

# NEGOTIATION

# 9



The **Negotiation 9™ (N9™)** is a set of nine core skills for executing **Tactical Empathy™**, which helps you achieve trust-based influence, your goal in every negotiation.

Mastering these nine skills gives you the ability to understand the feelings and mindset of your counterpart. This in turn ultimately leads you to be seen as more of a partner and less of an adversary, which makes it that much easier to get the outcomes you desire.

## Labels™

A **Label™** is a communication technique by which you identify emotions or sentiments you believe are evident in a negotiation that have not yet been verbally expressed.

Labels begin with phrases like *It looks like...*, *It sounds like...* and *It seems like...*. They can reinforce aspects of a conversation you want to highlight (e.g., *It seems like productivity is important to you*) or to defuse aspects of the negotiation that are obstructing your deal (e.g., *It seems like you hate when your team can't get things done*).



**EXAMPLE:**  
Your counterpart says, *This is the best deal you'll find.* Using a Mirror, you might say, *The best deal?*

## Dynamic Silence™

**Dynamic Silence™** is the process of using silence as a tool to give your counterpart the opportunity to respond to the other N9 skill you just used.

Silence is awkward. If you count *one-one thousand, two-one thousand, three-one thousand* in your head, the other side will say something before you get to 10.



**EXAMPLE:**  
Imagine you sell business software and your counterpart speaks for five minutes outlining their legacy organization's need for digital transformation. You might paraphrase what they've said like this:  
*Though you're doing well, you think you could be doing much better if you modernized.*

## Summary™

A **Summary** is a comprehensive synopsis of the entire conversation you've had up until that moment in time.

At a very basic level, it's the sum of two parts: labels and paraphrasing. Essentially, you're telling the entire story from **their** perspective.

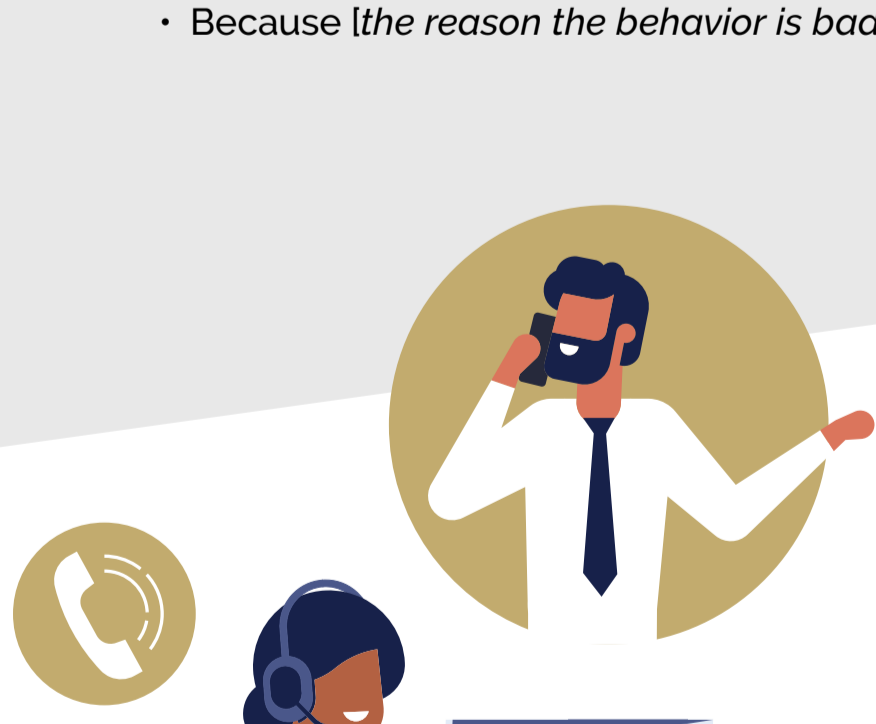


**EXAMPLE:**  
Your counterpart proposes a deal that's just not at all reasonable from their perspective. Using a Calibrated Question, you might respond:  
*What happens if we get off track?*

## 'I' messages™

When you need to draw a line in the sand or take a step back from a bad dynamic, use an "I" message, which is a negotiation technique that includes three parts:

- When you [do this counterproductive thing]
- I feel [like this]
- Because [the reason the behavior is bad]



## Rule of Three

Because **yes doesn't always mean yes**, you should strive to achieve three different agreements to the same question. We call this the **Rule of Three**.

In our experience, the first **yes** is a *counterfeit yes*, the second **yes** is a *confirmation yes*, and the third **yes** is a *commitment yes*. Use Labels after each yes to get to the next one. After you've heard the third yes, don't forget to iron out implementation.



**EXAMPLE:**  
Imagine the other side appears hesitant to get a seemingly solid deal done right that second. Using a Label, you might say:  
*It seems as though you need to run this by other folks on your team.*

## Mirrors™

In negotiation, a **Mirror™** is a technique by which you simply reflect the last 1-3 words your counterpart just said using an inquisitive tone.

You're not affirming or disagreeing with anything. You're just reflecting their words back to them so they keep talking.



**EXAMPLE:**  
Your counterpart seems frustrated but hasn't said anything to that effect. Using a Label, you might say, *It seems like there's something that's really bothering you.* Follow that up with Dynamic Silence by counting to 10 silently so you can let the Label really hit.

## Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is the process of taking what the other side said, repackaging it in your own words, and giving it right back to them.

It's kind of like a Mirror except you're speaking in your own voice. You can use this technique at any time to make sure your counterpart knows that you're listening and you're on the same page.



**EXAMPLE:**  
Continuing our paraphrasing example, you might add this Label at the end:  
*It seems like it's extremely important to you to make the right choice because this will affect the whole organization.* When you summarize effectively and hear *that's right*, a deal is right around the corner.

## Calibrated Questions™

**Calibrated Questions™** are questions that begin with *what*, *how*, or *sometimes why*.

They're used to shape the way your counterpart thinks. These are questions to which it is impossible to give one-worded answers.



**EXAMPLE:**  
Your counterpart is yelling at you. You might say: *When you raise your voice, I feel as though we're never going to get a deal done because we're not making any progress.*

## Encouragers

You never want to be the person who elicits the *Are you still there?* question on the phone.

Avoid this fate by using encouragers, which are simple forms of acknowledgment—like nodding your head, saying *mm-hmm*, and otherwise just letting the other person know you're paying attention.



**Ready to take your negotiation skills to the next level?**

When you're ready to master these skills, sign up for our [N9 course](#).

OR

Think you've got these skills down pat already? Check out our other [negotiation training courses](#).

[Register Now](#)

[View Courses](#)