

The importance of spiritual values and practices for the construction of negotiation capability

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Abstract

Considering that behind the role of decision makers there are individuals, the main objective of this research is to contribute to the understanding of the construction of negotiation capability. By using qualitative research through ground theory and participant observation method, this exploratory research identifies a set of spiritual values and practices applied by business leaders from 13 countries. This study is classified along 4 dimensions: spiritual values, emotion recognition accuracy, decision making, and leadership.

Keywords

Ética, Responsabilidad Social de la Empresa (RSE), Sostenibilidad, formación universitaria, curriculum

Introduction

The concept of negotiation has generated tremendous interest among management researchers. The negotiation process and profits often depend on how skillful the negotiators are not only in individual onetime negotiations but also in the maintenance of desirable long term relationships (Allred, K. G., Mallozzi, J. S., Matsui, F., & Raia, C. P. 1997;Cohen, T. R. 2010;Imai, L. & Gelfand, M. J. 2010;Patton, C. & Balakrishnan, P. V. S. 2010;Reb, J. 2010;Sycara, K. P. 1990;Thompson, L. & Hastie, R. 1990).

The impact of business executives' individual characteristics in ethical decision making has been extensively studied (Fraedrich, J. P. & Ferrell, O. C. 1992;Reidenbach, R. E. & Robin, D. P. 1990;Singh, J. J., Vitell, S. J., Al-Khatib, J., & Clark, I. 2007;Vitell, S. J. & Festervand, T. A. 1987;Vitell, S. J., Nwachukwu, S. L., & Barnes, J. H. 1993;Vitell, S. J. & Singhapakdi, A. 2008). Several experts believe strategy, intelligence and ruthlessness to be elements of a successful leader, however instead, the literature shows spiritual values such as integrity, honesty and humility to be key marks of leadership success (Reave, L. 2005). Hunt & Vitell (Hunt, S. D. & Vitell, S. J. 2006) shows that business executives' individual characteristics, like personal values and beliefs, can have an important effect on how they perceive different ethical situations. Elfenbein et al. (Elfenbein, H. A., Foo, M. D., White, J., Tan, H. H., & Aik, V. C. 2007) reinforces the importance of emotion recognition accuracy since individuals who are more accurate are able to use the information they gain from reading others' emotional expressions in order to behave more appropriately.

We understand that negotiation is a dynamic phenomenon and every business organization needs, until a certain point, to trust the ability of its representatives to negotiate successfully on its behalf.

In this paper, we argue that research that focuses on values and practices applied by decision makers and their importance for the construction of negotiation capability is scant. Furthermore, we believe that the ongoing discussion about negotiation and leadership needs to be complemented by a much clearer idea of which are the spiritual values and practices

employed by business leaders and how they affect maintenance or deterioration of business relationships.

We build on ground theory and participation observation in order to carry out the purpose of the present study that was to observe the attitudes of managers, CEOs and chairmen from 13 countries: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, England, France, Germany, Holland, Israel, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, UAE and USA and from different sectors related to investments activities, in order to acquire knowledge regarding the dimensions of the negotiation process which allowed us to contribute to the literature by identifying a set of spiritual values and practices that can provide a clearer understanding of the process of construction of negotiation capability.

We present our argument in 4 steps. First, we discuss the existing work on negotiation, leadership, spiritual values, emotion recognition accuracy, and decision making and introduce the research question that motivated our study considering the gap in the literature to date, by examining these dimensions interconnectedness. Second, we describe the methodology used to carry out our research. Third, we present our findings focusing on a set of values and practices and how they fit into existing works on negotiation capability. Fourth, we summarize our conclusions and make suggestions for future research.

We present below studies that focus on the concepts that have become evident during our exploratory research.

Conceptual overview of the four dimensions identified in the dynamics of the negotiation processes: spiritual values, emotion recognition accuracy, decision making, and leadership

For Buchanan and O'Connell (Buchanan, L. & O'Connell, A. 2006), "The study of decision making, consequently, is a palimpsest of intellectual disciplines: mathematics, sociology, psychology, economics, and political science, to name a few. Philosophers ponder what our decisions say about ourselves and about our values; historians dissect the choices leaders make at critical junctures. Research into risk and organizational behavior springs from a more practical desire: to help managers achieve better outcomes."

Reave (Reave, L. 2005) who reviewed 150 studies, argue "that there is a clear consistency between the values (in the sense of established ideals) and practices emphasized in many different spiritual teachings, and the values and practices of leaders who are able to motivate followers, create a positive ethical climate, inspire trust, promote positive work relationships, and achieve organizational goals. These spiritual values and practices also allow leaders to achieve organizational goals such as increased productivity, lowered rates of turnover, greater sustainability, and improved employee health."

Patching's work about leadership emphasizes that any approach to leadership, for it to be an effective tool, has to be harmonious with a leader's character. He proposes that a developed leadership style should align strongly with a person's values. He remarks that one must understand one's own character and only then can one develop a leadership technique. Patching outlines four basic characters: Warrior, Adventurer, Guardian, and Sage and states that the values one hold, are a key part of how one sees oneself (Patching, K. 2007).

According to Bass (Bass, B. M. & Steidlmeier, P. 1999), "the ethics of leadership rests upon three pillars: (1) the moral character of the leader; (2) the ethical legitimacy of the values embedded in the leaders vision, articulation, and program which followers either embrace or reject; and (3) the morality of the processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue."... He states that "in leadership, character matters. "The spiritual dimension underscores not only virtuous behavior but an attitude of openness

to the transcendent meaning of human existence.”... For him, “to be truly transformational, leadership must be grounded in moral foundations.”

Giberson et al. (Giberson, T. R., Resick, C. J., Dickson, M. W., Mitchelson, J. K., Randall, K. R., & Clark, M. A. 2009) describe that “the content of an organization’s culture does not form randomly; rather it forms through the CEO’s key strategic and operational decisions which in turn are a reflection of the CEO’s characteristics. These decisions form the basis for the shared values and assumptions that become the organization’s culture. Therefore, a relationship should exist between CEO personal characteristics and the cultures that emerge in their respective organizations.”

According to Moore and Flynn (Moore, D. A. & Flynn, F. J. 2008), “organizational behavior research endeavors to understand people in organizations—their motives, their decisions, their interpersonal relations, and the outcomes of their choices. To this end, OB scholars have incorporated theory and research from several disciplines, most notably psychology and sociology.”

For Berson et al., (Berson, Y., Oreg, S., & Dvir, T. 2008) “of the numerous ways in which any objective situation can be interpreted, individuals tend to adopt the interpretation that maintains their value perspective. For example, information concerning a firm’s moderate rate of turnover may be interpreted as a reason for concern by a leader who values stability, whereas it may be interpreted in positive terms by a leader who values novelty and renewal. Thus, values act as lenses, or filters, that determine the amount and type of information that leaders process.”

Reave (Reave, L. 2005) argues that spirituality in the workplace can exist without proselytizing or pressuring individuals. She underlines that in effective leadership, spirituality expresses itself not so much in words or preaching, but in the embodiment of spiritual values such as integrity, and in the demonstration of spiritual behavior such as expressing caring and concern.

Hood (Hood, J. N. 2003) findings “reveal that the ethical orientation of the CEO is a critical issue to consider in understanding ethical practices in organizations”. The results of her study “showed that social and morality-based values are directly related to ethical practices of formal statement of ethics and diversity training. Social values include the values of freedom, equality, and world at peace and morality-based values include the values of forgiveness, helpfulness, politeness and affection. According to her, these two groups of values take a broad perspective, in which social values indicate a concern for the welfare of others, and morality based values indicate the importance of and concern about the interaction the individual has with others. Personal values include honesty, self-respect, courage, and broadmindedness. Competency-based values include logic and competence. Both of these categories of values are focused on the individual rather than on an interaction with others. Morality-based and social values, more so than personal or competency based values, tend to link the individual with society. Thus, leaders exhibiting these values are likely to foster ethical practices in the organization.”

Bradley et al. (Bradley W. Brooks & Randall L. Rose 2004) propose negotiation orientation as a motivational construct in negotiation and define it “as a situational determined set of attitudes, perceptions, and expectations regarding the negotiation process and outcomes that affects negotiators’ objectives, behaviors, and levels of satisfaction with the negotiation”.

According to Baron's research (Baron, R. A. 2008), findings indicate that the feelings and moods individuals experience (i.e., their affect) influence many aspects of cognition and behavior.

In "A Briefing History of Decision Making", Buchanan et al. (Buchanan, L. et al. 2006) argue that "there is nobility in the notion of people pooling their wisdom and muzzling their egos to make decisions that are acceptable—and fair—to all"...They remark that "decision makers have good reasons to prefer instinct, and mention a survey of executives that Jagdish Parikh conducted when he was a student at Harvard Business School, when respondents said they used their intuitive skills as much as they used their analytical abilities, and credited 80% of their successes to instinct.

The study of Elfenbein et al. (Elfenbein, H. A. et al. 2007) about emotion recognition accuracy, emphasizes that the emotional expressions of others provide information that we can use to make social interactions more predictable and easier to manage. They state that expressive behavior serves as a window into reactions, intentions, and likely future behaviors. They also remark that, "effective negotiating requires parties to develop an understanding of their counterparts' interests and preferences, in a context in which such information may be explicitly hidden but implicitly revealed. For these reasons, the ability to attend to subtle communication signals may be beneficial to negotiators, and could help guide or impede a potential settlement."

Maccoby (Maccoby, M. 2007) argues that the ability to understand people is an essential concept for developing "Personality Intelligence". Social character, according to him, is a macro type of personality that describes the emotional attitudes and values shared by people whose personality has been formed in a particular culture or social class. Thus, he believes it to be essential for understanding the leaders we need and why people will follow them.

The understanding of the negotiation process, combined with the limitation of the current literature to explain its dynamics, leads to the following research questions: What are the underlying dimensions in the dynamics of negotiation? How do business leaders manage to maintain desirable business relationships? What is the role of spiritual values in the negotiation process? Which practices applied by business leaders are important for the maintenance of long term business relationships?

In the subsequent paragraphs, we describe the methodology used in our research in order to answer these questions emerged from the combination of our field work and the literature to date.

Methodology

Given our research focus and interest, ground theory and participant observation method were adopted to carry out our study, having in consideration that ground theory is a research technique of qualitative analysis in which theoretical approaches are generated from the collected data (Charmaz, K. 2000; Locke, K. 2001; Punch, K. F. 1998; Ryan, G. W. & Bernard, R. H. 2000; Strauss, A. L. 1987; Taylor, S. I. & Bogdan, R. 1998). Glaser and Strauss (1967), both sociologists, initially articulated the ground theory approach in 1967 with the publication of "The discovery of ground theory", using their study on the treatment that hospital personnel give to terminal patients. The objective of this research was to demonstrate how theory can be systematically generated from data (Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. 1967). According to the ground theory methodology, the theories, concepts, hypotheses and propositions are developed from data collected, rather than theories or previous research propositions (Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. 1978; Locke, K. 2001; Taylor, S. I. et al. 1998). Theoretical frameworks, assumptions and

propositions developed explain the data collected (Charmaz, K. 2000; Taylor, S. I. et al. 1998). The theory is developed inductively, although in the development of the theory deductive techniques can be used (Punch, K. F. 1998).

As Charmaz (Charmaz, K. 2000) describes, there are no rigid requirements for developing ground theory. There is a set of flexible strategies for this kind of qualitative analysis that allows the researcher to experiment. Charmaz (Charmaz, K. 2000) emphasizes that "ground theory methods specify analytic strategies, not data collection methods." It is the interpretation of data by the researcher that shapes the emerging codes on the ground theory.

According to Parker (Parker, L. D. 1999), there is confusion between the different descriptions, methods and assumptions that have been proposed by the creators of the theory. For example, Glaser and Strauss developed their concepts separately. The definition of ground theory given by Strauss and Corbin (Strauss, A. L. & Corbin, J. 1990) is: "A qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to inductively develop and obtain a theory about a phenomenon". The definition given by Glaser (Glaser, B. G. 1992) is: "It is an analytical approach, coupled with data collection, using a set of methods, systematically applied to generate an inductive theory about a substantive area. The end product of research is a theoretical formulation or an integrated set of conceptual hypotheses on the substantive area that is under study".

Glaser (Glaser, B. G. 1992) proposes a path, where the researcher allows central codes or core concepts to emerge from the encoding process. Strauss et al.'s (Strauss, A. L. et al. 1990) approach indicates that the researcher in advance can choose the research focus and guide the data collection and interviews towards this subject. A central concept (code) is then sought, to represent the interaction of research topics with the researcher's perceptions about the nature and dimensions of the concept (Parker, L. D. & Roffey, B. H. 1997). Having in consideration both approaches, in sum, we can say that in ground theory, the researcher simultaneously codes and analyzes data to develop concepts. Given our interest in theory development, we chose ground theory and participant observation method as the most suitable to conduct our research. As mentioned by Glaser, by continually comparing specific incidents of data, the researcher refines these concepts, identifies their properties, explores relationships between them and integrates them into a coherent theory. Therefore, the result of an investigation based on ground theory is an analytical interpretation of the world of the participants and the processes of constructing this world. To evaluate the results of the ground theory one should follow four criteria: fit, function, relevance of the phenomenon under study and the possibility of modification of the theory (Glaser, B. 1978).

Therefore, ground theory, is derived from the sociological perspective called symbolic interactionism whose central axis is the consideration of human beings as active creators of their world (Mead, G. H. 1934).

According to Atkinson and Hammersley (Atkinson, P. & Hammersley, M. 1994), "the definition of participant observation has been less controversial, but its meaning is no easier to pin down". According to them, "a distinction is sometimes drawn between participant and nonparticipant observation, the former referring to observation carried out when the researcher is playing an established participant role in the scene studied". They argue that "in a sense all social research is a form of participant observation, because we cannot study the social world without being part of it" (Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. 1983). "It involves participating in the social world, in whatever role, and reflecting on the products of that participation. Irrespective of the method employed, it is not fundamentally different from other forms of practical everyday activity, though of course it is closer in character to some

than to others. As participants in the social world we are still able, at least in anticipation or retrospect, to observe our activities 'from outside' as objects in the world" (Hammersley, M. et al. 1983).

We draw on Becker's approach (Becker, H. S. 1958), who states that "the participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he studies" and also "watches the people he is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them", as well as on the Hargreaves approach (Hargreaves, D. H. 1967) who argues that the method of participant observation leads the investigator to accept a role within the social situation he studies: as the researcher participates as a member of the group while observing it. Hargreaves states that, in theory, this direct participation in the group life permits an easy entrance into the social situation by reducing the resistance of the group members; decreases the extent to which the investigator disturbs the 'natural' situation, and permits the investigator to experience and observe the group's norms, values, conflicts and pressures, which (over a long period) cannot be hidden from someone playing an in-group role.

We also had in consideration Junker contribution in order to conduct our study. Junker (Junker, B. 1960) describes that participant observation has a fourfold typology: complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant and states that, since the field worker deals primarily in communications, all kinds of information are exchanged, by voice, social gesture, conveyance of feelings, or even documents, and for this reason, the information obtained during this process must be treated as public, confidential, secret or private concerning about selecting what to communicate and to whom to communicate it.

Based on the argumentation above regarding ground theory and participant observation, and respecting the confidentiality towards individuals and organizations names, the findings observed in our study and settled in form of best practices, are based on the knowledge acquired by participant as observer in over 600 personal meetings and conference calls with business leaders from 13 different countries: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, England, France, Germany, Holland, Israel, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, UAE and USA; and from different sectors: Construction, Consultancy, Energy, Law Firms, Financing, Trading, and Technology, involved in investment activities, where the first author had the opportunity to collaborate in the processes of negotiation for various projects as well as on the perceptions observed in over 800 interchanged e-mails and also by conducting 15 semi structured open ended interviews to decision makers, which were authorized to be tape-recorded for later transcription and analysis. These events occurred during more than 3 years, more precisely, from 2008 to 2011.

The contacts with the managers, CEOs and chairmen of the companies are due to contacts with clients from previous consulting engagements, or personal referrals. It is important to underline that the profit obtained by the projects in question is not included in the scope of our study; rather we sought to find out which personal values and practices contribute to the improvement of the process of construction of negotiation capability, considering the maintenance of long term desirable business relationships, independently of whether a deal has been successful or not.

Process of construction of negotiation capability

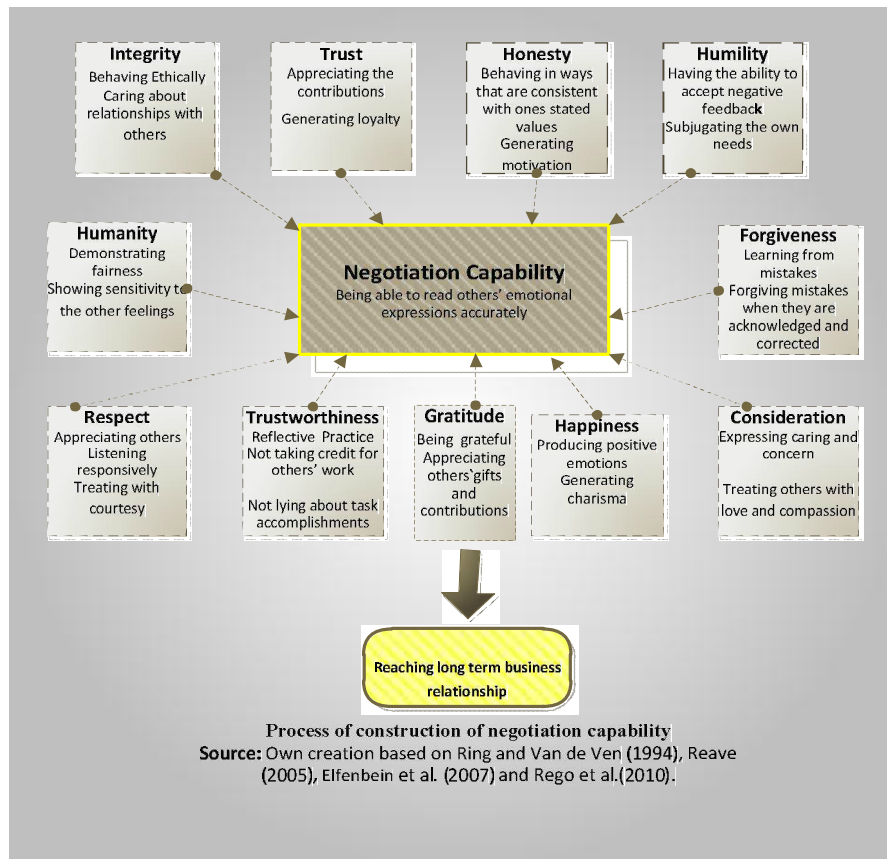


Fig. 1. Process of construction of negotiation capability

Given our view of the negotiation process, as a dynamic phenomenon, in this paper we followed Ring and Van de Ven's (1994), Reave's (2005), Elfenbein's et al. (2007) and Rego et al.'s (2010) works (see figure 1).

According to Elfenbein (Elfenbein, H. A. 2007), the construct of emotion recognition has been theorized to be one of the core components of the broader concepts of emotional intelligence (Matthews, G., Zeidner, M., & Roberts, R. D. 2002; Mayer, J. D., DiPaolo, M., & Salovey, P. 1990) and affective social competence (Halberstadt, A. G., Denham, S. A., & Dunsmore, J. C. 2001; Saarni, C. 2001). He underlines the importance to expand the body of research that can evaluate how emotional skills may contribute to the success and failure of reaching effective agreements, due to the given of the real-life importance of negotiation skill as well as recent interest in the role of emotion by negotiations researchers.

Ring and Vandeven (Ring, P. S. & Vandeven, A. H. 1994), mention the importance of cooperative interorganizational relationships and describe "that cooperative interorganizational relationships requires that individual choices, made in the present and realized in the future, be congruent (i.e., a present sense of purposes, values or expectations for the cooperative IOR is identical among the parties). According to them, in cooperative IORs, parties must negotiate and commit to achieving congruence in presently expected consequences by undertaking a line of behavior regarding a (presently uncertainty-filled) future." They suggest that "the institutionalization of a relationship is evident in three basic interactions that evolve over time between formal and informal processes of negotiation, commitment and execution: (a) personal relationships, (b) psychological contracts increasingly substitute for formal legal contracts, and (c) as the temporal duration of relationships extend beyond the tenure of initial contract agents, formal agreements (e.g., rules, policy, contracts) increasingly mirror informal understandings and commitments."

Reave's study about the relationship between spiritual values and practices and effective leadership (Reave, L. 2005) shows that "examining the relationship between spirituality and leadership can give us valuable insight into leader motivation as well as follower perceptions, motivation, retention, ethics, and performance. According to her, in many studies, a leader's demonstration of spiritual values such as integrity, honesty, and humility have been found to be clearly related to leadership success." She emphasizes that "the spiritual values of integrity, honesty, and humility, and the spiritual practices of treating others with respect and fairness, expressing caring and concern, listening responsively, appreciating others, and taking time for personal reflection have all been linked to quantifiable positive effects for organizations and individuals. Yet, according to her, they "cause leaders to be judged as more effective by both their peers and their subordinates, and they lead to enhanced performance." She reinforces that the field of research into spirituality in the workplace is just beginning to emerge, and that so much of the knowledge that has been gained has been scattered in different streams located in the fields of business, psychology, communication, human resources, religious studies, and medicine. Therefore, further gathering, analysis, and consolidation of the findings in these diverse fields will provide us with a broad empirical base upon which to build theory and explore interdisciplinary approaches.

Armenio et al. (Arménio Rego, Neuza Ribeiro, Miguel Pina e Cunha, & Jorge Correia Jesuino 2010) contributes to the understanding of the worthiness of organizations' virtues, "by showing that the perceptions of organizational virtuousness, predict affective commitment, either directly or through the mediating role of affective well-being", their study provides "practitioners with possible routes to act in favor of such a happier and more committed workforce. They believe that to build virtuous psychological climates, managers should care about how employees perceive the organization and its managers, paying attention to a number of aspects: (a) a virtuous sense of purpose in the organizational actions and policies; (b) an optimistic perspective toward challenges, difficulties, and opportunities; (c) a respectful and trustful way of acting; (d) a high level of honesty and integrity at every organizational level; (e) interpersonal relationships characterized by caring and compassion; (f) the combination of high standards of performance with a culture of forgiveness and learning from mistakes."

Based on the four researches mentioned above, our model of process of construction of negotiation capability intends to show the clear consistency between spiritual values and practices and their positive impact on the negotiation ability and building of long term business relationship.

Best practices identified in the process of the negotiation

The practices were identified during the process of participant as observer by the researcher which includes participation in several meetings, taking detailed notes of most relevant situations that called the researcher's attention during the various negotiation processes, analysis of the content of several interchanged e-mails, data gathered through semi structured interviews of 15 decision makers and analysis of other material (e.g., some documents and companies webpages content) both to verify the information provided in the interviews and the coherence with the core values of the organization when published.

The interviews were conducted in English, Spanish or Portuguese, depending on what was most comfortable for the interviewee. To facilitate the analysis and to preserve data integrity, we requested permission to record the interviews. After the interviews had been conducted, they were transcribed and analyzed in their original language. Once transcribed, we analyzed data using MAXQDA 10 qualitative data analysis software. The process of data analysis involved several phases (Miles, M. B. 1979). First, each interview was read in order to be

identified text related to negotiation practices and spiritual values and consecutively we attached codes to relevant sections of the interview. We then grouped these codes, allowing patterns in the data to emerge. After coding the interviews, we developed categories and reread the interviews and recoded where needed. Based on this coding, we derived a model of process of construction of negotiation capability, and we began to notice the central role that spiritual values and some determined abilities played in the negotiation process.

Drawing on the above, we propose 15 practices that according to our exploratory research showed to contribute for the betterment of the negotiation capability in different fields

Practices identified in the process of construction of negotiation capability

Negotiation is considered a primary means by which organizations members attempt to manage conflict, which leads to emotions aroused in conflict may influence negotiation processes and outcomes (Allred, K. G. et al. 1997). Moving back and forth between the data, the emerging model, and the literature, allowed us to identify spiritual values demonstrated to have a positive impact in the processes of negotiation and develop a link between these spiritual values and related good practices that we present below, consistent with the existing literature and our findings (Glaser, B. et al. 1967; Strauss, A. L. 1987; Strauss, A. L. et al. 1990).

1. Honesty. It was noted a great acceptance for being honest towards ones strengths as well as ones limitations.
2. Gratitude. The action of appreciating others' help, suggestions and contributions showed to be important for the willingness of collaborators to want to keep contributing in future projects.
3. Fairness. The attitude win-win among those working in the same project demonstrated to have a positive impact even when projects were not successful in the end. On the other hand, the attitude of trying to take the credit for the work of others had a very negative impact to the outcome of the negotiation.
4. Transparency. To act transparently in a negotiation process regarding the positions of the parties had a positive impact on building confidence.
5. Integrity. The act of trying to circumvent had a very negative impact in the negotiation process and it was not accepted by the business leaders observed in our study. However, being kept up to date via copies of e-mails, or actualized about the process of the negotiation by partners or collaborators, had a very positive impact in inspiring trust.
6. Confidence. This value showed to be the axis for a long term business relationship according to our study.
7. Consideration. Caring about partners and collaborators was also positively perceived.
8. Happiness. The action of smile and being positive demonstrated to produce positive emotions during the negotiation process.
9. Trust. Contracts were showed to be important; however it was demonstrated not to be a guarantee to building a long term business relationship which was observed to be based in the "good feeling", the trust and the confidence established between the parties during the negotiation process.
10. Humanity. Treating collaborators, partners and subordinates in a respectful and sympathetic way, was positively perceived.
11. Humility. Thinking in general other than in self, accepting learning from others as well as accepting negative feedback showed to also have a positive impact for facilitating the negotiation process.
12. Ethics. It was observed that it takes time and effort to establish a good and solid reputation and that it is fast to spread a bad one. Behaving ethically showed to be very well appreciated.

13. Accuracy. The ability of recognizing emotions and roles during a negotiation process showed to be a strong negotiation capability.
14. Forgiveness. The ability of acknowledging mistakes and learning from them was observed to be well regarded.
15. Sincerity. All of the previous practices were observed to have a positive impact if they were aligned with ones values. Acting Machiavellian showed to have a reverse effect.

Summary and suggestions for future research

We consider that the most important finding of our study for negotiators, is that the key to negotiation success is quite straightforward: obtain the trust and confidence of partners and collaborators. However, this is only possible to achieve if the small details of the everyday business relationship are cared for, like for example, attitudes like being friendly and empathic, by demonstrating high integrity, by being socially intelligent, well prepared, and/or knowledgeable in the relevant field of negotiation in question; and also being willing to take a win-win approach.

Some of the aspects to achieve an improvement of the negotiation capability can be achieved by training, but others cannot. It is important to remark that if negotiators are viewed as unprincipled or unreasonable, consequently, this attitude will generate lack of confidence and trust in the partners and collaborators, who could then ask themselves, how one will deal with them in future deals? Business can be fiercely competitive, and to some extent, a number of powerful influences can pressure well-meaning negotiators to cross the fuzzy line into unethical territory. It is not justifiable to use unethical means to achieve results. It may be productive in the short term, but it is demonstrated that this kind of attitude will be counterproductive in building long term business relationships.

In resume, a better understanding of how the values and practices emerging during the process of negotiation, affect the long term business relationship, can be useful for the process of construction of negotiation capability.

The ramifications of our study for future research could focus on demonstrating in terms of measuring outcomes, the impact of the spiritual values and good practices for long term business relationships and their consequence in the economic performance of the organizations. Additional research could focus on identifying bad practices applied by the decision makers during the negotiation process and their impact in the organization.

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