

Setting Objectives



Nothing happens until we plan. We need a strong vision and some clear objectives. Setting these objectives correctly is important if we are to achieve the vision.

We need first to define the difference between a vision and an objective.

Let's assume that I have a vision of becoming financially independent. Objectives are the battle plan, the stepping stones on the path towards the achievement of my goal. Therefore, a vision may have one or many objectives that I would need to fulfil to achieve my goal. For example, to become financially independent I might want to:

1. Get out of debt
2. Improve my saving
3. Start a business

So in terms of a negotiation you may have a vision to penetrate a new market sector, this will inform your Negotiation Objective, which may be to win the business at a small overall profit. This will then in turn inform your individual targets for issues that are to be agreed.

Examples of a poor objective might be:

- To win the business

This is too general and doesn't give any detail so really doesn't help at all.

- To win the business at a 5% margin over 12 months with a no return policy and delivery to a central point and payment terms of 20 days.

This example is too specific and doesn't leave any room for a negotiation.

Examples of better objectives might be:

- We aim for a return on investment of at least 15% over the next twelve months.
- We aim to achieve an operating profit of over £10 million on sales of at least £100 million Cap the increase in prescribing expenditure at 2% whilst maintaining a generic prescribing rate above 70%.
- Commission services to cut average length of stay by one day, whilst ensuring no increase in re-admission rates
- Cap the increase in prescribing expenditure at 2% whilst maintaining a generic prescribing rate above 70%.

Therefore in terms of creating a useful mandate these may be useful questions for you to ask

1) What is the Vision of your Business and how does this inform your Objective for the Negotiation

Describe the Objective for the Negotiation

Now ask yourself the following questions

- Is it clear how success will be measured?
- Is it specific enough?
- Are there any circumstances where you may be prepared to revise this objective?
- Have you shared this information with fellow negotiators?
- Got agreement and full understanding across the whole team?

2) Now think about the other party and what you know or suspect about their vision of their business and what this may mean for their objective

Describe what you think their objective may be

Now ask yourself the following questions

- What evidence do you have for believing that this is their likely objective?
- Do you think there are any other possibilities?
- What possible trades may therefore be attractive to them?
- How can you best test this through skilful questioning?
- What is the rest of the teams/organisations views about this

Doing this thinking will help you to achieve a desirable outcome in any negotiation. It will mean that you are well prepared and will form the basis for more detailed preparation.

It will mean that you enter the negotiation with the right mind set and other partners in the negotiation will know what you are aiming for.

Later we will look at

- Questioning – Great questions to ask, questions which reveal the other sides thinking
- What are your negotiating preferences and what does this mean for your development
- How can you best review a negotiation

Contact and Further Details **www.dynamiqconsultants.co.uk**
or email Ian Flemming on **ian@dynamiqconsultants.co.uk**