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Tactic of the Week #48

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Tactic #48 - Massaging a Big Ego

Summary: Appealing to a counterpart's sense of power to get him to make a decision.

Asking a question like, "Do you have the power to make this deal happen?" can be an effective tactic. Some people feel compelled to say "yes" for the sole reason that it strokes their ego. People with big egos believe they are always right, and like to feel in charge.

Example

A man goes out to buy a car for his family. He is a bottom-line, results-oriented type of guy who is good at negotiating a great deal. Once he makes the decision to buy a car, he wants to do the research, take a test drive, negotiate a deal, and purchase the car all in one afternoon. The salesperson, sensing the buyer's need for power, asks, "Do you have the power to make this type of decision without your wife?" The husband replies, "I am the sole decision maker when it comes to purchasing the family car."

Counter

Obviously, the tactic of [Higher Authority](#) would work best here—and it is probably in this man's best interest to employ it. He could say, "Although my wife and I usually agree on this type of purchase, I will have to review the purchase agreement with her to gain her approval."

It is usually wise to get someone else to review any deal you are structuring. Asking someone else to review your proposed outcome is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength.

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.

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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