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Paul Thies: Many business professionals out there have faced situations they would describe as high stakes. You want to talk about high stakes, imagine you're on the end of the phone line when a call comes in, and a kidnapper or terrorist demands you pay \$1 million or else an innocent person is going to lose their life. You simply cannot fail, so what do you do? What are the right and wrong ways to react? What can be learned from a decade's long career of taking these phone calls and contending with unbelievably high-pressure stakes? It takes the school of hard

Chris: Sure. Great question. Really, I think the intent of getting to yes, in the beginning, was very good. There's nothing wrong with the intent. What the intent really was, is getting to agreement. What are the essentials of great agreement? First of all, the other side feels committed and this whole getting to yes thing, the problem with that is, it spawned the Yes momentum and momentum selling and momentum agreements and they became traps. Getting to yes, in an application became about trapping people. We've seen the Yes, momentum described as get a series of micro agreements. Each one is a tie down, each one is a commitment and then you got to them. They got to say yes to the big commitment. It's a trap.

I was lucky enough to meet Roger Fisher some years before he died. That wasn't the intent but that was the way it began to get implied. Then how do we get out of that? What really matters? What really becomes an agreement? Empathy precedes agreements. Empathy is not sympathy. Empathy is just understanding the other side because if you don't understand where the other side's coming from your agreement is not going to hold up. It's just not. Then the process of discovery, beginning to yes people will go heavily into preparation, learning as much as possible.

The problem with preparation and learning as much as possible about the person on the other side of the table, first issue is most of the data sources are like dating

making that people can't imagine they need anything else, and they're just scratching the surface. It's that much of a difference to switch from yes to no.

Paul: It's like you said, it creates an environment where a relationship can flourish.

Now since the book has come out, there's been a lot of stuff that we've raised our understanding of increased refinement, increased understanding. What questions are designed primarily to uncover obstacles, to get people to think about obstacles? The famous Jim Camp question was, what's the biggest challenge you faced? That's about identification of obstacles. What's stopping you from moving forward? What are the next steps? That's about obstacles. How is then discovering how to overcome the obstacles. How to implement through the obstacles. How's about implementations. Yes, there's nothing without **[unintelligible 00:19:39]**. An agreement is nothing without implementation. We've realized that there's a refinement, not exclusively, but primarily when you're looking for implementation, you're going to use a how question. The very beginning, it never split the difference. Starts with the famous, how am I supposed to do that? Which was originally as

Chris: That's right.

Paul: What do you think are some of the most powerful and effective tools that you've found that successful negotiators employ?

Chris: The first one is patience, which can be very hard for some people. When I was coaching negotiations, hostage negotiations, I can never tell somebody to be patient, but if they're really trumpet at the bet to move ahead, I'd say, "Patience is a weapon." They'd be like, "Oh, all right." Realizing that appeals to someone who either is very assertive or is trying to be very assertive. The patience, calm demeanor. Warren Buffet, by anybody's definition, anybody is going to have to admit that Warren Buffet's likely a very good negotiator. If he wasn't, somebody mentioned his name, we wouldn't know who he was. [laughter]

That dude's reputation is not for being impatient or loud or attacking. If anybody who's only barely aware of Buffet, and you would ask them, "How patient do you figure Warren Buffet is?" They'd probably say, "Oh yes, guy is got to be patient as heck." Which then is letting the deal come to you. Having the ability to let the deal come to you. Have the ability to let the awareness of the problems and the obstacles come to you so you're not caught off guard, so you know what you're getting into. Patience is a great accelerator of great deals. That would be another critical attribute plus the more patient you are the more likely to listen.

Paul: Then my last question for you, and this is it's around the concept of the Black Swan, and in fact, your consultancy is named after Black Swan. You talk about the concept in the book, it's almost like this magical phenomenon that just happens in the life of a negotiation that just really opens things up. Can you explain the concept of the Black Swan and how they can be game changers in negotiations?

Chris: Yes. Black Swan was originally inspired by Nassim Nicholas Taleb's book, *The Black Swan* that it read back in 2007. He called it *The Impact of the Highly Improbable*. What are the little things that make all the difference in the world? Point of fact, they're everywhere now. We can get into a very academic discussion over the concept of imperfect information. Point of fact, no matter how smart you are you've got imperfect information. No matter how good you are, you'll hold in every deal, you're holding something back. There's stuff you're keeping to yourself close to the vest, cards you're not showing, budget, timeline, pressures.

Do you want to make the deal? Do you not want to make the deal? What are the issues that make the deal better or worse for you? The stuff you're holding back is important. Otherwise, you wouldn't hold it back. You feel the other side's going to gain leverage of you if you know it and if it was known, it would change everything. Well, if you're holding stuff back then, so are they. You get two sets of hidden information. The hardest thing to wrap your mind around is what's in the overlap. If I don't know what you're hiding and you don't know what I'm hiding, then if somehow, if we trusted each other enough through, put our cards on a table, then the overlap of the combination of the two could be astronomical. Put it in poker terms.

Maybe if we put our cards together, we got a royal flush, and it's unbeatable. The overlap is where the power is. Take an approach that simultaneously builds trust and gathers information so that if what you haven't managed to get them to tell you

based on trust, they'll blurt out accidentally and they're going to know stuff that's important that they have no idea is important. You don't know to ask for it because you don't know what they're hiding. You get into this phenomenal, either upward or downward spiral. The upward spiral starts with this really impactful cool stuff here. They could tell me if I could build a great relationship without making them feel exploited or interrogated.

Paul: It sounds though Chris, that part of that too is that you've got to have confidence in your own position to be vulnerable about a certain amount of information or whatnot. You got to be sober, but-- I don't know. Maybe I'm wrong, but it seems if you're going to-- If I recall, you talk about some of the things in the book and what help me through this. If you're under time pressure, I have to have this deal done by Friday, or else, that the normal intuition is don't tell people you're under time pressure because they'll perceive it as a weakness and they'll try to exploit it. It's like, "He's under a crunch, so now we got him." Instead, you flip it around and say like, "Look, I have to have this done by Friday." Then you're franchising them to help you solve your problem again. Again, it seems there's this wrapping your head around the idea of being open with your vulnerabilities maybe. I don't know. What do you think?

Chris: Yes. That's a great point. Wrapping your mind around that, about the ways we take ourselves hostage is one of the key issues because your vulnerabilities, that's you taking new hostage. I'm vulnerable here. Some people take those vulnerabilities and make them str nBTW*nBT 12 thauB00088wa600088tW*nBT6 841.8 r75(,)tfs68 r

In implementing this process, picking out the behaviors, seeing how predictable it is, my team also started keeping track of the time costs of the HALFs. They came back to me and they said, "When we make a deal with the half between negotiation, implementation of the deal, start to finish, it's two to five times the time cost." Which means you just took a 50% cut in pay to deal with a pain in the neck." Then, the next

Concise, actionable newsletter, uses the skills that day plus a newsletter is the gateway to the website. It's the gateway. We've got a treasure trove of stuff to help people raise the level of their game, make more money, and a point of fact, this collaborative negotiation is going to make you happier too. You're going to enjoy life more.

Paul: Yes, absolutely. Hey, thank you again, and I wish you the very best, and thanks again for your time.

Chris: Thanks for having me.

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[00:36:24] [END OF AUDIO]