

# THE MASTER NEGOTIATOR

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Tactic of the Week #46

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## Peter Barron Stark President

Peter and his team of expert negotiators train leaders, sales professionals and procurement specialists in the art of negotiation.

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## Tactic #46 - Electronic Shark in the Moat

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Summary: Stalling a negotiation by creating the perception one is too busy to respond to a counterpart's request.

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To be an effective negotiator, you need access to the person who has the knowledge and ability to negotiate. Many years ago, secretaries played the role of Shark in the Moat, letting only a few, select people have contact with their bosses. Today we are more technologically advanced – we have *Electronic Sharks* in the Moat such as caller identification, voicemail and email. It's difficult to negotiate when you can't get past someone's electronic shark. Some negotiators use this tactic to their advantage.

### Example

A commercial real estate professional is trying to secure an appointment with a corporate executive. No matter how many times the real estate professional calls, he constantly reaches the executive's email or voicemail, and the executive herself, or the secretary, calls back at odd hours and leaves a voicemail or an email in response. Although the responses give the real estate professional hope of an actual meeting, the Electronic Shark in the Moat is very effective at keeping a distance between the two counterparts.

### Counter

The real estate professional could try calling very early in the morning or very late in the afternoon when there is less chance that the Electronic Shark in the Moat is on duty. A second tactic is to utilize [Find Us an Umpire](#) (either within or outside the executive's company) to help bring the two people together.

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

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

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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.

858.451.3601

11417 West Bernardo Court  
San Diego, California 92127



11417 W. Bernardo Ct.  
San Diego, CA 92127

Phone: 858.451.3601  
FAX 858.451.3604

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