

The skills of negotiation are critical for physiotherapists to achieve successful outcomes in business and health care reform.

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The possession of effective negotiation skills is essential to achieve successful outcomes for physiotherapists working in business and health care reform. Understanding the negotiation process and improving negotiation skills can significantly increase the chance of attaining successful results. The negotiation process involves a number of crucial steps with the aim of achieving a win-win situation. Initially, it is critical to thoroughly prepare for the negotiation by planning one's strategy. The physiotherapist must know their desired outcome and be prepared to ask for it, and it is vital to know prior to a negotiation at what point one will walk away. Researching and discovering the other party's values and circumstances gives vital pre-negotiation intelligence. Once known, a value proposition can then be created that aims to achieve the intended outcome and also satisfy the other party. Second, the conduct of a negotiation is critical to success. The ability to assess the other party and quickly gain rapport assists successful negotiations. Issues need to be stated early with the communication of the value proposition and the intended outcome. At this point bargaining takes place where each party discusses their relevant points of interest. It is critical to never bow to pressure, only principle. Finally, and hopefully, both parties are in agreement and desired outcomes are achieved. If no consensus is reached, be prepared to organise a second session or walk away. With sound negotiation skills, most negotiations can conclude with a win-win situation where the physiotherapist can attain their desired outcomes.