

Enlightened Negotiation: 8 Universal Laws to Connect, Create, and Prosper

Mehrad Nazari

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Enlightened Negotiation is a book that is both interesting to read and offers quite a bit of wise counsel.

Mehrad Nazari skillfully demonstrates how negotiation can be principled and collaborative, rather than adversarial, in the elucidating *Enlightened Negotiation*.

Negotiation seems to generate perennial interest as a business topic, evidenced by numerous books and seminars on the subject. While some self-proclaimed experts promote toughness in negotiating, Nazari takes a more reasonable and even humanistic approach. His premise is that truly successful negotiation is based on “the art of collaboration,” and his goal in writing *Enlightened Negotiation* is to impart three decades’ worth of knowledge about how to reach a kind of negotiation nirvana.

The book is structured around eight “laws,” each of which is a cornerstone for “enlightened negotiation.” The laws, such as “The Law of Trust,” “The Law of Intention,” and “The Law of Reflection,” are thoroughly described in distinct sections that feature engaging text augmented by numerous short case studies illustrating each law at work. In “The Law of Manifestation,” for example, Nazari reveals two common reasons why negotiations fail: “Parties come to the table with a zero-sum assumption,” and “Parties come to the table with fixed positions.” The author then addresses strategies to overcome such failure by thinking in advance about “best alternatives” if the negotiation doesn’t produce the optimum outcome.

The book also includes an intriguing account of the sale of the Kashi Company, of particular interest because negotiating shifted the sale to Kellogg rather than Kraft, even though Kellogg offered substantially less money. Kellogg, the book reveals, won out by respecting the founding ideals and heritage of Kashi.

Taken together, the eight laws form a sort of blueprint for “enlightened negotiation” that, writes Nazari, can take one to “a new place, with a new level of understanding and consciousness.” A book that is both interesting to read and offers quite a bit of wise counsel, *Enlightened Negotiation* will very likely be of great value to anyone who wants to get the most out of negotiating, whether it be in business or in life.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Fall 2016)

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