

**CHESS AND HARD NEGOCIATIONS IN BUSINESS*****Florin Alexandru LUCA****„Gh.Asachi” Technical University, Iasi (Romania)*

Pregătirea unei negocieri cere timp. Avându-se în vedere că abordăm segmentul unei negocieri dificile, acesta necesită un timp dublu de pregătire, informare și sacrificii. În această confruntare concesiile minore sunt pionii.

Jocul de șah are ca finalitate capturarea regelui inamic. Jocul se poate termina cu câteva piese lipsă sau se poate transforma într-o confruntare pozițională în care cel care „mănâncă” mai multe piese câștigă până la urmă. Aceasta abordare, mai de durată, implică o strategie simplă, dar necesită multă atenție și răbdare. Greșeala adversarului, neatenția lui, este foarte importantă.

O altă abordare se bazează doar pe strategie. Șahistul anticipează 3-4-5 mutări în avans, concentrându-și forțele într-un punct, astfel încât, odată atacat, să se producă spărtura care să rupă echilibrul jocului. Dacă punctul de impact ales este în preajma regelui advers, atunci partida se încheie ușor printr-un șah-mat năucitor pentru adversar. În celelalte cazuri, ruperea echilibrului produce încercuirea pieselor inamice sau ruperea lor în două, cu grave consecințe asupra coordonării apărării adverse. Finalul este același: defilarea triumfală spre victorie a pieselor proprii.

Lucrarea de față își propune să abordeze aspecte importante ale negocierii în avantaj.

*“Young fighters attack with impulse.*

*Experienced warriors wait patiently for the enemy to reveal himself”*

*... in a movie*

Preparing for a negotiation takes time. Taking into account that we are approaching the segment of a difficult negotiation, it requests a double negotiation time, information and sacrifice. In this kind of confrontation minor concessions are the pawns.

Chess aims to capture the king of the enemy. The play may end without some of the pieces or may transform itself into a confrontation of positions, in which the one that “eats” more pieces eventually wins. This approach is a long term one. It implies a strategy and requires a lot of attention. The adversary's mistakes and his lack of attention are very important.

The other approach is based only on strategy. The chess player anticipates 3, 4 or 5 moves and concentrates his forces on a spot in such a way that, once he is attacked, there will be a breach that will destroy the balance of the game. If the selected impact spot is near the enemy king, then the game will finish easily, in a surprising checkmate for the adversary. In the other cases, the destruction of the balance will result in the surrounding of enemy pieces or their separation in two parts with hard consequences for the defense coordination. The same goal: the triumphal parade to victory of your own pieces.

Just like in business, the most powerful person thrown in the fight is not also the most important one. The queen is the equivalent of company manager, an important person within the company management. Her annihilation leads, from a theoretical standpoint, to winning the game.

There are three simple strategies. Surely, there are many others, more complex, but I will base myself on these three, because a simple strategy always gives results.

You should know more about your adversary than he knows about himself. You must never under estimate him. The proverb with the little strokes that fell great oaks may be true sometimes. If you know your adversary and you give him his real value, the two will be business partners for life. If not... you will remain at least with a substantial profit.

The best defense is a well thought attack, someone said... I don't know who. An offensive way of thinking and acting increases the chances of winning. If it is you who makes the first move and keeps the initiative, the adversary will be obliged to defend himself. A continuous, well coordinated attack will prevent him to organize and launch a counterstrike. A rule of marketing is that it is necessary to follow up the quality at any level and up to the smallest detail. Many try to break a brick with the fist. The finesse and precision of a strike, the concentration of the impact energy in a point determines the breakage of the brick.

The following three components are fundamental for an offensive negotiation:

1. A focusing point. It is necessary, on the one hand, to prepare a smoke screen represented by gossips, information and trumps, real or false it does not matter, and concentrate many elements that have direct link or may exert indirect pressure on the adversary.
2. The shock. It is generated by mobility, speed, aggressiveness and simultaneous direct strike or by encirclement. The negotiator must start a series of menacing events or to repeatedly create all kind of misbalances. The adversary must be confused and his information system overloaded.
3. Perseverance. When something works, keep using that thing. Repetition and consistency, backed by supplementary strikes in cascade are important elements of distributive negotiation. Perseverance leads to victory. In order to obtain it, two conditions must be fulfilled:
  - a. destroy the communication channels of the adversary in order to isolate him and
  - b. follow him up to the total annihilation.

A lioness can easily kill a lonely buffalo. In a flock, however, buffalos organize their defense. They stick together forming a wall of sharp horns which the enemy cannot penetrate. The options of the lioness are minimal in this case (a suicide attack, a shameful retreat or to lurk patiently until a buffalo will make the mistake to separate from the flock).

The biggest mistake in such a negotiation is to allow the adversary to breath, rest and regroup. If you did not succeed to capture the main piece (the king) and the adversary managed to maintain some intact forces, then he will regroup and you will have to face a much harder resistance and a much greater attention. The adversary now knows your impact force and he will know to react to it.

We can easily make a parallelism with the great conquerors of the world, Napoleon and Hitler. They invaded Russia, defeated the enemy forces, captured prisoners but did not destroy the fight potential of the Russian army. A part of these forces regrouped, re-equipped themselves and the end of the story is known by everyone.

The surprise element is the best way to dominate at the psychological level and to annihilate any initiative of the adversary. In this case trickery has an essential role. It is a war of nerves. The adversary must be confused, threatened and blackmailed... The power we have must be hyperbolized at his mental level. In fact, the power the adversary thinks we have is only in his head. The fight field that we wish to conquer has a few square centimeters.

The negotiator must penetrate in those compartments of the adversary's mind that contain the cycle observation-orientation-decision-action (at all levels), adopting a more subtle, non-differentiated, irregular and faster attitude.

If we succeed in invading that territory and create chaos, the adversary will easily make concessions. The surprise element can turn the balance in our favor in a decisive way and the success that we will obtain will excel by much the efforts we made.

Any chess game is based on dissimulation. The adversary is lead into error by an evident action, an action that, in fact, prepares the surprise strike, the strike that intends to create a misbalance.

The adversary must be kept confused. He must not be able to anticipate the next move that you intend to make. An evident threat of an imminent attack, by concentrating the pieces in order to prepare a “breakage point”, i.e. the positional superiority on a definite spot, can be a real threat or just one that will mask the intentions of the adversary. What I appreciate in chess is the mobility with which pieces are re-dislocated and regrouped in almost infinite combinations.

The same in negotiations. The one who dissimulates best and is most persuasive always wins.

Everything can be negotiated. Everything depends on the way things are presented. A very important thing: Don't be eager! Eagerness obscures the capacity to analyze and act, and the partial result, even if it is tempting, can be dangerous. The adversary will try to take revenge with the first occasion. Maybe it is nothing great at a first glance, but if we have a quick look of the Iraq dossier... The art of hard negotiation is conditioned by the fact that the adversary, even if he is defeated, must remain satisfied and calm.

And after all, we should say that it does not matter how bad the position of an adversary in a certain moment is. No matter how weak he looks, he can lead the situation to a stalemate. So be careful. Don't enjoy the laurels of victory before capturing the king. It once happened to me.

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