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Sugar 'n' Spice and All Things Nice: Gender and Strategy Choices in Negotiation

Mara Olekalns, *Melbourne Business School*

Carol Kulik, *University of South Australia*



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Sugar ‘n’ Spice and All Things Nice: Gender and Strategy Choices in Negotiation

Mara Olekalns
Melbourne Business School
University of Melbourne

Carol T. Kulik
School of Management
University of South Australia

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Chapter Objectives

- Summarise gender differences in negotiation
- Identify strategies that women can take to improve their outcomes
- Describe the consequences of violating gender-based expectations about behaviour in a negotiation context
- Describe how attributions of competence affect women's strategic options in negotiation.

Introduction

Despite the implementation of equal-opportunity policies, women continue to earn lower salaries than men. Surveys tracking the salary outcomes of MBA graduates, both overseas and in Australia, show a startling gender gap. All other things being equal, female graduates' starting salaries are 6% lower and their guaranteed bonuses are 19% lower than those of their male peers (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). An Australian survey of 500 MBA graduates showed that the median salary for female graduates was half the median salary for male graduates and the post-starting salary increase for women was \$28,000 compared with \$71,000 for men (Nixon, 2002). With every pay rise predicated on starting salary, the gender gap widens with each passing year, until women leave the workforce with less financial security for their retirement. Recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that women have \$3 for every \$10 men have in their superannuation accounts.

The gender salary gap is not confined to inexperienced or less educated graduates. Analyses of the 2001 Australian Census of Population and Housing Household Sample File show that the gap is larger in high-pay jobs than in low-pay jobs (Miller, 2005). Australian Bureau of Statistics data indicate that women earn on average 16% or \$196 a week less than men; to match the average wage a man earns in 12 months working full-time a woman would have to work 54 extra days.. In addition, women are almost twice as likely to be under-employed as men, they are over-represented in industries dominated by casual, part-time and low paid employment and two thirds of female public servants don't get promoted after returning from maternity leave. Consequently, the gender gap is a problem for women in all occupations and will continue to negatively affect women for generations. Even optimistic researchers who point to a narrowing of the gender gap acknowledge that it will still be in evidence through 2031 (Kidd & Shannon, 2002).

How can the gender salary gap be eliminated? One answer is to teach women effective negotiation tactics that will narrow the gap when starting salaries are discussed with employers. Without negotiation training, women are less likely to negotiate starting salary, and when they do, they ask for less and settle

more readily than men (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Stevens, Bavetta & Gist, 1998). However, women who choose to negotiate are confronted by a Catch-22: The behaviours associated with higher negotiated outcomes (strong arguments, active defense of personal interests) violate traditional gender-role expectations. Consequently, the woman who successfully negotiates favourable outcomes for herself may be perceived as competent, but she is also likely to encounter a backlash and be perceived as less likeable than a man engaging in the same behaviours (Carli, 1990; Carli, LaFleur & Leober, 1995; Rudman & Glick, 1999). This has a long-term cost for the woman, because likeability is an important component of leadership potential (Watson & Hoffman, 2004). The competent but disliked new hire may earn more, but will incur the cost of strained social relations in the workplace and limited promotion opportunities.

In this chapter we examine how social stereotypes affect the perception of women who strive to improve their economic outcomes through negotiation. We discuss how gender affects negotiation process and outcomes by: (a) describing how men and women differ in their approach to negotiation (b) highlighting the social consequences for women who adopt a more competitive negotiation style; and (c) articulating the process by which counter-normative behaviour influences negotiation outcomes. Throughout this chapter, we describe the strategies that enable women to preserve ongoing organisational relationships and simultaneously improve their economic outcomes.

Women in Negotiation

Why do women obtain poorer outcomes than men? Research suggests that, at every stage of the negotiation process, women make decisions that signal a more accommodating approach and consequently undermine their economic outcomes. This effect is amplified because the perception that women are 'soft' in their negotiating style invites their managers and peers to make less generous offers to them. Every negotiator needs to make a series of strategic decisions before starting to negotiate (see Figure 1). In this section, we describe how women and men differ in the way they prepare for, and engage in, negotiation -- highlighting how these differences affect women's outcomes.

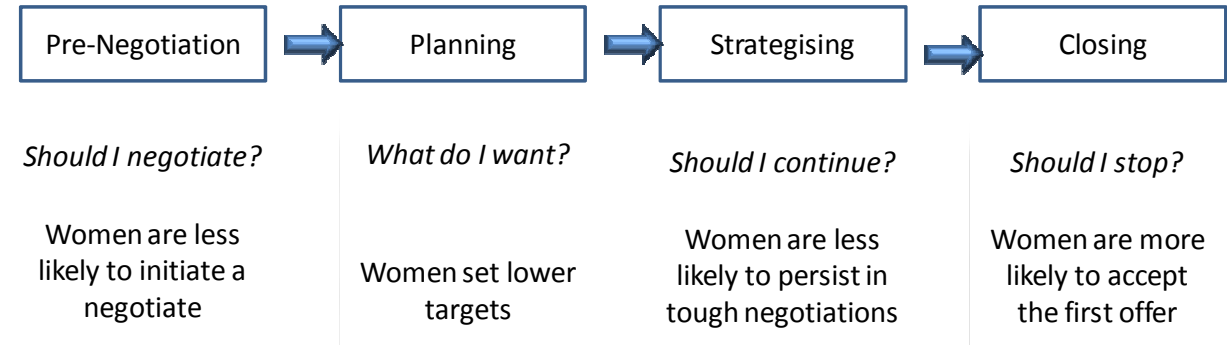


Figure 1. Strategic decisions in negotiation

The moment of discomfort. Gender differences are evident even before we initiate a negotiation: whereas men describe negotiation as something “fun” and “like going to a football game”, women liken negotiation to going to a dentist. So, it’s not surprising that women are more reluctant to initiate a negotiation. However, even women who can overcome this reluctance are less likely to negotiate because they perceive less of the world as negotiable. For men, every interaction is a possible negotiation from a discounted price when they purchase a suit to ‘extras’ when they buy a car through to additional compensation or assistance when they agree to take on additional responsibilities in the workplace. Women, on the other hand, almost need to be invited to negotiate. Unless a situation clearly signals that negotiation is appropriate, as is the case when negotiating a starting salary in a new job, women are unlikely to negotiate. Even when a setting clearly encourages women to negotiate, they are less likely to do so assuming for example, that must necessarily start at the base salary within a salary range. Most importantly, women are more sensitive than men to the ‘moment of discomfort’ that precedes a negotiation. Although both men and women say they feel anxious before they start a negotiation, men are more likely to push through this moment of anxiety than women. Recently, economists quantified this feeling of anxiety by asking women and men how more they would be willing to pay for a car to avoid negotiating. Women valued the opportunity to avoid negotiation at twice the price of men (see Babcock & Laschever, 2003). This research is

consistent with the finding that a critical difference between men and women was their persistence in the face of a tough negotiating partner: whereas men persist and push back, women exit the negotiation (Gist, Stevens & Bavetta, 1991).

Knowing what you want. An important step in preparing to negotiate is setting goals. The most important goal for negotiators is their target point, the best possible outcome from their point of view. Negotiators also need to determine their resistance point, the worst deal they are willing to accept. Target points tell negotiators what to aim for and where to initiate a negotiation, whereas resistance points tell negotiators when to stop conceding and walk away from a negotiation. There is considerable research evidence that negotiators who set high targets obtain better outcomes than negotiators who set low targets (Stevens, Bavetta & Gist, 1993). Research also shows that negotiators who focus on their targets outperform negotiators who focus on their resistance points (Galinsky, Mussweiler & Medvec, 2002). So, an approach in which negotiators set low targets and focus on their resistance points leads to poor outcomes. And it is precisely this combination of behaviours that characterise how women approach negotiation: They set lower targets than men and focus on their resistance points, accepting the first offer that is above their resistance point (Kray & Thompson, 2005).

Using your power. A final difference is in women's and men's willingness to exercise power and walk away from a deal. Alternatives are an important source of power in negotiations. It goes almost without saying that negotiators with more alternatives have more power. Yet women are more reluctant than men to invoke an available alternative to improve on their current situation. In work-related negotiations, this means that men who are dissatisfied generate alternatives and then use them to justify requests for a better salary package ("If you don't improve my package, I will accept the offer I have from a competitor"). Women are more likely to simply accept the alternative offer. They never find out whether their organisation was willing to improve their salary package and the organisation loses a valuable employee. Women who do negotiate are more likely than men to accept the first offer they receive. In a recent study, Kray and Gelfand (2006) showed that women were concerned that if they tried to negotiate an offer, they would be perceived as "losers" by their organisation. This is especially concerning because research also

shows that women receive less generous opening offers than men despite being in identical negotiation situations (Burgmann, 1986).

Small Steps to Success: Planning and Managing Negotiations

Is getting tough the answer? Our discussion suggests that there are several, simple measures that women can take to improve their outcomes in negotiation. However, all of these strategies imply that women need to become tougher: they need to push harder, set higher targets, generate and invoke their alternatives. These behaviours are part of a competitive negotiation repertoire and reflect the way that men approach their negotiations. They are all core elements of successfully protecting economic outcomes. However, as we go onto discuss in the next section, following a competitive path has negative consequences for women. As a result, they need to consider how they use these ‘tougher’ strategies. One means for softening the impact of competition is to combine it with a more accommodating style. When used together, competition and accommodation can signal a problem-solving orientation which benefits women. In this section, we outline several simple steps that women can take to improve their negotiation outcomes. While we discuss target points and power, we also describe how women can change the negotiation to a more problem-solving orientation.

Get informed and use your power. The effects of target and resistance points are so powerful, that a simple strategy for improving economic outcomes is to ensure that these limits are well-informed. In particular, women need to broaden their information search when they set targets. Imagine Cath, who is about to renegotiate her salary package. Usually, when she tries to decide what she should ask for, Cath seeks the advice of her network. However, unlike men who have networks with many relatively casual contacts, women tend to build smaller networks with deeper relationships (Ibarra, 1997). This means that Cath is likely to turn to her closest friends and peers, very likely to also be women, consequently limiting the information she collects. It is therefore especially important for Cath to undertake a thorough information search. To ensure that she identifies an appropriate target point, Cath should not only ask her network

contacts but move beyond her immediate network, gathering information from both women **and** men. In addition, Cath needs to utilize information from the web and her professional association.

There is one further watchpoint for Cath to avoid. In preparing for her negotiation, she should avoid focusing only on 'price', in this case her salary. Good planning means recognising that employers can offer a range of benefits beyond salary. However, because Cath is less likely to recognise opportunities for negotiation, her list of negotiable items is likely to be shorter than a comparable male colleague's list. Cath can expand her list by asking her network what else is included in their employment packages. She can also generate and add to her list over time: company cars, car parking, office space and furnishing, flexible start or end times, working from home, paid internet access, a laptop, job title, the tasks she will be responsible for and the support available to her (such as a personal assistant) are all items that Cath could place on her wish list. While some offer her tangible benefits, others – such as job title – hold symbolic value and signal the worth to the organisation.

Change the game. Women are less likely than men to recognise negotiation opportunities and be willing to act on those opportunities. As we saw in the preceding section, women's unwillingness to engage in negotiation can be traced back to their perception that negotiating is like a visit to the dentist. Much of this discomfort can be attributed to the stereotype of negotiation as a highly competitive process. Because women, unlike men, see a negotiation as an event embedded in a broader relationship they are reluctant to engage in a highly competitive negotiation process (Gray, 1994; Gelfand, Major, Raver, Nishii, O'Brien, 2006). The solution is to play a different game.

One way to do this is to prime a different mental model. Rather than approaching negotiation with the view that it is necessarily a competitive process, approach it as a problem-solving exercise. More importantly, prime the other negotiator to also adopt a problem-solving perspective. Recent research suggests that successfully priming problem-solving can benefit women. Laura Kray and her colleagues (2001 - 2005) showed that when men and women are told that their success in negotiation is a measure of their abilities, women perform more poorly than men. However, when men and women are told that effective

negotiators are people who engage in behaviors associated with problem-solving, men outperform women in negotiations.

There are a number of simple strategies that Cath can use to re-orient her manager. The first strategy is to change the language that she uses. Researchers in topics as diverse as team work and communication recognise that language can either increase or decrease social distance. By this, we mean that language signals whether we believe we stand apart from others or whether we are working together with others. When we signal that we are working together with others, we create an environment that encourages problem solving. The simplest way to do this is to use inclusive language, *we* instead of *I* (Donnellon, 1994). Negotiators who use “we” obtain better outcomes than those who talk in terms of “I” (Simons, 1993). Using inclusive language is one aspect of positive politeness, a way of communicating that emphasized the relationship and signals a desire to maintain social harmony (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Other strategies that fit with the idea of positive politeness include active listening, focusing on perceived similarities and building rapport with the other negotiators (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In negotiation, these behaviours are all part of a broader problem-solving approach. By engaging in them, women not only encourage their counterparts to adopt a problem-solving approach, they also create an environment that fits better with their style.

A second technique is to manage and redirect the negotiation process. When negotiators represent negotiations as competitive, they engage in a series of moves and counter-moves aimed at demonstrating their power and eroding the other party’s power (Kolb, 2004; Kolb & Williams, 2000). This necessarily escalates the competitiveness associated with the negotiation and increases women’s concerns about relational damage. When faced with an opponent who engages in classic competitive moves, women can use a series of subtle interventions to redirect or ‘turn’ the negotiation (Brett, Shapiro & Lytle, 1998; Kolb, 2004). A benefit of this approach is that these interventions fit more comfortably into a relationship-focused approach to negotiation and redirect the negotiation to problem-solving.

These strategies fall into one of two categories, those that redress attempts to shift the balance of power (*restorative turns*) and those that invite the other negotiator to play a different game (*participative*

turns). Based on her analyses of workplace negotiations, Deborah Kolb identifies two restorative turns: correction and naming. Cath can correct her employer's interpretations of her behavior by providing an alternative explanation, for example, by reframing her perceived hyper-competitiveness by explaining that her salary request is based on industry norms. She can more directly protect herself by showing that she recognizes that her employer is playing a tough, competitive game by naming the tactics that he is using. In response to a very low offer from her employer, she might say "I'm sure you don't mean to low-ball me".

It may, however, be more productive for Cath to use participative turns because these actions will redirect the negotiation to a problem-solving orientation – which will benefit Cath because it is more congruent with her relational orientation. To redirect the negotiation, Cath can use diversion, interruption or questioning. In keeping with Fisher and Ury's principle that negotiators should be "tough on problem, soft on the person", Cath can ensure that whenever her manager tries to undermine her position in the negotiation she reminds him that of the key goal for the negotiation, which is to reach consensus on her new responsibilities. A second, highly effective participative move is to take a break. This break can be as short as taking a sip of water or as formal as suggesting that the negotiation be reconvened at a later date. For example, in response to new information from her employer, Cath might say "I need some time to consider how that affects my situation. Can we meet again tomorrow?". This offers Cath several benefits: As well as releasing her from making a decision under time pressure, it interrupts the rhythm of the negotiation. When Cath and her manager meet again, the negotiation starts with a different dynamic. Finally, Cath can seek more information by questioning her manager. By responding to competitive moves with a request for more information, Cath avoids escalating the tension in the negotiation and uncovers potentially valuable information about her manager's underlying motives and interests.

The Bigger Picture: Strategies, Stereotypes and Backlash

The actions that we described in the previous section are small steps that women can take to manage their negotiations. Many of the behaviors that we described focus on changing the negotiation from a competitive to a problem-solving process. Our reason for doing so is the finding that women perform better

when negotiations are oriented to problem-solving. To understand why women need to take these actions, we need to place the strategies we recommended into the broader context of negotiation – the strategies that are available, the expectations that the concept of negotiation primes and the different reactions that men and women elicit when they choose particular strategic paths in negotiation.

The very idea of negotiation primes a focus on economic outcomes. How much did we pay? Did we get a good deal? Did we obtain good tangible outcomes? However, negotiations also have a relational component (Olekalns & Brett, 2008). As well as asking whether we walked away with good economic outcomes, we need to consider whether we walked away with intact or improved relationships. We achieve good subjective outcomes when our reputation is preserved and the process is perceived as fair (Curhan???). This is an especially important consideration whenever we anticipate that we will negotiate with the same person again in the future, as is the case in employment contract negotiations. When negotiators choose their strategies, they need to consider how their actions will affect both their economic and social outcomes.

Negotiators who focus on improving their economic outcomes choose to behave competitively (Pruitt, 1983). A competitive approach is associated with extreme opening offers, high targets and an unwillingness to make concessions. Competitive negotiators focus on influencing the other party and trying to erode the other party's power by presenting strong, reasoned arguments, counter-arguing, and highlighting their power by referring to alternatives. Conversely, negotiators who focus on improving their social outcomes are more accommodating. Accommodating negotiators listen to the other party's concerns, display empathy and place a higher priority on the other party's outcomes than our own. All of these behaviours are likely to strengthen the relationship (Allred, 2000; Pruitt, 1983). Neither strategy is without its costs. Competitive negotiators risk escalating tension and triggering a competitive spiral that not only progressively worsens relationships but may lead to no outcome at all. Accommodating negotiators avoid the negative relational consequences of competition, but sacrifice their own economic outcomes.

A third alternative for negotiators is to employ a problem-solving strategy. The goal of problem-solving (or collaboration) is to obtain both good economic and good social outcomes. This approach calls for a careful blend of competitive and accommodating strategies. To implement problem-solving negotiators are

encouraged to give and seek information about underlying needs and interests, to maintain flexibility in relation to how their own needs are met and to ensure that they do not make concessions on their most important issues (Allred, 2000; Pruitt, 1983). Most negotiations are well suited to problem-solving because this approach helps negotiators balance two competing tasks, those of creating and claiming value in a negotiation. Value creation describes those processes that increase the resources available to negotiators and is often described as 'increasing the size of the pie'. Value claiming describes how those resources are distributed between negotiators and determines the size of the slice that an individual receives (Lax & Sebenius, 1986). In managing these tasks, negotiators need to preserve and build a strong relationship to create value while simultaneously ensuring that their economic outcomes are not eroded by the other party. Consequently, negotiators need to both cooperate and compete.

It seems self-evident that problem-solving should be the strategy of choice for negotiators and we have encouraged women to reframe negotiations as a problem to be solved. Women and men, however, face different challenges in implementing a problem-solving approach because the *expectations* of these two groups differ. Social stereotypes create the expectation that men not only will, but *should* act assertively and independently, whereas women not only will, but *should* show concern for others (Kray & Thompson, 2005; Perry, Davis-Blake & Kulik, 1994; Rudman & Glick, 1999). These socially shared expectations imply that, in negotiation, women's strategic choices are partly constrained by the greater emphasis they place on maintaining harmonious relationships over pursuing good economic outcomes. From our point of view, an important consideration is how these expectations align with the perceptions of what makes an effective negotiator. According to Kray and Thompson (2005), the stereotype of an effective negotiator is of someone who is rational, assertive, strong and dominant. Not only do these behaviours reflect a competitive style, they also reflect the traits included in a male gender stereotype. Conversely, the stereotype of an ineffective negotiator is of someone who is yielding, emotional, submissive and weak. These behaviors reflect both a more accommodating style and the traits included in the female gender stereotype. The consequence of these stereotypes is that men and women will elicit quite different reactions when they adopt a problem-solving approach in their negotiations.

We have already said that a strategic approach based solely on competition or accommodation is unlikely to produce the most benefit for both negotiators. Accommodation carries the risk of conceding too much, whereas competition carries the risk of conceding too little and damaging the relationship. To obtain the dual benefits of good individual outcomes and a good relationship, negotiators need to adopt a problem-solving approach that blends competition and accommodation (Lax & Sebenius, 1986; Pruitt, 1983). To achieve this optimal collaborative mix, women need to add competition to their strategic repertoire, while men need to add accommodation to theirs. However, these complementary strategic adjustments, made in pursuit of identical economic goals, have asymmetrical consequences for men and women.

For both men and women, the implementation of a collaborative strategy requires that negotiators introduce counter-normative behaviours. Violating prescriptive social stereotypes frequently has negative consequences for women but not for men. Successful women attract more personal derogation than equally successful men because the mere recognition of success produces inferences that the women have engaged in counter-normative behaviour (Heilman et al., 2004). This penalty for counter-normative behaviour is not usually incurred by men. Engaging in cooperative altruistic behaviour results in more favourable evaluations of men (but not women); withholding cooperative behaviour leads to more unfavourable evaluations of women (but not men) (Heilman & Chen, 2005). As we explain below, women who violate prescriptive gender stereotypes are at risk of eroding their ability to influence the other negotiator, consequently damaging both their social and economic outcomes.

To understand why this occurs, we need to understand the impression formation process. Research shows that we form impressions of others on two dimensions, warmth and competence (Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2004; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick & Xu, 2002). Groups (and their members) are placed into one of four categories based on whether they are evaluated as high or low on warmth *and* high or low on competence. Both women and men belong to “mixed valence” groups, that is, groups in which members are viewed as low on one dimension and high on the other. Men are uniformly viewed as high on competence and low on warmth. By comparison women are expected to be warm but not competent. An important difference between groups is that whereas women move between the two mixed valence stereotypes, being viewed as either

likeable and not competent *or* not likeable and competent, men can break free of mixed valence stereotypes to be viewed as *both* likeable and competent (Cuddy et al., 2004). As a result, women cannot engage in the counter-normative competitive behaviours associated with competence without a corresponding loss along the likeability dimension.

In negotiations, women who add competitive behaviors to gender-normative accommodating behaviors will be perceived as competent because they are engaging in the behaviors associated with effective negotiation (Kray & Thompson, 2005). But, because a competitive strategy violates gender stereotypes, women will incur social backlash, being perceived as less likeable. Bowles and her colleagues (2007) showed that women who initiate negotiation are perceived as more “pushy” than those who simply accept offers made to them. If this loss of likeability was the only consequence of adding competition to accommodation, perhaps it would be worthwhile. However, by employing competitive behaviors women violate expectations in a negative way. In negotiation, switches from cooperation to competition are interpreted as negative violations of expectations and elicit heightened competitiveness from the other party (Hilty & Carnevale, 1992; Olekalns et al., 2005). As a result, a woman who introduces counter-normative competitive behaviours into the negotiation not only violates her negotiation partner’s expectations, she violates them in a distinctly negative way. The result is likely to be that women undermine their social outcomes, being perceived as neither competent nor likeable, *and* their economic outcomes.

The Likeability Factor: Sugar ‘n’ Spice in Negotiation

Preserving likeability is critical to women’s success in negotiations because a female negotiator’s ability to exert influence hinges on how her competitive behaviours are perceived by the other party. A negotiation partner is likely to see a woman’s competitive behavior as violating prescriptive gender stereotypes, and women who violate gender stereotypes generate social backlash (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). This does not mean that women should avoid using competitive strategies during negotiation. But it does suggest that women need to think carefully about what strategies might be most effective in their particular circumstances.

In employment negotiations, one key variable women need to consider is how unambiguously work outcomes signal their competence to supervisors and other organisational agents. When a woman's work performance is incontrovertible, and her competence is undeniable, her biggest challenge in a negotiation is being likeable (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). If Cath works alone, and her performance is reflected in unambiguous quantitative units (number of widgets manufactured, or dollar sales), she is in a good position to make a strong argument for better economic outcomes and she is very likely to convince her manager that she deserves a salary increase. However, competent women are disliked (Heilman, 2001). Perceivers view very competent women as less friendly, helpful, sincere, trustworthy and moral, and more hostile, selfish, devious and quarrelsome (Heilman, Block & Martell, 1995). Cath's assertiveness in negotiating a pay increase may improve her economic outcomes, but if it damages her relationship with her manager, her long-term career outcomes may be put at risk (O'Connor, Arnold & Burris, 2005). Therefore, Cath needs to "turn up the volume" on her likeability during the negotiation.

To boost likeability, Cath needs to communicate to her manager the value she places on preserving their relationship. She might, for example, start her negotiation by re-affirming how much she likes working for her organisation. She might also start with some small talk, asking her manager about his children or referring to activities that they both enjoy such as hiking or tasting fine wines. She could continue with this relationship building theme by flattering her manager and maybe even flirting a little. Ingratiation techniques like these can boost her likeability (Bolino & Turnley, 2003; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Kray & Locke, 2008).

But in some organisational settings it is difficult to attribute performance outcomes directly to individuals (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). In these settings, managers may be especially likely to undervalue female employees' contributions and see female employees as less competent and influential (Heilman & Haynes, 2005). When competence indicators are ambiguous, female negotiators face a double challenge – they have to demonstrate their competence to their negotiation partner without sacrificing likeability in the process.

Let's consider an alternative scenario for Cath. Suppose she is the only female team leader in a male-dominated sales organisation. In this scenario, Cath's performance is assessed against her team's ability to meet its quarterly sales targets. This past year, Cath's team outperformed every other team in the organisation. In this scenario, Cath needs to tailor her negotiation strategies so that her employer sees her as simultaneously competent and likeable. This is a tricky task. Cath knows that her team's success is largely due to her motivational strategies and a new training program she implemented, but these strategic and agentic behaviours are not part of the traditional female gender stereotype. Therefore, Cath's employer is unlikely to automatically attribute team performance to Cath – he is more likely to think that Cath got lucky by being assigned an unusually talented and high-performing team.

In this scenario, Cath needs to make sure that her employer attributes the team's performance to her own personal competence. She needs to do this without losing likeability in the process – so a straightforward competitive approach to the negotiation is a bad idea. Instead, Cath can use traditional gender stereotypes to her advantage. She can highlight how her leadership style has changed the team climate in a performance-enhancing way, helping the team to achieve unusually high targets. She can describe how her engagement in stereotypically feminine activities such as being inclusive, recognizing other people's emotional needs, and supporting others contributed to team performance, positioning these behaviours as legitimate indicators of competence (Rudman & Glick, 1999). By reframing her team leader position as a "femininised" role, Cath can proactively provide her supervisor with convincing evidence of competence without violating gender stereotypes and without sacrificing likeability (Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Implications for Organisations

The gender salary gap is a problem for both women and organisations – suggesting that the problem needs to be addressed by proactive efforts by both female employees and their employing organisations. Individual women can learn to be more effective negotiators, but organisations can also take steps to reduce the role that gender plays in constraining women's economic outcomes. In the long run, organisations whose

practices clearly signal when it is appropriate to negotiate, and identify the parameters of appropriate negotiation, should achieve greater gender equity in economic indicators.

For example, researchers have recommended that organisations clearly establish a “zone of negotiability” (Rousseau, 2001) that specifies the conditions of employment that can be negotiated – as well as the conditions that cannot be negotiated. When everything is subject to negotiation, the employment relationship becomes a purely economic exchange and negotiations take on a political tone (Rousseau, 2001). In these situations, women may be particularly reluctant to initiate a negotiation. But when the negotiation terms are made explicit, employees are more likely to see opportunities for successful negotiation (Rousseau, Ho & Greenberg, 2006) and women may incur fewer penalties for negotiating.

Employers can also specify the conditions (e.g., performance criteria) required to negotiate certain employment terms (Rousseau, 2005). When organisations are explicit about “what it takes” to negotiate alternative levels of employment terms, negotiated deals can be discussed openly among coworkers and fairness across employees can be maintained. In these situations, women may be more motivated to negotiate economic outcomes because they know they are operating within a legitimate organisational framework for outcome distribution. Further, aggressive tactics (e.g., threats to reject the offer or generating counter-offers) may be less necessary in these situations (Rousseau, 2005), requiring female negotiators to engage in less gender counter-normative behavior and generating less backlash.

Chapter Summary

We introduced the topic of women and negotiation by focusing on the gender wage gap. However, this wage gap is only one example of the ways in which women’s reluctance to negotiate undermines their outcomes. As we showed in our “In the Field” box, women’s reluctance to negotiate affects both tangible outcomes such as salaries and less easily quantifiable outcomes such as additional organisational or family responsibilities. In our discussion, we highlighted several ways that men and women differ in their approach to negotiation: not only are women less willing to initiate a negotiation, they also set lower targets

and are less willing to use their available power bases. While women need to change how they approach these core negotiation skills, we highlighted the Catch-22 that they face if they simply choose to “get tough”. The dilemma for women, but not for men, is that they may improve their economic outcomes by getting tough but are likely to incur social costs. In organisational negotiations, where maintaining good relationships is critical to obtaining ongoing support from peers and managers, women may worsen their long-term career outcomes. We proposed that women can avoid this situation by carefully framing their requests to avoid being perceived as “pushy” and by managing the negotiation process. However, organisations also have a role in creating an environment that does not punish women who choose to negotiate.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the key differences in men's and women's approaches to negotiation?
2. What are the costs and benefits of "getting tough" in negotiation?
3. Should women act on Kray and Thompson's' recommendation to "harness gender stereotypes" and emphasize their feminine side in negotiation?
4. What actions can organisations and managers take to ensure women obtain equitable organisational outcomes?

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In the Field

Think women don't need to negotiate? Think again.

Gender inequity starts early: A 2008 survey of 1472 Australian children and their parents revealed that parents give boys almost a dollar a week more in pocket money than they give girls (Collins, 2008). And when parents give children household chores, girls are more likely to be assigned unpaid kitchen and cleaning jobs, while boys get paid for raking leaves or washing the car (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). As a result, girls become conditioned to inequities at a very young age and may start to take for granted that their contributions are worth less than those of boys.

Gender inequity happens around the world: Researchers have highlighted a wage gap between men and women in many different countries. In Lithuania, for example, women's wages are almost 20 percent lower than men's; in Korea, women's wages are 40 percent lower than men's. Irish women are paid an average of 9% less than men for performing the same work. In New Zealand, men in a fulltime job earned about \$318 per week more than their female colleagues; the comparable difference in Australia is \$196.

Gender inequity isn't just about money: In the average Australian household, men perform 11 hours of housework per week while their wives average 23 hours (Bittman et al., 2003). Married women who work full-time still perform two-thirds of the housework and childcare (Lennon & Rosenfield, 1994). But women are also more likely to perform "maintenance" and "care and feeding" activities in the workplace than their male colleagues (Huff, 1990) – serving on more committees, engaging in good citizenship behaviours, soothing hurt feelings. Unfortunately, these activities are usually not formally recognised, so women shoulder more tasks and more diverse tasks on the job and at home without compensation.

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In the Field

Turning Moves

Cath is about to renegotiate her employment conditions with her manager. Since the resignation of her team's supervisor, Cath has been informally leading the team. Under her leadership, the team has not become more cohesive but has significantly improved its performance. Her manager, Rob, has repeatedly expressed his satisfaction with Cath's performance. As a result, Cath feels confident that her manager will agree to increasing her salary and also formalising her role as team leader. Below, we demonstrate how the conversation might unfold, depending on whether Cath uses moves or turns as she encounters obstacles in her negotiation.

Cath starts by saying "I'm glad to have this opportunity to talk about my employment conditions. As you know, I have been informally supervising the team since Mark's resignation last year. I really hope we can formalise the arrangement with a promotion"

Rob responds by saying "Cath, that's just not possible. You don't really have the necessary experience and qualifications to be a team leader"

Moves and Countermoves.....

Cath: What do you mean? Haven't I successfully led the team for the past 9 months? Even you have said so.

Rob: Of course you have been successful as an informal supervisor, but that's because everyone tried hard and overlooked some of your shortcomings.

Cath: What shortcomings? Who?

Rob: Well, I don't want to name names or start listing your weaknesses. Let's just say you're not ready yet

Cath: It's not as if Mark didn't have weaknesses ... you were perfectly willing to overlook those. The team is performing so much better since I took over.

Moves and Turns...

Cath: I'm a little puzzled by your comment. Haven't you been satisfied with my performance in the last 9 months? (*question*)

Rob: It's true I have said I was satisfied, but I made allowances because you were taking on the role informally. You just aren't ready for the responsibilities of the position.

Cath: This seems like a developmental issue. Perhaps if we talk about the areas in which I could strengthen my skills, we could identify some specific training needs (*divert*)

Rob: That's seems like a constructive approach.

Cath: Why don't we meet again tomorrow? I'll do some research about training programmes and then we can identify the most effective ones for me (*interrupt*).

Alternative Reflection

Working Mums Are Likeable, But Are They Competent?

Some researchers have found that conveying information about a professional woman's maternal status makes her appear likeable *and* competent (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). But other researchers find that perceivers who learn about a professional woman's maternal status see her as likeable but *less* competent (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004).

What accounts for these conflicting results? One key factor is whether the professional woman's competence is incontrovertible and undeniable. Learning that a female professional is a mother leads perceivers to infer that she is caring and nurturing. That's a good thing – we like women who are caring and nurturing. And if perceivers already know that the woman is competent, the likeability information makes a good package even better. But when competence is uncertain or ambiguous, perceivers use the information about maternal status to infer likeability and competence simultaneously. In these situations, likeability and competence operate like a seesaw – likeability goes up and competence goes down.

Learning that a female negotiator is a mother might lead her negotiation partner to infer that she is caring and nurturing. These inferences could protect a female negotiator against the backlash that competitive behaviour sometimes generates. However, this protection will only occur if the woman's negotiation partner already has formed a strong positive impression of her as competent.

Therefore, before you open the negotiation with a story about your children, ask yourself what your negotiation partner knows about your skills and competence. If the answer is “not much” the information about your maternal status might do more harm than good.