



**The Chartered Management Institute's Short Course Programme in association with ProSeminar**

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## **Is power the vital ingredient for successful negotiations?**

Current events in financial and business markets might lead us all to think that there is little any of us can do but "*sit tight, keep a low profile and hope for the best*"! But this could be described as the "politics of doom" and, if implemented, will certainly make matters worse!

We know that there are some specific sectors that are "bucking the trends" and leading some business managers to believe that one person's recession can be another's opportunity. None of this offers much hope if your business is already vulnerable to negative cash-flow or a miniaturising market – but there is one thing that we can all do to help the business survive!

When confronted by a serious "squeeze" – a few years back – my organisation adopted "zero-based budgeting". This involved all cost-centre managers having to revisit their budgets to discover ways in which money could be saved without affecting planned activities which were part of the strategic plans of the organisation. It was amazing how much this achieved – with little in the way of negative effect.

Could budgets have been overstated? Possibly! But, when confronted with a life threatening disease aren't most of us prepared to make some concessions to a healthier lifestyle? Of course, the end result also led to managers and staff working smarter (as well as harder!) but, with high levels of commitment and empowerment, the results were quite outstanding.

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**Short Course for Management & Professional Development**

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So, building on our strengths is vital in present times – but also being prepared to revisit those deals that were constructed when business was easier. If negotiation is still an activity that some Brits engage in reluctantly – it can be an even bigger mental challenge when we contemplate seeking to *re-negotiate* a deal which we agreed to, say, last year. Is this easier when we work for a large, powerful organisation - and the supplier (or client) is much smaller (and weak)?

Well, probably, obtaining the result is easier – but what about that nice aspiration of implementing “win/win” deals? And am I expected to behave like some over-ambitious participant in the Apprentice TV show? If so, “count me out” is probably the likely response from most of us!

This would be the politics of despair – and there is a better way in which we could use our time! For example, ProSeminar has offered Negotiation Skills programmes at Advanced, Essential and Introductory levels for the last 4 years and has recently re-focused its main provision on its new title – Negotiating the Better Deal. A participative programme – with detailed practical exercises reflecting contemporary issues - delegates will be guided towards a Personal Action Plan that will still be providing benefits three months after the event. If you want to find out whether power is the only vital ingredient to successful outcomes in a negotiation, then you could do no better than book your place now! I look forward to meeting you there!

Peter Fleming  
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