



CONFERENCE  
ZURICH | 2023

EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY

MANAGING RISKS

OCTOBER 5 & 6



# NEGOTIATION CONFERENCE ZURICH | OCTOBER 2023

On October 5th and 6th, 2023, executives and decision makers from 15 different countries convened in Zurich, Switzerland, for the Negotiation Conference.

The Negotiation Conference offered valuable insights, fresh viewpoints and broadened the scope of tactics in complex negotiations.

This year, the central theme was “Managing Risks in Negotiations.” Twenty distinguished speakers explored this theme from various angles, offering insights on leadership and adapting their ideas to high-stakes scenarios.

This executive summary provides the key takeaways from the Negotiation Conference 2023.



## PARTNERS 2023

**IMD**

**Forbes**



**PANERAI**





## **KEYNOTE SPEECH: HOW TO MANAGE RISKS IN NEGOTIATIONS**

MATTHIAS SCHRANNER

At the opening of the Negotiation Conference in 2023, the Founder & CEO of the Schraner Negotiation Institute, Matthias Schraner, shared his insights and strategies for managing risks in tough negotiations. He used the proprietary SCHRANNER CONCEPT® to explore how the four core elements of the concept, Preparation, Opening, Leadership, and Deadlock, relate to risk management in difficult negotiations.

Matthias emphasized that preparation is the backbone to negotiate successfully. It involves analysing internal and external risks using a risk assessment, avoiding negotiating with oneself, and the importance of formulating precise demands and walk away positions in writing.

He then continued to explore the opening phase of a negotiation, which is about setting the right tone for the process. He stressed the importance of embracing conflict proactively rather than avoiding it.

When discussing the most challenging negotiations based on his own experiences, Matthias underscored that refraining from using threats in highly emotional negotiations is of paramount significance. Furthermore, recognizing the distinction between a warning and a threat is crucial to avoid inadvertently intimidating the opposing party, as threats increase the risk of an unplanned escalation. If you threaten and do not deliver, you lose credibility. Warnings, on the other hand, are powerful signals and could be employed as a tactic. When delivered in a skilled and respectful manner, warnings will help you stay in the “driver’s seat” and lead the negotiation.

In discussions about the leadership and deadlock phases, Matthias urged that leading the negotiation based on strategy rather than emotions and intuition proves to be significantly more effective.

Overall, Matthias greatly emphasized the importance of assembling a negotiation team with the clearly defined roles of Negotiator, Commander, and Decision Maker.

#### Key Points:

- Analyse your internal and external risks before going into the negotiation.
- Formulate your walkaway position in writing.
- Issue warnings rather than threats to navigate negotiations effectively.
- Assemble a negotiation team: Negotiator, Commander, and Decision Maker.
- Avoid making concessions too early, as it signals weakness and invites further demands.
- Remember, there is risk on your side and the other side.
- Make the disagreement costly for the opposing party.
- Do not avoid a deadlock scenario. Instead, create one instead at the beginning of the negotiation by "putting the fish on the table."





## **PANEL DISCUSSION: CEO TALK**

MARNI MCMANUS, DANIEL WIENER, MODERATED BY DAVID HUGHES

The panel discussion brought together Citi Country Officer Marni McManus and Daniel Wiener, the Founder and President of the Global Infrastructure Basel Foundation. Using an exemplary case study, the panel discussed Citi's role in a high-profile case where it supported a non-profit organization at the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic. From a negotiation perspective, the panel focused on how important it is to create a "mutual enemy" in a situation where many players with different interests are at the negotiation table. This also helped to manage the risk in such a complex undertaking.

Both speakers mentioned that in navigating a scenario involving a diverse and international group of players with different interests in a situation of crisis, a practical approach is to identify suitable intermediaries and arrange their roles in a way that unifies these players against a common adversary. Once this alliance is established, it becomes crucial to maintain clarity and ensure that every participant and their mediators follow the sequence of events seamlessly. This helps in keeping the group's efforts synchronized.





## KEYNOTE SPEECH: THE STORIES WE TELL

BETH FISHER-YOSHIDA

In her keynote speech, Beth explained the impact of various narratives, encompassing social, educational, organizational, and familial influences, on our effectiveness as negotiators. Beth asserted that self-awareness plays a pivotal role in successful negotiation, as it involves a profound understanding of one's multifaceted self. This self-awareness is indispensable for selecting which aspects of oneself to emphasize during negotiations.

Beth underscored that individuals can effectively influence their personal traits by crafting empowering narratives about themselves, reflecting on their daily behaviours and interactions, and addressing insecurities with self-compassion. Beth emphasized the significance of comprehending one's identity within a negotiation context. This understanding enables negotiators to employ negotiation strategies authentically and successfully and remain aligned with their desired outcomes, even in stressful or crisis situations.

Furthermore, Beth highlighted the valuable role of emotions in negotiations, emphasizing that emotions carry meaning and serve as a guide for action. She noted that the expression of emotions varies among individuals and cultures, potentially leading to varying interpretations and meaning-making.

She concluded by emphasizing that self-awareness is a continuous journey, as self-knowledge evolves over time. The better one knows oneself, the more adept one becomes at self-management in negotiation settings, making self-discovery an ongoing and transformative process.

**Key points:**

- Self-awareness is critical.
- The better you know yourself, the more you can manage yourself in your negotiations.
- Under stress, our positive attributes, which we characterize as strengths, can become weaknesses when used to an extreme.
- Knowing yourself is lifework because it is forever changing.
- Emotions are meaningful, a great information source, and a prescription for action.
- How your emotions are expressed varies by person and culture, which may lead to different interpretations or meaning-making.





## **PANEL DISCUSSION: PEACE NEGOTIATIONS**

OLEKSANDRA MATVIICHUK, MATTHIAS SCHRANNER, DAVID HUGHES

In their profound conversation, Nobel Peace Prize Winner and Human Rights Lawyer Oleksandra Matviichuk, alongside Matthias Schranner, explored crucial insights on peace negotiation strategies specifically tailored to address the ongoing Ukraine crisis.

The central question at hand was whether both parties are ready to come to the negotiation table immediately in order to resolve the crisis. The answer to this query is clear: no, they are not prepared to do so.

Matthias, after a comprehensive analysis of the situation and insights provided by Oleksandra, offered his expert opinion. He underlined that in the context of high-stakes negotiations, parties only gather at the negotiation table when there's something mutually beneficial at stake for both. Consequently, it is of utmost importance to establish conditions that offer incentives for both Ukraine and Russia, encouraging active engagement in the dialogue. Ensuring that the cost of disagreement for Russia outweighs that of agreement is vital in this case.





**PANEL DISCUSSION: SHE'S THE NEGOTIATOR BY FORBES DACH**  
BETH FISHER-YOSHIDA, MATTHIAS SCHRANNER, MODERATED BY  
SOPHIE SCHIMANSKY

In this panel discussion, the speakers explored the theme of diversity within negotiation teams. Beth began by sharing her experience during her first visit to Japan, where she encountered an entirely different cultural context. She stressed that despite many of us being well-travelled and feeling confident in our understanding of various cultures, awareness and comprehension in practice can be quite distinct.



When it comes to selecting people for a negotiation task force, Matthias doesn't base his decision on gender but rather classifies individuals as "gamblers" and "rational negotiators." Rational negotiators operate on a cause-and-effect basis, believing that, for instance, high job performance should lead to a raise. In contrast, gamblers initiate negotiations with irrational demands for the sheer enjoyment of the process. Gamblers create dynamics that provoke reactions and enjoy the "game." According to Matthias, when deciding who should represent the team at the negotiation table, it's essential to consider the cultural background of the opposing party. Based on this understanding, one can determine whether a rational negotiator or a gambler would be more favourably received. Matthias illustrated this by pointing out that a gambler might be less well-received in Switzerland compared to the Netherlands. Therefore, diversity within the team is crucial and equips it to handle various negotiation environments effectively.

Beth expanded on the topic of inclusivity, emphasizing that gender should not be a dividing factor in negotiation. However, certain historical biases may discourage certain individuals from taking a more active role. These deterrents might stem from personal characteristics and the dynamics of the environment. Consequently, Beth advocated for inclusivity in diverse teams, seeing it as a mutually beneficial approach that leads to superior individual and team results.

## **PWC WORKSHOP: HOW IS ESG CHANGING THE WAY OF DOING BUSINESS IN THE RISK GOVERNANCE LIFECYCLE**

ALEXANDRA BURNS, VINAY KALIA

Alexandra and Vinay explored the challenges that firms face with increasing pressure from clients, markets, and regulators to transform their business strategies. This transformation affects governance, various risk factors, and extends to third-party relationships. The session dived into the reasons behind this need for change, what changes are necessary, and how they will impact both the present and the future.

## **PWC WORKSHOP: A NEW ERA OF CYBER RISK TRANSPARENCY**

URS KÜDERLI

Urs detailed how, with the increasing digitization and widespread adoption of cloud platforms, the changing dynamics of threats and adversaries present a growing and significant risk to organizations. Consequently, there is an escalating demand for comprehensive cyber risk management and reporting, particularly as C-level executives wrestle with the challenge of gaining clear insights into the complex cyber risk environment.

**ALLIANZ WORKSHOP: DEFUSE NEGOTIATION RISKS THROUGH  
BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE**  
CHRISTIAN STEININGER

Christian presented the Nobel Prize-winning insights that explains how people truly act and decide, harnessing the transformative power of debiasing in order to amplify your strategic thinking, mitigate negotiation pitfalls, and set you up for success. He analysed how the ethical use of behavioral insights has unlocked the value at scale for Allianz, its customers, and external clients of his team – in negotiations and beyond.





## KEYNOTE SPEECH: TACTICAL EMPATHY

CHRIS VOSS

In his keynote speech, Chris Voss placed a strong emphasis on the pivotal role of empathy in successful negotiations. His approach encourages viewing negotiation as a collaborative effort and negotiating with the other party rather than against them. Active listening plays a crucial role in the outlined approach. Furthermore, accurately summarizing the opposing party's perspectives they shared with you could lead to the so-called "that's right" moment and trigger the release of oxytocin. The "bonding" hormone has several beneficial effects in negotiations. It fosters trust and honesty, ultimately making the other party more genuine and less demanding. Another highly effective yet entirely contrasting

tactic to the previous one is intentionally making incorrect statements. Doing so prompts the negotiating counterpart to correct you, leading to the sharing of additional information.

Voss further emphasized the importance of understanding the inherent risks in negotiations. Negative emotions stand out as a primary trigger for disagreements during negotiation, which is why effectively managing and navigating these emotions is paramount. Overly emotional behaviour can be seen as a threat and may put your negotiating partner in a negative state of mind. Instead, the goal in a negotiation is to employ the right questions that prompt your counterpart to contemplate and arrive at mutually beneficial solutions on their own.

#### Key Points:

- View negotiations as a cooperative endeavour, aiming to negotiate with the other party rather than against them, which can lead to more productive outcomes.
- Strive to create a "that's right" moment by accurately summarizing the other party's position, making them feel understood and facilitating trust and cooperation.
- Intentionally present incorrect information to encourage corrections, which can elicit more valuable information from your negotiating counterpart.
- Clearly outline the potential consequences to the other party, prompting them to contemplate their choices and leading to more informed decision making.

# CAMILLE VASQUEZ

LITIGATOR PARTNER AT BROWN BODENICK



## **FIRESIDE CHAT: SHOWDOWN - HOW TO SETTLE A DISPUTE**

CAMILLE VASQUEZ, DAVID HUGHES

The long-awaited fireside chat with Camille Vasquez took the audience on an informative journey of settling high-stakes disputes, using the universally spectated defamation trial of Johnny Depp as a point of reference. Above all, Camille urges the importance of preparation in any high-stakes situation or crisis. Knowing who you are as a person, brand, or company and what you represent sets the foundation for success in any negotiation or crisis management scenario. And it is imperative to do so before the crisis peaks.



In any challenging negotiation, it's essential to have a well-thought-out strategic plan in place before you begin. However, overpreparing can restrict flexibility, a vital element in negotiations. Vasquez emphasized that being able to adapt to changing circumstances, whether in a courtroom or during a negotiation, is crucial. In the context of business negotiations, excessive preparation often leads to making assumptions about the other party, potentially limiting what you believe is possible or not.

Later in the discussion, Camille highlighted the significance of prioritizing themes over depending on a predetermined list of questions. This emphasis on themes offers more adaptability, but to fully harness your capabilities, it's crucial to engage in active listening to strategize your next steps.

Another noteworthy approach Vasquez introduced was when she discussed a tactic of extracting valuable information from the opposing party. Camille underscored that it is vital to inform yourself about what the opposing party believes their weaknesses are. This can be accomplished by using well-prepared questions and actively listening to the responses. As your negotiating counterpart begins to elaborate, they are likely to reveal vulnerabilities in their position. From a negotiation standpoint, providing explanations often leads to justifying your position, placing you in a defensive stance. Consequently, this opens a prime opportunity for you to identify weaknesses.

### Key Points:

- Understand your brand identity and maintain consistency throughout the crisis.
- Be prepared, and employ the tactics authentically.
- Avoid relying on a script during a negotiation; instead, concentrate on themes and essential keywords when preparing your agenda.
- Formulate questions that prompt the opposing party to provide explanations; once they are explaining, they are losing.
- Try to quiet out the noise around you and stay focused on the prior established demands and targets.
- Build a strong team and operate in synergy.
- What is the “aha moment”? Know the exact information that you need the opposition to verbalize. To achieve this, utilize active listening skills; individuals frequently reveal details you may not have directly inquired about.



## **PANEL DISCUSSION: INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**

PETRA JANTZER, KAMALES LARDI, MATTHIAS SCHRANNER

The panel discussion, organized by Advance – Gender Equality in Business, brought together three distinguished speakers: Petra, Kamales, and Matthias. The focal point of their discussion was the essential aspects of inclusive leadership.

In his presentation Matthias outlined a comprehensive three-phase approach to inclusive leadership. He emphasized the pivotal role of encouraging every team member to speak up, encouraging the generation of creative ideas even under pressure, and the importance of presenting a unified front when negotiating with external parties. Particularly



in the context of gender diversity and the ongoing underrepresentation of women in negotiation settings, Matthias proposed that companies work diligently to rectify these imbalances. He encouraged the active empowerment of women to overcome self-doubt and ardently pursue their objectives. His conviction was that the contributions of women could yield significant and positive impacts.

Petra contributed to the discussion by underscoring that inclusive leadership strives to create an environment free from the constraints of cultural, social, and political labels. It should make every individual feel welcome and empowered to make meaningful contributions. A fundamental tenet of this approach is ensuring an equitable distribution of voices, acknowledging that the true value emerges from a diversity of perspectives. Petra stressed that diversity alone is insufficient and highlighted the indispensable role of inclusivity and encouragement to make it truly effective.

Kamales, in her insights, emphasized the critical importance of comprehending the profound impact of technology on people's lives. She advocated for the development of digital empathy and underscored the necessity of inclusivity, especially within the predominantly male-dominated digital landscape. Kamales also placed significant importance on exposure to diverse backgrounds and perspectives as a catalyst for enhancing self-awareness and nurturing leadership growth.

All three speakers collectively emphasized that effective leaders must confront their biases, embrace continuous learning, and actively cultivate growth, both in themselves and within their teams. Their insights collectively underscored the significance of inclusive leadership in promoting diversity, fostering inclusivity, and driving positive change within organizations.



## KEYNOTE SPEECH: LEADING HIGH-PERFORMING TEAMS

GEORGE KOHLRIESER

George's keynote addressed multiple issues: the transformation in leadership and negotiation, fostering psychological safety, actively embracing a conflict and navigating high-pressure situations.

Creating a climate of psychological safety is a pivotal aspect of reducing the risk of failure through human errors. A critical step in this process is understanding who you are as a negotiator, person, and leader, unlocking your most profound power to authentically



become the negotiator while knowing your triggers to manage your emotions under pressure.

George offered a particular perspective on conflict, defining it as a difference between individuals or groups characterized by tension, emotionality, disagreement, and polarization, where bonding is either strained or absent. He encourages leaders and negotiators not to shy away from conflicts but to openly address them by “putting the fish on the table”, thereby, raising issues openly.

In his role as the Negotiator, former police psychologist, and Professor of Leadership and Organizational Behavior at IMD, George shared valuable advice for leaders navigating high-pressure negotiations.

- Focus on Micro Goals: Break down your larger objectives into smaller, manageable tasks. This helps maintain clarity and allows you to concentrate on achievable steps.
- Visualization: Practice mental rehearsal to envision successful outcomes. Visualization can boost your confidence and prepare you for challenging situations.
- Positive Self-Talk: Harness the power of positive self-talk. Your inner dialogue can significantly impact your mindset, so maintain a constructive and affirming internal conversation.

- **Seek Support:** Don't hesitate to lean on trusted colleagues for assistance and guidance. A supportive network can provide valuable insights and collaboration.
- **Self-Calm and Focus:** Develop techniques to keep yourself composed and maintain your focus, even in high-stress situations.
- **Inner State Management:** Ensure you feel in control and avoid becoming a psychological hostage to your own emotions. Emotions can affect decision-making, so managing them is crucial.
- **External State:** Exude confidence and self-control in your external demeanor. This outward expression can inspire trust and reassurance in those around you.
- **Personal Effect:** Understand your personal effect and how it impacts others. Your demeanor and behavior can influence the people you lead.
- **Outward Focus:** Cultivate a mindset that prioritizes service, interdependence, and building strong connections with others. This outward orientation enhances collaboration and teamwork.
- **Purpose-Driven Approach:** Let your purpose guide your actions, rather than succumbing to external pressures. A sense of purpose can be a powerful motivator.
- **Take Risks:** Embrace a willingness to learn and take calculated risks. Both are essential for personal and professional development.

Kohlrieser concluded that empathy plays a crucial role in this journey. Being able to progress through the four stages of the bonding cycle, that is, attachment, bonding, separation, and grief is a prerequisite for being able to collaborate with people.

The ability to create bonds with others, even in challenging situations, is critical, focusing on understanding the pain points and desires of the opposing party.



## **IMD WORKSHOP: CULTIVATING A FUTURE-PROOFING CULTURE**

ZHIKE LEI

Future-proofing your organization often means creating and sustaining a positive and empowering culture. But why can't companies and their leaders get the "culture" right? This session will investigate the fundamental tenets of a future-proof culture. We will then explore practical approaches to cultivating a culture that helps anticipate and prepare for potential changes and challenges.

## **IMD WORKSHOP: ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

KARL SCHMEDDER

Schmedders explains how the most recent IPCC Report estimated a stark rise of 3°C in global average surface temperature before the end of the century. This severe increase stands to disrupt life on Earth as we know it. In this session, he dove into some economic perspectives on how our actions are exacerbating this trend before exploring the various solutions suggested by economic theory that could enable humankind to address and alleviate its impact.

## **SCHRANNER NEGOTIATION INSTITUTE: LEADING NEGOTIATING TEAMS**

DAVID HUGHES, KLAUS LASSERT

This workshop provided a review of the four principles of the SCHRANNER CONCEPT®. The main focus being to highlight the most important aspects of establishing and leading negotiation teams in organizations. This hands-on workshop, invited the attendees to work in teams to reflect on applying successful negotiation team tactics in your organization.

# LEADING HIGH-STAKE NEGOTIATIONS

17 - 18 OCTOBER 2024

## ALREADY LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT NEGOTIATION CONFERENCE?

Our team is already preparing for the 2024 edition of the Negotiation Conference in Zurich, and we are excited to announce the theme: Leading High-Stakes Negotiations.

Thank you for joining us this year and we are looking forward to staying in touch with you!

[WEBSITE AND NEWSLETTER](#) | [LINKEDIN](#)