

# THE NEXT WOMEN

BUSINESS MAGAZINE



INDUSTRY NEWS   FUND RAISING   FEMALE HEROES   INTERVIEWS   AWARDS & EVENTS   BUSINESS LIFE   VIDEO

Home > Articles > Negotiations: the Advantage of being a...

Search:

## Negotiations: the Advantage of being a Woman...And the Mistakes she Makes

18 tweets  
retweet

Follow Us: [Join our newsletter](#)

18 February 2011 by [Simone Brummelhuis](#)

CAREER

### WHAT IS THE NEXT WOMEN?

The Next Women is the first award-winning online Women's Business Magazine and networking forum with a focus on startups and growing businesses led, founded or invested in by women.

[Find out more](#)

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Simone Brummelhuis**  
Simone Brummelhuis is VP Europe of [Astia.org](#), the premier entrepreneur programme for high-growth women-led companies. She is founder and CEO of...

[Read more](#)  
[View all Contributors](#)



This article is written by [Karen Hough](#), Founder and CEO of *ImprovEdge* and the Author of *The Improvisation Edge: Secrets to Building Trust and Radical Collaboration at Work*.



Karen Hough

There's a common misconception that the best negotiators are unyielding tough nuts who yell and pound their fists. However, those who engage in a collaborative process with a win-win outcome are the most successful.

For over 12 years, I've been working with professional negotiators in Fortune 500 companies. I've seen impressive skills in both men and women, but there are some gender-specific trends I've noticed.

If we as women can focus more on our strengths, we can become exponentially better negotiators. Whether you are negotiating a million-dollar contract or bedtime for a 4-year-old, women have collaborative advantages in negotiation.

#### First, where do we fall down?

**Mistake #1: We don't negotiate.** I call this "price-tag syndrome". We believe that the price we see is non-negotiable. Believe it or not, you can negotiate anywhere. Ask the grocer to give you tomorrow's sale since you are shopping today. And when gathering competitive estimates, ALWAYS ask, "What can you do for me on this number?"

**Mistake #2: We negotiate against ourselves.** Sorry friends, but women are the WORST at this! We walk in with 10% already knocked off the price of our proposals before the client even asks. If they are silent, we fill the gap with promises to shave the number, or we give up extra services. Know your value – know your price – and present it confidently.

**Mistake #3: We undervalue ourselves.** This mistake is common amongst female entrepreneurs setting prices and female executives wanting a raise. Get some competitive analysis! Find out what the market is paying for services or jobs just like yours. Then make sure your prices reflect the market plus any special skills you bring to the table. Ask for more - you're worth it.

#### Now, let's concentrate on our strengths.

**Advantage #1: We ask questions.** In negotiation, the person asking questions and listening is the one with the power, not the one talking all the time. It is especially important to hone your skill in asking open-ended questions; the type that requires a narrative answer. "Tell me more about your work in pharmaceuticals." Questions also allow us to catch our breath or clarify an important point. If you feel stumped, a good open-ended question can buy time and enlighten us.

#### Advantage #2: We prefer agreement over conflict.

When we are able to keep ourselves and those in the room calm, agreeable and talking, everything in negotiation goes better. Understand that when emotions show up, it's time to take a break. Get out of the room or call back. If you are feeling confrontational, emotions might lead your decisions.

#### Advantage #3: We can read body language.

Women often admit that they had a "gut feeling" about someone or something. When you ignore your instinctual response to a negotiation situation, you are endangering your success. If the



The Improviation Edge

### UPCOMING EVENTS



**Women In Green Forum**  
30 Aug 2011 - 08:00 - 31 Aug 2011 - 16:00  
Santa Monica, California  
The Women in Green Forum promises to showcase women who have made an impact on the environmental...

[Read more](#)  
[View all Events](#)

**Book Now**

### POPULAR ARTICLES

Is Deauville the Next Davos? Conclusions of The

### FEATURED PARTNERS

other person seems uncomfortable, confused or anxious, note it. It may explain some of their demands or behavior. Also, watch your own body language and be sure that it is in alignment with your goals. If you want the conversation to be collaborative, keep your arms uncrossed and lean forward. Look for the collaborative win/win in any negotiation. If one party wins it all, and the other party loses it all, the deal will probably fall through. When all parties walk away from a negotiation with something they wanted, everyone considers it a win. Those deals usually stay in place, and the parties can return to negotiate again, agreeably, on the next deal.

Karen Hough is the Founder and CEO of ImprovEdge and the Author of "The Improvisation Edge: Secrets to Building Trust and Radical Collaboration at Work" published by Berrett-Koehler. She speaks internationally and writes on negotiation, leadership, sales, and presenting with impact, and is the recipient of the Athena Award for outstanding woman-owned business.

Login or register to post comments 845 reads Like 0  
Share

## Related Content

- Darwinian Business Event Panellists
- The Leading Female Eco Internet Heroes
- UK Technology Woman of the Year Awards: the Results
- Saska Graville from Red Magazine Advises Female Business Owners on a Successful PR Pitch
- Female Entrepreneurs Learn Top Business Strategies for 2010
- Views from an Entrepreneur turned Angel Investor
- Astia Companies Show Record Q1 Momentum Despite Tough Economy: 11 secured funding!
- Female Internet Hero: Audio Interview with Eileen Gittins of Blurby
- The 49 Most Notable Female Internet Heroes of 2009
- Africa has some Fabulous Women in Tech

Women's...

World Economic Forum Davos: These Are the Women

Mark Zuckerberg on Oversharing, Social Design and Facebook...

Help for Startups! A Semi-Complete List of Startup Accelerator...

Africa has some Fabulous Women in Tech

View all

## FEATURED FEMALE HERO



**Gina Bianchini**

Gina Bianchini was CEO of social networking platform Ning, which she co-founded with Marc Andreessen. Since leaving Ning in March 2010, she has been an executive in residence at the An...

Read more

View all Internet Heroes



## RECENT ARTICLES

Female Entrepreneurs Set To Double Over Next 30 Years

7 Tips Every Business Networker Needs To Know About To Generate...

A LinkedIn Success Story: Savvy Networking Requires a Strategy

The Future of UK Business 2011: Super Cities and Local High Tech...

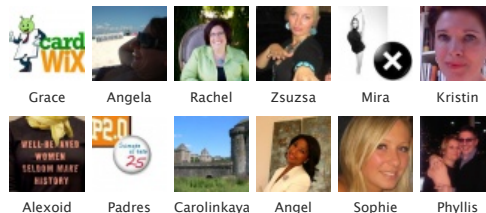
Help for Startups! A Semi-Complete List of Startup Accelerator...

View all

## Find us on Facebook



805 people like The NextWomen.



Facebook social plugin

Simone Brummelhuis  
thenextwomen

Female Entrepreneurs Set To Double Over Next 30 Years:  
<http://t.co/mvsOFhT> via @AddThis  
7 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

A LinkedIn Success Story: Savvy Networking Requires a Strategy | The Next Women – Business Magazine

<http://bit.ly/o6o7KR>  
8 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

---

I have just joined #wellingtonvc as a venture partner  
<http://t.co/3PFyMFv>. Great team. Very excited.  
15 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite



Join the conversation

## About TNW

The Next Women is the first award-winning online Women's Business Magazine and networking forum with a focus on startups and growing businesses led, founded or invested in by women.

[Find out more](#)

## Advertise on TNW

Advertising on The Next Women is the best way to reach our audience of over 25,000 leading, founding and investing women across Europe and Americas.

[Find out more](#)

## Submit Your Story

Send us your article or entrepreneurship story for review and you might be featured in TheNextWomen.com. Simply send your article to [info@thenextwomen.com](mailto:info@thenextwomen.com) in word format (.doc or .docx).

To suggest women we should profile or interview, send us a form via the [Contact Us](#) page.

## Help

[Contact](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#)  
[FAQ](#)

## Follow Us

[Join our newsletter](#)