

# TURFONOMICS™

Chapter 2

## TIME ISN'T MONEY. PRODUCTIVITY IS.

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### BOTTOM LINE THINKING

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Plus it's 10-20% more fuel-efficient than competitive models. That means more than just reduced fuel costs. It also means you can carry less fuel compared to other machines. Less fuel means less weight, and less weight means less stress on your turf.

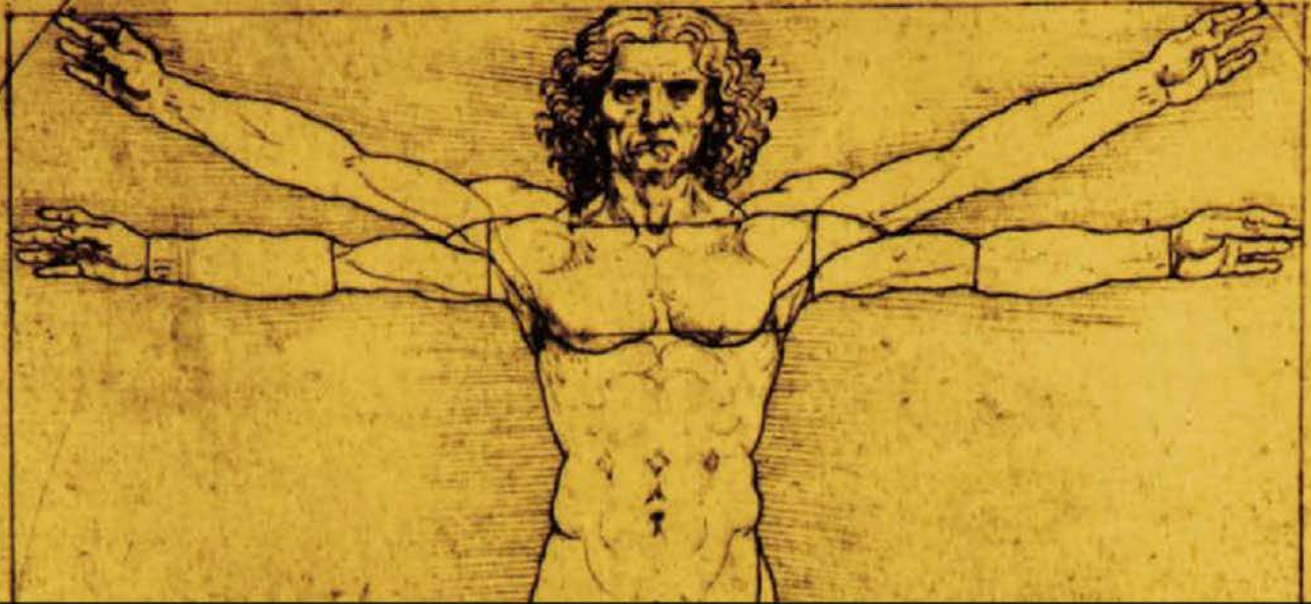
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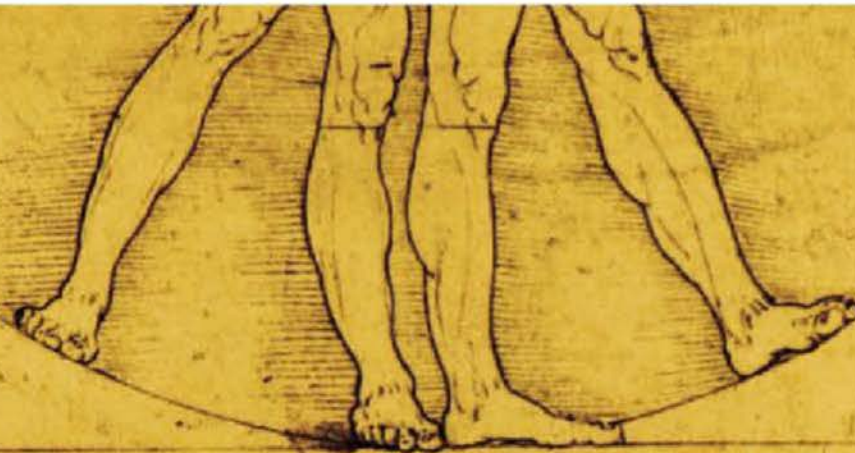


Reelmaster® 3550-D



# ***Anatomy of Negotiation***

How to influence, lead, and get your way: Our experts dissect successful negotiation strategies to protect your personal and professional interests.



by Frans Jager

# Getting results

**N**egotiating is part of everyone's life. Only thieves – if they don't get apprehended – get away with getting what they want without negotiating: they just take what they want.

If you are a golf course superintendent, you have a lot of negotiating to do, because you have to interact with a large number of people in different constituencies; and none of these people will always, automatically do what you want to get done. Some might say: everything is a struggle for the superintendent. Maybe that is how it is perceived; certainly the superintendent knows that you don't always get what you want and you certainly do not get what you want without negotiation. No denying that it is a tough job to be golf course superintendent. Almost like being President of the United States: you are being held responsible for anything that happens under your watch and yet, by yourself, you can only do so much and influence the outcome only to a limited extent. You need a lot of cooperation from the weather and from a lot of people, who each have a mind of their own, to arrive at the desired result.

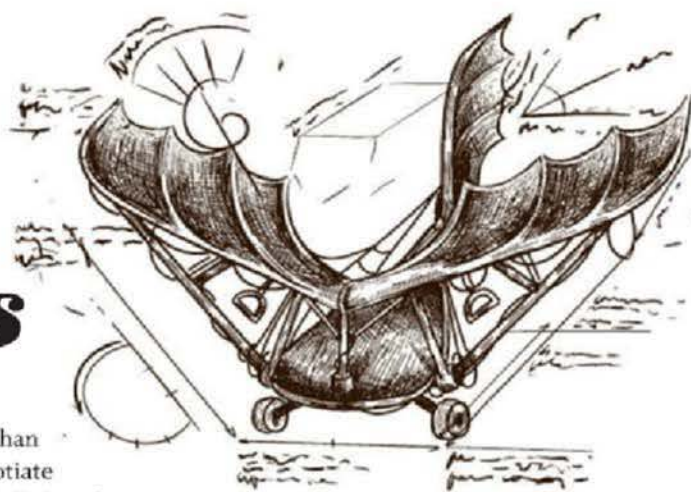
When it comes to negotiation, people automatically think about a buyer/seller relationship. The old fashioned horse trading or deal making. So, the perception is that it is in the procurement process that the superintendent really needs to bring his/her negotiating skills to bear. But is it? The procurement part of the job may, in fact, be one of the simpler ones to negotiate.

Yes, there are situations in which some buying savvy comes in nicely. But not very often. Just like in our personal lives, the buying routine has much more to do with making sure that you get exactly what you want than with getting something at a bottom bargain price. We pride ourselves when we make a "super-good" deal, but if we are honest with ourselves, what did we

really negotiate? More often than not we let the supplier negotiate with himself, knowing full well that if we wait a little longer, the product we want will go on sale. Getting a good deal, even the best deal, is probably more a matter of timing than a matter of negotiation.

The superintendent is in a pretty good buying position. If you are an industry supplier, it is your business to know every superintendent in your market. As superintendent, you are easily identified and

easily located, which means every supplier in the business will come to you and will want to work with you. You can hardly ask for a better competitive scenario. The hardest part of the procurement job of the superintendent is therefore not the negotiation of the best price; it is in separating the chaff from the kernels and determine



## BY THE NUMBERS

### Interpersonal relations

We queried superintendents about their purchasing philosophies and relationships with suppliers and distributors. Here's how they weighed in:

Number of local/regional suppliers/ reps you purchase products from annually

5

Number of turf-chemical suppliers you purchase from

3

#### Top 5 criticism of suppliers in your area

1. Only contact me when they need to sell something
2. I feel pressure to do early order
3. Call too often, pester me
4. I feel pressure to buy products I don't need or more than I need
5. (tied) They don't offer agronomic support
5. (tied) They don't understand my needs

#### Changed who you purchase chemicals/fertilizers from in recent years



#### Do you have a primary turf-chemical supplier?



Percent of turf-chemical supply purchased from this primary supplier **75%**

Source: GCI research

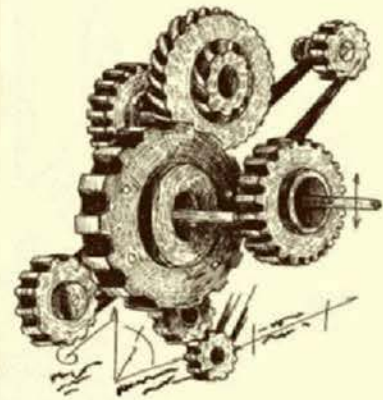
who the suppliers are that have your best interest at heart, that have what it takes to make you and your business successful and are willing to serve you day and night when the chips are down.

The procurement process for the superintendent, like for any other business buyer, has a strategic and a transactional component. The strategic component will consist of determining how many suppliers you want to have involved in your business, who they are and what you expect from them. I have been a buyer long enough and often enough to know that picking the right supply partner addresses most of your challenges. If you pick the right

## Rules of engagement

For a superintendent to "negotiate for results" following rules need to be observed:

- Decide what is crucially important (imperative) to you in the procurement process
- Make sure that these imperatives actually serve the business, not you personally
- Let your suppliers know what your imperatives are and invite them to compete on that basis
- Award your business only to suppliers who are able and willing to meet your imperatives
- Hold your suppliers accountable for meeting your imperatives in full, all the time
- Don't deal with any more suppliers than you need to get all of your imperatives met, in every aspect of your operation, all the time
- There is no room in a productive, lasting supply relationship for any dishonesty, half-truths, white lies, or renegeing on a commitment



- The best supply relationship is a two-way street that respects the legitimate interests, including the right to make a profit, of the seller as well as the buyer
- Make sure whatever deal or commitment you make cannot be overruled by a higher authority at either side of the transaction

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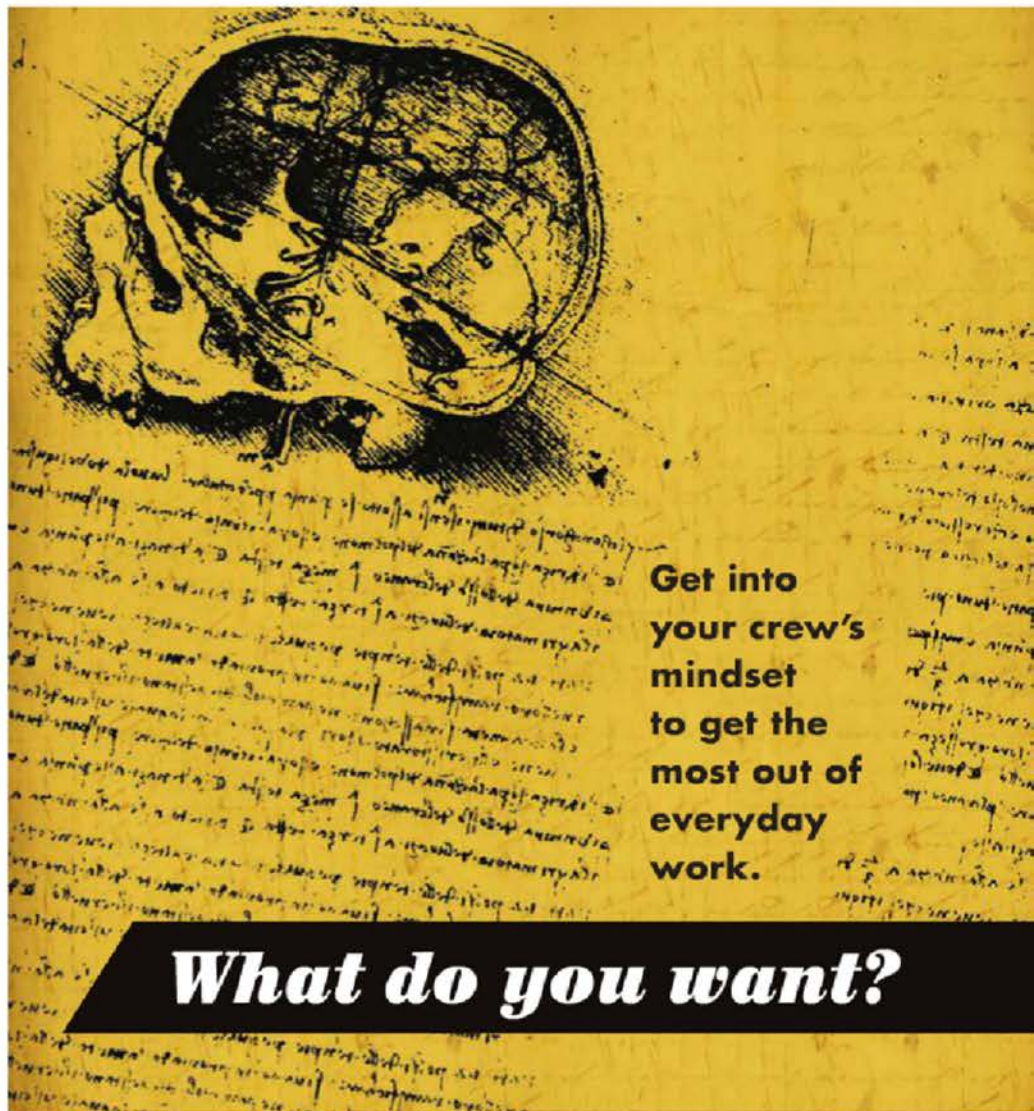
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partner, you don't have to worry about getting a fair price and you can count on the fact that he will be there for you when it counts most. The strategic component of the procurement process will determine the success or failure of the supply side 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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your crew's  
mindset  
to get the  
most out of  
everyday  
work.**

## ***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-



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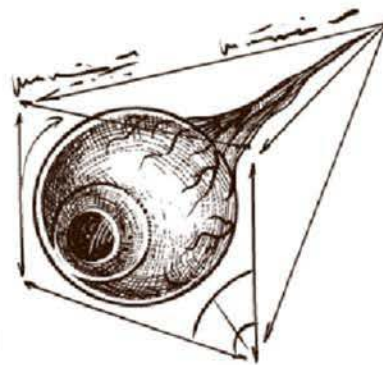
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ple's highest potential to the workplace. Fundamentally, when you tell someone exactly what to do and how to do it, that old-fashioned model of supervision – here is your job, do it exactly this way – what you get is exactly what you're asking for 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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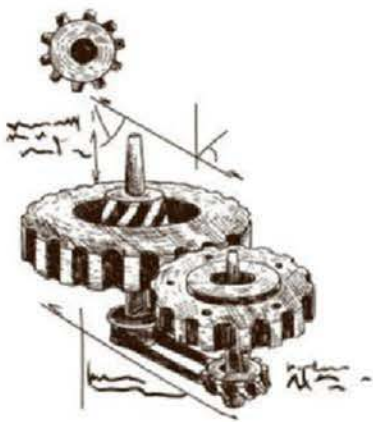
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"A lot of it is about asking questions and either asking questions of the individual or simply engaging in a questioning mindset yourself."  
 — Amy Wallis

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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