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Tactic of the Week #2



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Tactic #2 - Referencing an Expert Opinion

Summary: Citing the opinion of an authority to gain clout.

One of the more powerful tactics to utilize when presenting information in a negotiation is to cite the opinion of an expert.

Example

A man is selling his automobile for \$12,000. A woman tells him that she will buy the car for \$11,500 if she can take it to her mechanic to make sure there are no major problems needing repair. The prospective buyer takes the car to her mechanic who prepares a computerized printout outlining \$1,500 worth of repairs. The buyer returns to the seller with the computerized report of needed repairs and a revised offer to purchase the car for \$10,000.

Counter

The seller has several possible counters at his disposal in this situation, depending on his goal. If he is confident that a buyer will eventually come along and pay his price, he might simply tell the prospective buyer, "Eleven-five is the lowest offer I will accept." Second, he could question the validity of the mechanic's recommendations. If the mechanic's report shows the brakes on the car are bad, the seller may want to go to the trouble of inspecting the brakes himself to test the validity of the report. If the brakes have even ten thousand miles left on them, the seller has more room to negotiate. He can lower the price a bit to cover all or some of the brake repairs, or he can stand firm, saying, "The reason I priced the car so low is that I knew it needed some repairs and I have taken those repairs into account in my asking price." Last, the seller could consider referencing his own expert, taking the car to another mechanic to verify that the prospective buyer's mechanic was accurate on every item that was in need of repair. If the buyer's mechanic was inaccurate on even one item, the strength of this tactic is quickly lost.

Do you have any negotiation questions? If so, then send them to us by hitting the "reply" button. We'll do our best to address them in upcoming tactics.

If you'd like to forward this issue to a friend or colleague, please click "forward email" below.

This tactic is one of 101 strategies and tactics featured in [The Only Negotiating Guide You'll Ever Need](#), by Peter Stark and Jane Flaherty.



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