

How to Create Win-Win Solutions

There's a classic negotiation story about two children who are fighting over an orange. Unable to agree on who should get the orange, Rita and Dalia ask their dad to decide. Dad finds a knife, cuts the orange in two, and gives half to each child.

Rita squeezes the juice out of her half of the orange, drinks it, and throws the rind away. Dalia carefully shaves the rind off her half of the orange and uses it to bake a cake. Then she throws the fruit away. Alas, Rita and Dalia are left with only half of what they wanted, when each could have gotten all. What happened?

The children's positions - each wanting the entire orange - were in opposition. But their interests - juice in one case, and flavoring for a cake in the other - were entirely compatible.



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We often see our position as the only solution that will meet our interests. In reality our position is usually just one of many potential solutions that could give us what we need. Skillful negotiators look beyond positions to identify the underlying interests, and then look for solutions that address the interests of both parties.

Here's a simple template for creating win-win solutions, illustrated with the example of Rita and Dalia. A blank template follows that you can use to create your own win-win solutions.

	Rita	Dalia
1. Positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want the orange 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I want the orange
2. Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange juice to drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orange flavoring for a cake
3. Interest-based Problem Statement	<p><i>How can we resolve the orange problem in a way that addresses Rita's interest of having orange juice to drink and Dalia's interest of having orange flavoring for a cake?</i></p>	
4. Possible Solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give the fruit to Rita and the rind to Dalia Give the entire orange to Rita and give Dalia artificial orange flavoring for her cake Give the entire orange to Dalia and give Rita orange juice from the carton in the refrigerator 	

Use this template to help identify win-win solutions to your own challenges.



	Yours	The other person's
1. Positions		
2. Interests		
3. Interest-based Problem Statement	<p><i>If we could resolve [describe the problem] in a way that addresses:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>your interests of (reiterate their interests)...</i> • <i>and my interests of (reiterate your interests)...</i> <p><i>...Would you agree to that?</i></p>	
4. Possible Solutions		