



Cornell University
ILR School

Interest-Based Negotiation Training

This two-day training workshop is designed to convey both the theory and practice of a systematic approach to bargaining that results in:

- Better technical solutions
- Greater likelihood of mutual compliance with outcomes
- Improved working relationships between the parties

Sometimes labeled “mutual gains bargaining” or integrative bargaining, interest-based negotiation frames negotiation as joint problem solving to resolve each party’s underlying issues, needs and concerns. The process works by encouraging the parties to focus on interests, rather than positions, and to use information, communication, and innovative thinking to identify superior solutions.

Interest-based negotiation is not soft bargaining. It is not about giving in, peace at any price, or saying “trust me.” It is about becoming a more effective negotiator and arriving at more agreements that are workable. It’s about recognizing behaviors that escalate conflict and avoiding them, about learning to work with those you’ve become accustomed to working against, about ensuring your constituency understands what you’re doing and will back you, and about using bargaining power effectively to keep the parties on track to an agreement.

The Interest-Based Negotiation Workshop

The training process is designed to accommodate different learning styles, and includes presentation, discussion, and simulations. Simulations offer hands-on practice and are used to demonstrate the use of each of the five principles that guide interest based discussion. Simulated bargaining situations begin with simple one-on-one issues. By the end of the workshop, parties are bargaining in teams on issues reflecting their actual work situations. The issues become more complex as the training proceeds. One simulation may be conducted with the entire group using a real workplace issue identified by the parties. Throughout the workshop, participants are encouraged to question the process and discuss real life applications.



The Goals of the Training Seminar

Develop new skills and techniques

- Create problem-solving from conflict
- Put information and communication to use
- Craft agreements to benefit both parties
- Strengthen working relationships
- Learn the step by step process

Learn and appreciate the principles

- How to focus on interests, rather than positions
- How to generate multiple options, instead of “horse trading” over offers
- How to listen and question until you understand the interests of others
- How to stick to it, even when the other side plays hardball
- How to ensure your constituency understands what you’re doing
- How to understand the role of power
- How to operate from knowledge of your own best interests

Program Faculty

Over the last 15 years, Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Extension Division has earned a national reputation for its work with Interest-based Negotiation, training more than 30,000 labor and management negotiators from both public and private sectors. Workshop leaders are drawn from the School’s Extension Faculty. Each brings expertise in the application of interest-based techniques to collective bargaining, grievance handling and joint labor-management processes. Participants will be guided step-by-step through a systematic review of Interest-based Negotiation. The training design is highly interactive and includes lecture, discussion, and simulation exercises to provide opportunity for hands-on learning as well as reflective discussion.



Customized Training to Meet Your Needs

Workshop Size & Location

- Between 20 and 35 people is ideal
- On-site location or convenient training facility, including Cornell ILR facilities

Who Should Attend?

- Bargaining committees from both sides of the table —
Where more than one unit will bargain with administration or management, the committees from all units may come.
- Professional negotiators who may be involved in bargaining —
This means union regional representatives and lawyers for either party, if these people will have an active role in bargaining (at the table or away from the table).
- “Significant others” —
Bargainers often benefit from including individuals from both parties who may not sit in on formal negotiations but who, if they understand the bargaining approach, will be able to support the process and, perhaps, contribute to bargaining solutions through work on special committees. They are individuals whose working lives will be directly affected by the outcome of negotiations. In a typical organization, these are line managers, perhaps department heads, international union representatives, if not usually at the table, stewards, committee chairs, trustees and other influential local union leaders not on the negotiating committee.

Timeframe

- 2 Days or 2 ½ Days for Negotiating Team Training —
In our experience, we’ve found a negotiating team benefits most from two days of working together, experiencing and experimenting with interest-based negotiation techniques. The additional half-day in the longer seminar allows time to work in the safety of the seminar environment on one or two issues that are real for your organization, helping people understand how the process works. It also allows time for facilitated discussion of how you might apply the process to your contract negotiations or grievance administration process.
- 1 Day Refresher Training for Experienced IBB Negotiating Teams

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