

# THE MASTER NEGOTIATOR

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Tactic of the Week #42

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President**

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## Tactic #42 - Feeling Hurt or Betrayed

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Summary: Appealing to a counterpart's feelings by acting personally upset by an offer.

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Most negotiators want to avoid hurting someone else's feelings. Tough negotiators don't mind being ruthless, since they consider their actions just a part of business, but even they don't feel comfortable when someone tells them they have hurt his feelings or betrayed him in some way.

### Example

We were negotiating a subcontract for our services. In the middle of the negotiation, the contractor stopped and stated that it was important that we know how he felt. He went on to tell us that because of our long business relationship, he felt hurt and betrayed that we would not work for him unless we made a higher fee. We backed up and changed our aspirations because we felt terrible that he was taking our actions so personally. We do not mind driving a hard bargain, but we do not want to hurt people's feelings in the process. Unfortunately, we learned when this happened a second time with the same person that the "hurt feelings" were just a tactic.

### Counter

We could have simply apologized and asked the contractor to clarify why he felt hurt. Or it may have been helpful to ask, "[If You Were in Our Shoes](#), could you understand why obtaining the higher fee might be important to us?"

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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