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Tactic of the Week #78

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Tactic #78 - The Dead Fish

Summary: Raising an unreasonable deal point to distract a counterpart and get her to make a concession on another deal point.

You place a deal point on the bargaining table that you do not expect to achieve and do not particularly care about, knowing that it will be about as acceptable to your counterpart as the smell of a dead fish. When your counterpart makes a fuss, you offer to give up the deal point, but you make it sound like a big concession on your part so you can ask for something in return.

Example

Consuela is buying a used car from Josh. Josh is asking \$10,000. Consuela wants to pay less, so she lays The Dead Fish on the table, asking Josh to purchase new tires. When Josh balks at the suggestion, she agrees to drop the new tires demand, but only if he lowers his price by \$400.

Counter

Josh could simply insist that the price is not negotiable. Or he could use [Apparent Withdrawal](#), [These Boots Are Made for Walking](#), or the [Trade-Off Concession](#).

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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