

NEGOTIATION SKILLS AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

**THE STRATEGIC
USE OF EMOTIONS
IN NEGOTIATION**



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Emotions are conscious mental reactions, experienced subjectively through strong sentimental manifestations. They are frequently directed to a specific object and accompanied by psychological changes that lead to behavior that can be observed. When we recognize emotions and manage them in negotiations, we can achieve more effective outcomes. That is why IE skills are so important.

Professor Ian Shapiro of Yale University has classified the influence of emotions on negotiations in the following way:

NEGATIVE INFLUENCE -

- They can distract our attention from the substantive objectives of a negotiation.
- By revealing our emotions, we expose ourselves to being manipulated.
- Emotions inhibit reasoning.
- Emotions can get out of control.

POSITIVE INFLUENCE +

- Awareness and opening up of our emotions leads to understanding and empathy towards the interests and needs of other people.
- Through our emotions, we can communicate another element in a negotiation, our position.

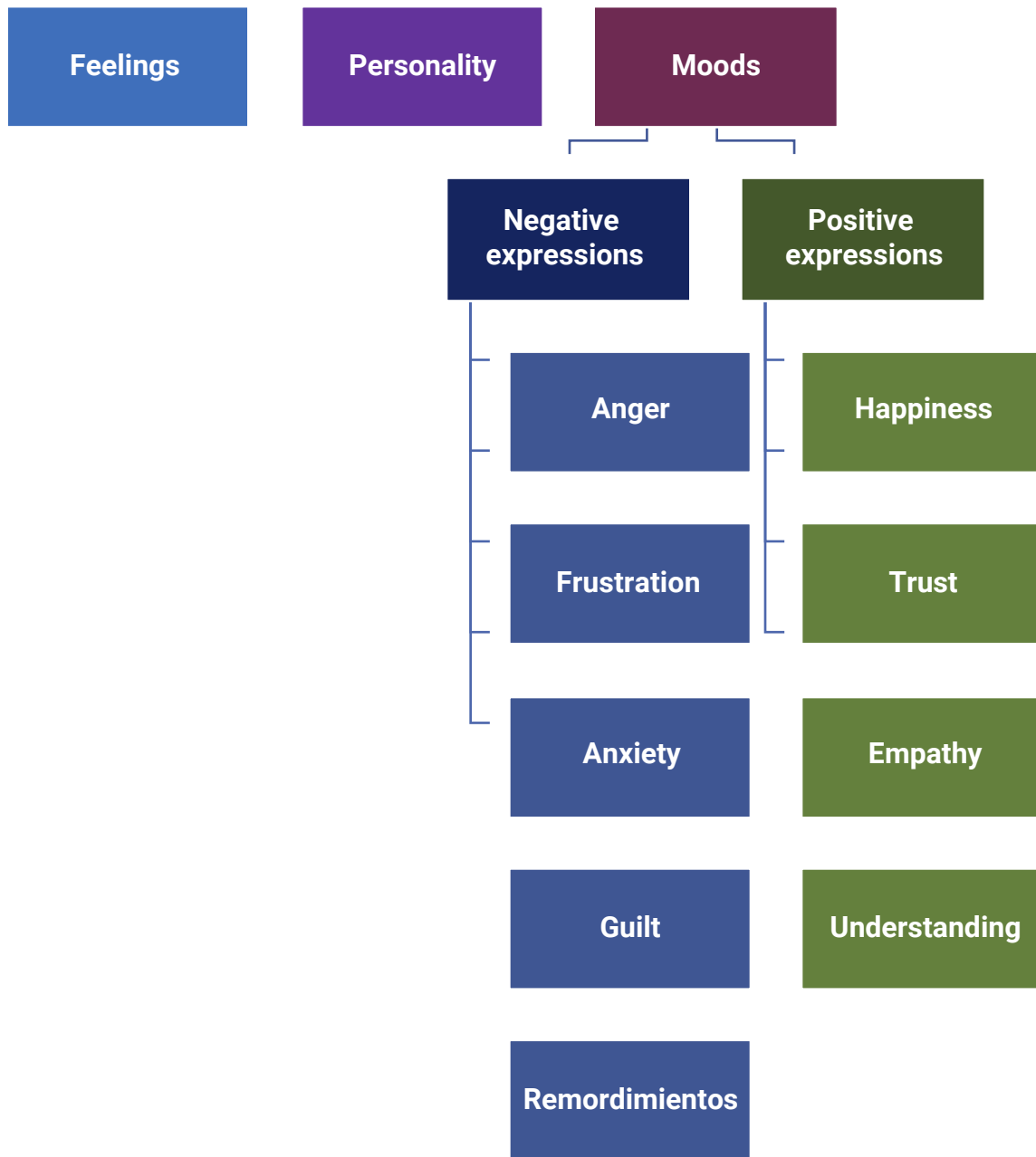
EI, as an ability to manage our own emotions and find meaning in the emotions of others, is fundamental to an effective negotiator.

In spite of the popularity of EI in other disciplines, negotiation was late in recognizing its value. According to GestioPolis (2002) "A negotiator who knows his Emotional Intelligence and improves it will be in a better position to correctly develop the dialectic process of negotiation." Nevertheless, until only a short time ago, literature on negotiation considered that emotions interfere with the negotiation process and made it difficult to arrive at an agreement. Today we know that emotions play an important role in decision making, creativity, and interpersonal relationships, all of which are key factors to achieving a productive agreement.

The third pillar of communication is emotions, inherent to all negotiation process. Our interest here is to underline the importance of the **strategic use of emotions in negotiation**, remembering that the negotiating process implies the appearance of both negative as well as positive emotions.



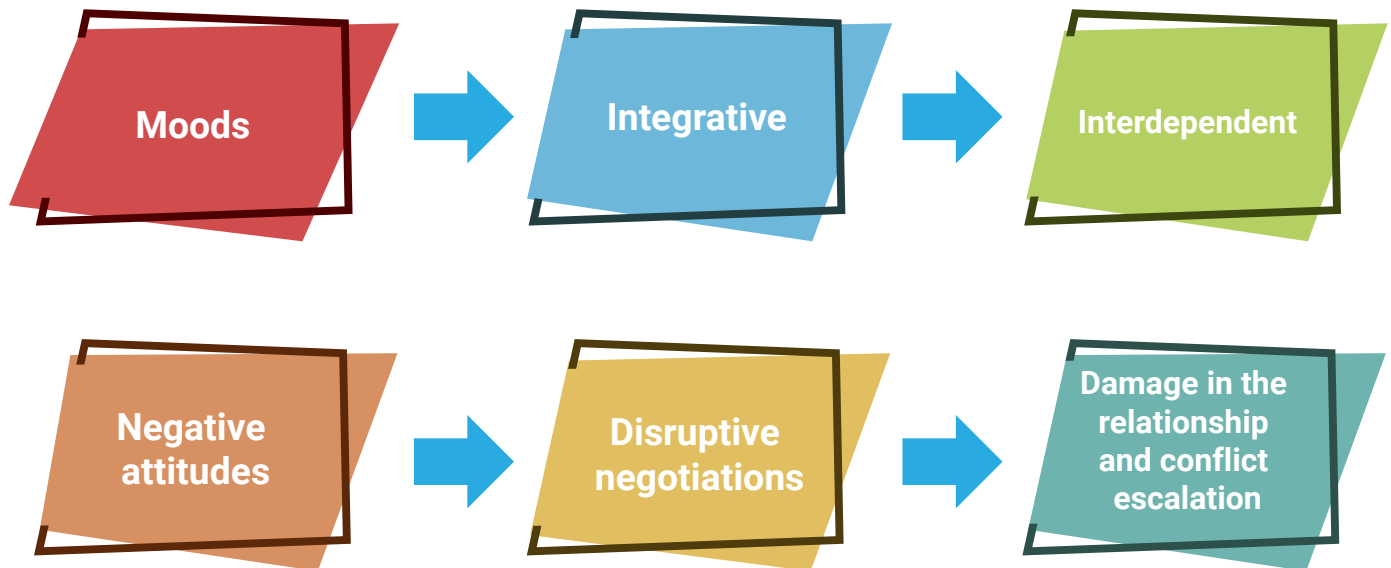
According to researchers Andrew Wasynczuc and Colleen Kaftan of Harvard Business School, the complexity of emotions can be appreciated in its taxonomy which includes :



Positive moods (generally) lead to integrative negotiations, while negative emotions cause distributive negotiations.

Integrative negotiations stimulate long term interdependent relationships, based on trust and value creation.

In distributive negotiations short term results are sought and value is desired without caring if the relationship is damaged, or if there is a potential escalation of conflict.



A negotiator with emotional intelligence can identify and program emotional expressions (verbal and non-verbal) to re-enforce and emphasize behaviors (positive and negative) in the other negotiator. Current research reveals that mimicking emotions is often shown through body language and facial expressions, which establish very powerful emotional “connections.” These connections help to create empathy and strengthen trust among negotiators.

A note about negative emotions. When they are limited and opportune, they can encourage constructive dialogues that often lead to an innovative process in a negotiation. There are negative emotions that are stronger than others, however. Anger implies power, competence, threat, and mastery to the negotiator, while regret generates distrust and lack of credibility. Well managed (and constrained) anger can confer power in a negotiation.

On the other hand, over-emphasizing positive emotions can lead to happy agreements, but under-optimized ones, frequently exceeding in concessions to the detriment of results.

To manage emotions correctly, we return to EI, the concept Dr. Daniel Goleman consolidated in his book by the same name. Emotional intelligence is the ability to accept our own emotions and recognize the emotions in others, with the goal of creating empathy and achieving productive agreements.

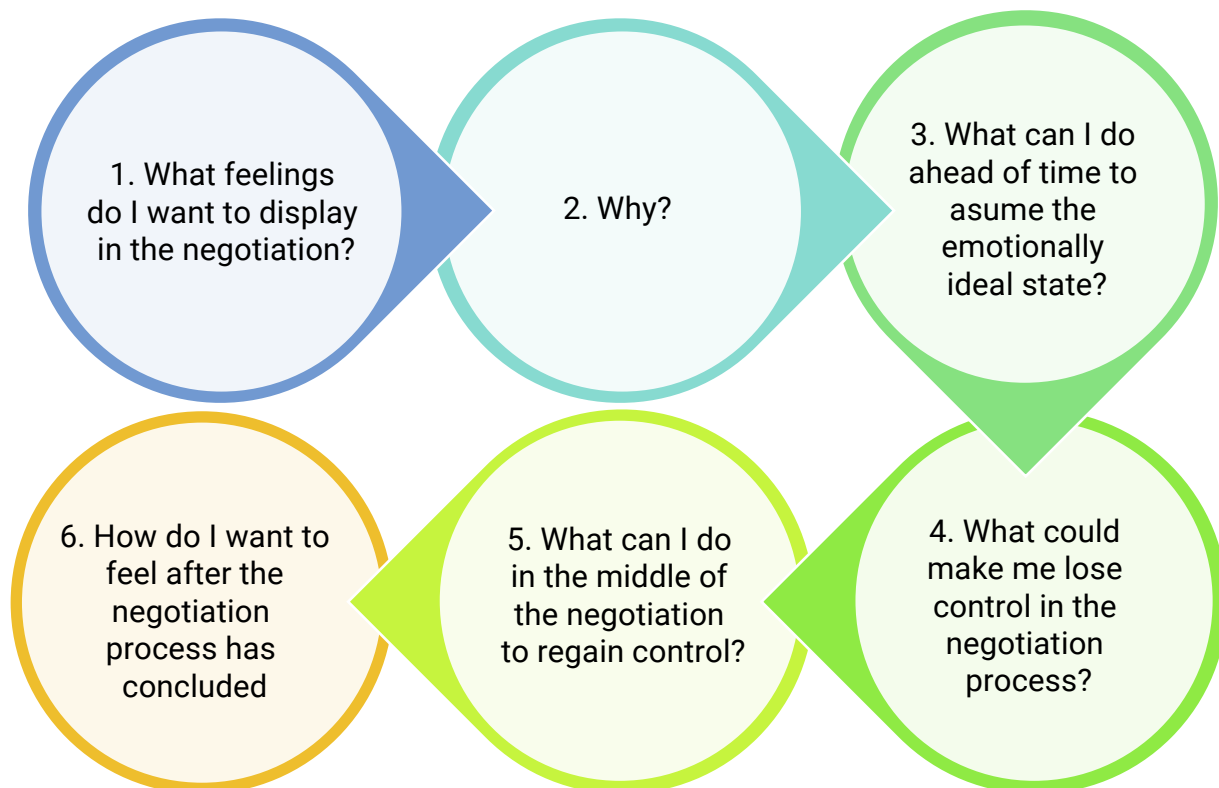
Here I will discuss a recent experiment (December 2018) published by PON (Program on Negotiation) at Harvard University by researchers K. Kim, N.L.A. Cundiff, and S. Bong Choi under the title “Should emotional intelligence be considered one of the essential tools in negotiation? In the first part of the study, 200 graduate students were given a questionnaire to evaluate their EI level. Later, they were assigned job interviews in which they negotiated terms such as salary, vacation pay, medical insurance, and other benefits.

The study revealed that students with a higher EI quotient consistently showed more empathy, seeking long term collaborative relationships with their employers, based on mutual trust. It's important to point out that, in some cases, too many concessions were made in order to reach agreements, so that is why we propose in this course that these abilities are used in conjunction with effective communication (perception, cognition, and emotion) to achieve greater benefit.



An emotionally intelligent negotiator is capable of perceiving the emotional state of his counterpart and, in an effective way, respond in a timely manner. At the same time, the negotiator is aware that his own emotional state greatly influences the mood and behavior of other people because of the contagious nature of emotions. These people have the skill of managing complex negotiations and achieving collaborative agreements among people with antagonistic postures.

In the seminal work *Negotiating with Emotion* by Kimberlyn Leary, Julianna Pillemer, and Michael, Wheeler, published in *Harvard Business Review* in January, 2013, recommended an emotionally intelligent strategy, consisting of six phases, to prepare for a negotiation:



El can be developed and it can also improve like other skills; we just have to remember that practical experience is the road to accomplishing this.

Summarizing: in negotiation we should become more deeply aware of the nature of our emotions and “tune into” others’ emotions with an empathetic disposition.

Reference:

Manzó Sánchez, J. (2002). *El negociador y su inteligencia emocional*. Recuperado de <https://www.gestiopolis.com/negociador-inteligencia-emocional/>