

# THE MASTER NEGOTIATOR

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Tactic of the Week #81

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

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## Tactic #81 - The Power of Crazy

Summary: Doing something irrational to encourage a counterpart to concede deal points just to escape from the behavior.

Once in a while it pays to do something crazy—something so irrational that your counterpart will concede just to get rid of you. To make this technique effective, you have to do something so far afield from rational behavior that your actions are obviously absurd.

### Example

At the Department of Motor Vehicles, we once observed a woman who was so upset about having waited in three different lines without finding anyone who could solve her problem that she began crying and screaming, "All I want is for someone to treat me like a human being!" When this outburst started, a manager took the woman aside and personally helped her sort out her registration problems.

### Counter

If someone uses this tactic on you, don't take the behavior personally. Realize that many negotiators do the absurd just for effect. You can always walk away until your counterpart agrees to become reasonable. Another possible tactic is [No More Mr. Nice Guy](#). If your counterpart realizes that every time she becomes unreasonable, you withdraw the last offer you already agreed to, she will soon recognize that her behavior is costing her. Another option is to get closer to someone who is acting crazy. Telling a person who is being absurd, "I love working with you because you display such great passion and emotion," usually diffuses the effectiveness of the crazy behavior.

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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