOU WORK NEGOTIATING INTO YOUR MANAGEMENT STYLE?

A lot of it is about asking questions and either asking questions of the individual or simply engaging in a questioning mindset yourself. Asking yourself what motivates these folks? What is it they're trying to get out of this job or this situation? What are the benefits to them of doing what I'm asking them to do?

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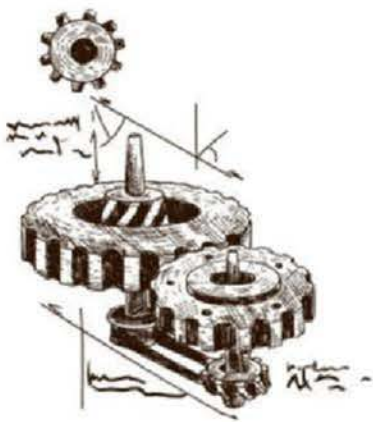
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"A lot of it is about asking questions and either asking questions of the individual or simply engaging in a questioning mindset yourself."  
 — Amy Wallis

And if you can start to think about things that way, then you're a lot more likely to be able to offer someone a solution that excites them as much as it excites you.

You can ask them in some situations, "Help me understand what it is what you're trying to accomplish here. Help me understand what you value and what's important to you." But sometimes it's also about simply observing people and taking

a mindset of seeking to understand them and their goals and their desires and then working within that. The examples we use are often pretty simple. If I'm assuming that because I like chocolate cake you must like chocolate cake, and I offer you chocolate cake as a reward for something, you might like lemon pie. And if I'm not paying attention to that, it's harder for me to offer you something that has value to you.

**A LOT OF SUPERINTENDENTS HAVE TRIED MOTIVATING THEIR CREWS USING MONEY, BUT THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH THEY CAN OFFER THERE.** I think that most people would love to make more money. There's very few people who would say, "No, you're paying me just right, there's no reason for you to give me any more than what I'm getting." So that's a given. And certainly, being able to offer someone money that represents the value they add and that they offer to the organization is important. However, organizations do struggle with reaching a point where there just isn't extra money lying around and so the question is "What do we have that has value?" And in many cases, that is simple. It's things like offering recognition. It's things like creating an environment where people acknowledge what someone else has accomplished and

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makes them feel good about that. A sense of feeling great about the work that you're doing and having that acknowledged knowing that someone's paying attention makes a big difference in people's motivation.

A thank-you note from a manager. Some sort of public acknowledgement. Those kinds of things can make a big difference in motivation.

But also really fundamentally, we find

that people are motivated by having a certain sense of control over the work they do, having the opportunity to make some decisions about the work they're doing. It doesn't necessarily mean that you have to say to someone, "Hey, you get to make all the decisions, go do whatever you think is right." But to say, "Here's what we're trying to accomplish, what suggestions do you have for how we can do that?" or "Hey, do you have any ideas on how we can improve upon this?" It's incredibly motivating for people to feel like they have a sense of some control about the work they get done and how they get it done.

To revert to the old-school model that says "I will tell you exactly how to do everything, exactly how much time it should take to do everything, exactly what the end result should look like and check in on you frequently," is essentially reducing someone to a machine in a sense. To say, "You're going to do the things I control," versus being engaged in figuring out the process with you and deciding and making suggestions which tends to create a much more human work environment and again often results in better results than you would've done on your own.

**SO WE'RE TALKING OPENING THE FLOOR DURING THE MORNING MEETINGS?** That can certainly be a place to do it, though one of the things you want to be careful of is, you can lose a lot of time and momentum by engaging too many people in that discussion. So if the people in the room are all stakeholders in a particular project then having them all involved in the discussion will be helpful. In that case it probably makes more sense to consult with the team leader, have the team leader have that discussion with their employees and to sort of separate out, even get out there with the team, say "OK guys, here's what I'm trying to tackle, what ideas do you all have?" It's difficult to have a bunch of people in the discussion that don't really have skin in the game. So you really need to figure out who are the stakeholders, who you need to be engaged in the process and then conduct those discussions individually or in small groups.



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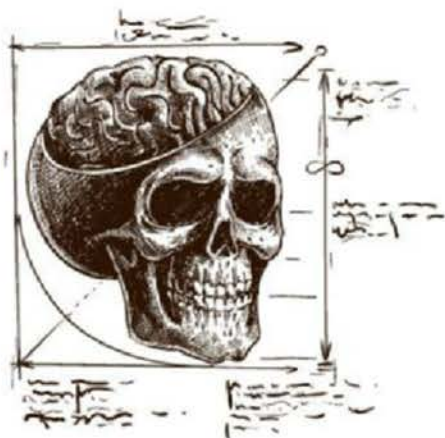
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## COVER STORY



### **SO IS EVERYTHING WE DO A NEGOTIATION?**

I think it's important to recognize that every interaction you have is setting you up for some future negotiation. Some people would say every interaction is a negotiation to some degree. And I don't think that's entirely true, and I think sometimes we're just having a conversation. But I think that one of the fundamental things that we know about negotiation is that having a strong relationship already enhances your ability to have a successful negotiation. Don't kid yourself into thinking that you can treat your employees like employees for a year and then when it comes time to negotiate salary for example that suddenly they're going to be open to negotiating. Build the relationships throughout and build that collaborative mindset and collaborative mentality every day as you have your day-to-day discussions and meetings and interactions so that when the time comes that when you need something and you are entering into a negotiation, you've already got the relationship established. You've got the goodwill and you've got the mutual trust. In a sense, everything that we're doing day-to-day is preparing us for a potential high-stakes negotiation in the future.

### **WHAT ARE SOME MISTAKES WE CAN MAKE**

**IN GETTING STARTED?** Making an abrupt, complete change in your work style is actually going to undermine trust, even if it's a positive change. People will be looking at you, going "What the heck happened to you?" And it makes it difficult for them to trust you. So what you want to start with is setting a goal of changing something about the way you interact that's going to get you closer to that

integrative bargaining kind of mindset. So rewarding people and acknowledging people for the work they're doing, asking a few people each day for their input into something, or demonstrating to people that you're willing to offer some kind of reward for working with you and working collaboratively.

And if you can start putting down those kinds of foundational building blocks, then over time you can set goals of gradually changing your own behavior and you're going to find that it also gradually changes your team's behavior so you get what we call a "virtuous cycle." So that I do something that helps you to feel good about your job, and that gives you that little bit of extra kick so that you're willing to put in a couple extra minutes or a couple extra hours when needed to get something done and that means we accomplish something even bigger. We've got success to build upon. Starting to create that virtuous cycle and then gradually adding more collaborative behaviors into it is the way to do it, though you probably want to do it over a series of months and not try to change everything all at once because we know that trying to change everything all at once just doesn't work. You can't lose weight, quit smoking, quit drinking and start exercising on the same day and think that you're going to be successful at all of those things.

One last important thing: If you are going to commit to what we're talking about, you've got to be willing to let people make mistakes, and you've got to be willing to say, "When you make a mistake, I've got your back and we're going to work through this together." If you expect people to immediately know exactly how to do everything and you don't give them any opportunity to make mistakes, then this is going to fail because the moment that a stressful situation arises, you're going to step in and go back to your old management style. You've got to be willing to accept that mistakes are going to happen and that helping people to learn from that is going to enhance everybody's ability to do their jobs.

*Kyle Brown is GCI's associate editor.*