

THE MASTER NEGOTIATOR

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Tactic of the Week #53

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Tactic #53 - These Boots Are Made for Walking

Summary: Walking away from an unacceptable deal.

In any relationship, the side with the least commitment to continuing the relationship has the most power. Being able to walk away from the bargaining table when the tide turns against you gives you leverage.

Example

Kathleen wants to buy a daybed for her daughter. The bed has been advertised for \$177. When Kathleen starts to pay for the bed, the salesman tells her there is an additional \$25 delivery fee. Kathleen doesn't want to pay the fee, since her husband can pick up the bed in his company truck. The salesman agrees to waive the delivery charge.

A week later when Kathleen and her husband go to pick up the bed, the clerk behind the counter states that the person Kathleen talked to previously did not have the authority to remove the delivery charge. After going back and forth, Kathleen finally says, "Just give me my \$177 back and we'll buy the bed somewhere else."

Counter

If someone uses These Boots Are Made for Walking on you and you can meet your goals without that person (e.g., other people are interested in your product or service), let your counterpart walk. In the example above, the clerk apparently thinks the store can sell the bed to someone else for the full price plus delivery charge, so he is not concerned that Kathleen is walking away. If he decides that waiving the \$25 charge is a small concession to make, he may utilize the tactic of [Losing the Battle to Win the War](#). But if the clerk ends up chasing after Kathleen and bringing her back to the bargaining table, his power will deteriorate considerably. Car salespeople are notorious for going after customers when they start to walk away. Remember, if you keep walking, the leverage will be on your side, as long as you have a way of contacting your counterpart again should you desire.

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.

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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.



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