



TEACHING MATERIALS ON BRAZILIAN PRIVATE COMPANIES: SOFTWARE CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

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ABSTRACT

This article addressed an IT integrated solution contract negotiation case in Brazil, aiming at improving the negotiation skills for negotiators, contractors, and service providers on software negotiations, managers, and other practitioners, through Type II negotiation, two-party, multiple-issue role-play simulation. The case involved a packaging company and an IT manufacturer within a six-month negotiation. Key findings pointed out the necessity of improving value creation strategies, such as structured planning negotiation, to achieve mutual benefit deals. Case implications suggest the investigation of distinct business scenarios. Discussion and future research recommendations comprise the present study.

Keywords: Negotiation, Software, Contractor, service provider, Teaching materials

INTRODUCTION: -

The negotiation took place in Rio de Janeiro, Southeast Brazil. The companies' names were altered for compliance issues, including the names of the participants, omitted to preserve the case confidentiality. Moreover, the negotiation lasted six months, ended in December 2020. The contract was in force when this article was written.

The current study addresses the buyer-seller negotiation between two parties and multiple issues in a Type II negotiation (Dias, 2020). It presents a full set of teaching materials on software contract negotiation, supporting negotiators, buyers, sellers, practitioners, and managers.

Teaching materials on business negotiations have attracted scholar attention (Dias, 2020, 2019; Dias, Lopes, Teles, Pereira and Castro, 2020; Dias & Lopes, 2019; Dias & Teles, 2018; Dias & Duzert, 2017; Dias & Navarro, 2017).

In this article, negotiation is defined as a “process of communication by which two or more parties seek to advance their interests or those of the persons they represent through an agreement on the desired future action.” (Salacuse, 2003, p. 11)

The Four-Type negotiation matrix (Dias, 2020) was adopted because it provides a sound model for negotiation classification, encompassing past body of research on the subject (Dias, 2020; Raiffa, 1982; Fisher Ury and Patton, 1981; Sebenius, 1992; Ury, 2015; Susskind & Field, 1996; Salacuse, 2008; Rinehart & Page, 1992; Pruitt & Rubin, 1986). In sum, this is a buyer-seller negotiation between two-parties and multiple issues, or Type II negotiation, as illustrated in the following

Figure 1:

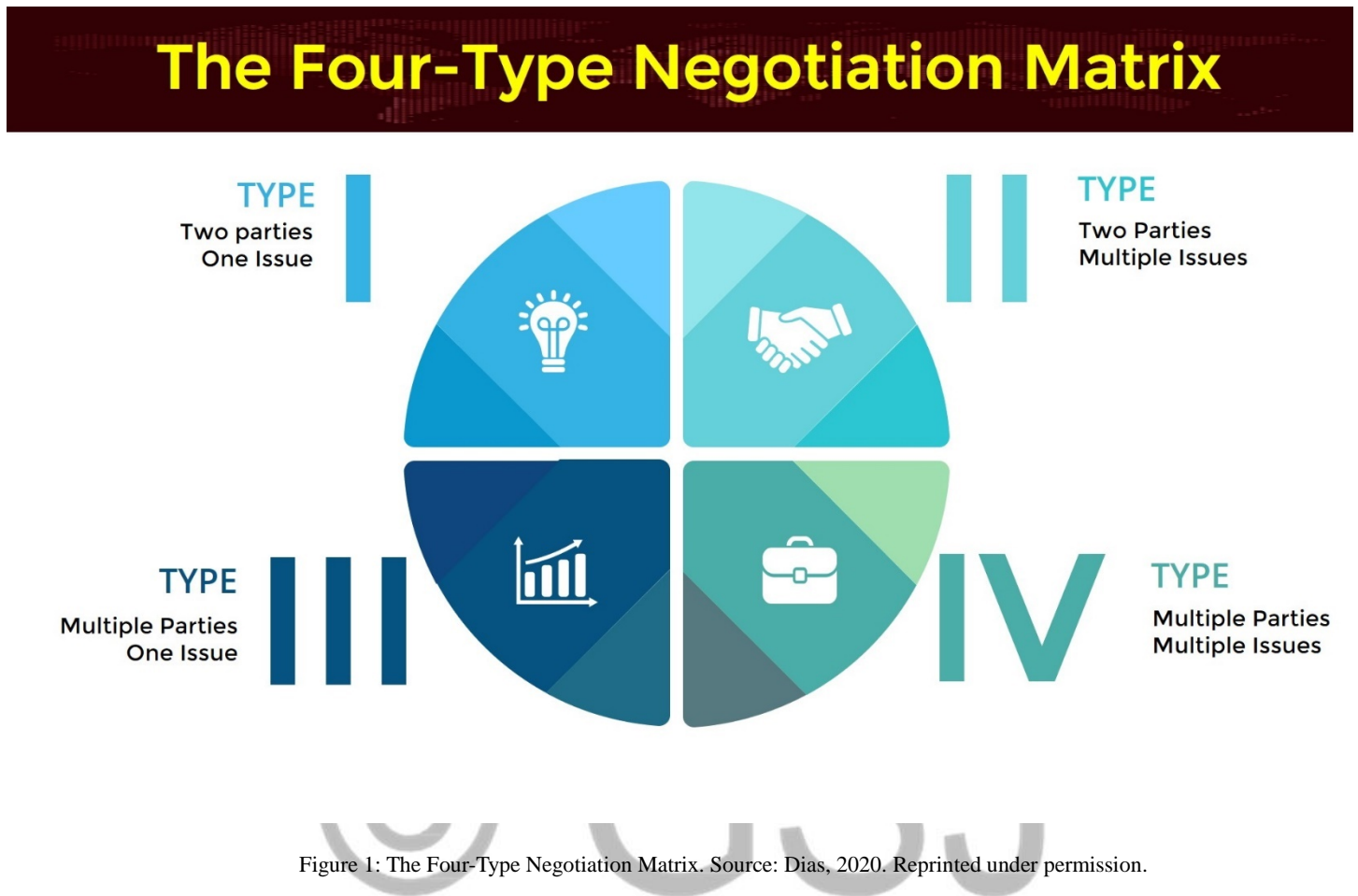


Figure 1: The Four-Type Negotiation Matrix. Source: Dias, 2020. Reprinted under permission.

Despite the real negotiation involved multiple parties and multiple issues, Or Type IV Negotiation (see Figure 1), involving a six-month negotiation process, for academic purposes, the teaching case is limited to the final contract negotiation between two parties, multiple issues, or Type II Negotiation (Dias, 2020).

In the next section, we present the methods and case limitations.

METHODS AND RESEARCH LIMITATIONS: -

This study is a buyer-seller contract negotiation case between a software provider, and an incorporated company, as the analysis unit (Yin, 1988). In this article, the inductive rationale and interpretivistic approach were taken into consideration. The present research is limited to a Brazilian business negotiation. Other countries or businesses should be investigated separately. This case is also limited and supported by Goffman's dramaturgical theory (1959, 1961), in which parties play their roles as actors, performing life case scenarios as stages, such as a drama.

ROLE PLAY SIMULATION: SOFTWARE CONTRACT NEGOTIATION: -

The role-play simulation starts with the incorporated company manager, the contractor represented by the company named Packing Inc., and the manager of the XDR Service Provider (SP). Both are assumed names in order to safeguard the confidentiality of their identity for compliance purposes.

In the role-play simulation, the negotiation is narrated from six months ago to date. Both parties have already discussed and refined the deal with their counterparts about creating an integrated solution - from the compact controller up to high-end control solutions for their industrial plants. Parties one and two are presented in the Appendix section.

After six months of comings and goings, both parties have to negotiate three issues: (i) the total amount of the project, between \$400,000 to \$435,000; (ii) full payment of the debt, or in two installments (85 plus 15 percent), and (iii) intellectual property rights; exclusive licensing agreements for computer software, on patents, copyright, design rights, trademarks, and other legally protected rights. The contractor wants to retain ownership of the source code, while the software provider wants joint ownership of intellectual property rights. The case mechanics and a full set of teaching instructions are shown in Appendix I.

The role-play simulation was designed ultimately to provoke a debate on the buyer seller negotiation multiple issues, such as payments conditions, intellectual property ownership about the source code, and the total amount of the agreement, on a six-month, multiple round, multiple issues negotiation. In the next section, we discuss in detail the particulars of the role-play simulation.

DISCUSSION: -

This role-play simulation is a particular case of buyer-seller negotiation, designed for face-to-face classroom interactions or executive training sessions. However, due to the coronavirus pandemic, it was adapted to virtual classes, in which parties should engage remotely in the negotiation, by phone or video calls.

The present role-play simulation has implications in the following fields of study: (a) debt collection negotiations (Dias, M.O., 2019, 2019b; Dias, M.O. and Albergarias, 2019); (b) retail business negotiations (Dias, M. O., et al., 2015; Dias, M. O. et al., 2015, 2014); (c) carmaker industry (Dias, M. O., Navarro and Valle, 2013, Dias, M. O., et al., 2014; Dias, M. O., et al., 2013); (d) Craft beer industries (Dias, M.O. and Falconi, 2018; Dias, M. O., 2018); (e) mining industry (Dias, M. O., & Davila, 2018); (f) civil construction (Dias, M.O., 2016); (g) Non-governmental organizations (Paradelá, Dias, M. O.; Assis; Oliveira, J.; Fonseca, R. (2019); (h) aircraft software manufacturer industry (Dias, M., Teles, and Duzert, 2018; Dias, M.O. and Duzert, 2018); (i) software manufacturing industry (Dias, Lopes and Golfetto, 2020); (j) Cooperative societies contract negotiation (k) Dias, 2018; (l) public agents (Dias, M. O., 2018); (m) copier manufacturer industry (Dias, M.O., 2012); (n) non-market forces (Dias & Navarro, 2018); (f) (g); (o) teaching materials on mediation (Dias, M. O. & Teles, 2018); (p) governmental business relations (Dias, M. O. & Navarro, 2017); (q) e-business negotiation (Dias & Duzert, 2017); (r) streaming video industry, such as Netflix (Dias, M. O., & Navarro, 2018), amongst others.

One of the issues discussed here regards the internal versus external negotiation environment as the case backdrop and how vital are the coordination and synergy between the stakeholders from different departments within a company, on both sides, as a critical success factor. The software in question is a complex project, intensively negotiated in many rounds. However, one interesting point to be discussed in class regards the negotiation follow-through: no matter how successful the previous stages were, the results might be catastrophic if the last negotiation round is not well planned and engaged. Consequently, a no-deal followed by the search for a negotiation alternative would result from such an absolute misunderstanding between them.

In sum, all parties should abide for constant alignment meetings, encouraged to share their opinions, and to build exciting propositions for both sides, respecting the underlying interests of the other party, and ultimately devising new solutions aiming at value creation before value distribution (Fisher, Ury, and Patton, 1981).

In the real-life case scenario, virtually all negotiations were held by virtual communication, following the local governments' sanitary restrictions due to the coronavirus pandemic, a particular challenge faced by both parties successfully. One must adapt to survive, especially in times of uncertainties.

The Four-Type Negotiation Matrix proved to be useful for creating negotiation strategies within the case because it provided an amplified view of the negotiation process.

FUTURE RESEARCH AND CASE LIMITATIONS

This case investigated a business negotiation software contract between two parties involving multiple Brazilian scena-

rio issues (Type II Negotiation, see Dias, 2020). Other countries, cultures are encouraged in future studies to be investigated separately. Finally, the study of the impact of the negotiation case applied to the students and training sessions should also be the object of future research.

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APPENDIX I

Teaching notes

Scenario: the case illustrates the difficulties faced by the parties to avoid a loss of software contract. Different laws and particular issues, such as different negotiation processes, should be considered for other countries.

Mechanics: parties should take 45 min to 1 ½ hour to read the case and prepare themselves to negotiate. Negotiation mapping is strongly encouraged to be used to help plan the negotiation – 30 min to 1 ½ hour of negotiation plus 40to one-hour debriefing session. In total, one hour and a half to three hours' total time for this exercise.

Mechanics: parties should take 45 min to 1 ½ hour to read the case and to prepare themselves to negotiate. Negotiation mapping is strongly encouraged to be used additionally to help planning the negotiation – 30 min to 1 ½ hour of negotiation plus 40to one-hour debriefing session. In total, one hour and a half to three hours' total time for this exercise.

Significant Lessons: the case was designed to develop effective strategies to deal with integrative negotiations; to map and focus on underlying interests; to practice empathy towards each other; to develop promptness in creating mutual value to be later distributed.

Objectives: This exercise intends to discuss the role of parties in an integrative, Type III negotiation. That negotiation should be seen not as an intrusion devoted to promoting disruption but as one aid to promote consensus between two different parties. One crucial objective is related to process control.

MAIN FEATURES	
Time required	1 hour - 2 hours
Number of participants	2 parties, contractor and contractee
Groups involved	No
Issues	Three issues
Agent present	No
Third part present	No

APPENDIX II - PARTIES' ROLES

PART 1

◆◆ IT MANAGER XDR COMPANY◆◆

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

You are the company XDR's IT Manager and was called by the representative of the company Packaging Inc. six months ago to talk about a challenge: develop a system to take global stock and all its manufacturing units. At that moment, there was as reference only project form with a macro description of the system (one of the Scanning Master Plan products that Packing Inc. You had hired last year, at which time ten priority initiatives for development were mapped in the next two years).

You received the fact sheet and some technical alignments, but due to the limited information for preparing a proposal of closed scope, you suggested the execution of a conceptual project. After fifteen days of work, you submitted a budget proposal for the conceptual project, but Packing Inc.'s representative disapproved and requested that the details be done in the proposal phase. The value of the proposed conceptual project was \$ 30,000 (for execution in 2 months). You conducted a series of meetings and internal alignments and, after a month, sent the budget proposal for the development of the system for Packaging Inc., for \$ 250,000. After several alignment meetings, the team began to be assembled to meet the demand of Packing Inc. The budget proposal was revised and reached the value of \$ 350,000 because of the increase in the project's scope. Packing Inc. has scheduled a meeting with other interlocutors (IT and processes) to present the solution proposal. Packing Inc. has sent a Technical Specification document for equalization of supplier proposals and defined some IT criteria (architecture) for finalization of the proposal. A month ago, the proposal was revised and reached the value of \$ 435,000. The difference in the initial project was due to the increase in the complexity of the project. The discussion then reached the board. You helped the representative of Packing Inc. defend the proposal before its board, helping with the technical arguments due. You learned that Packing Inc. had conducted research with three other competitors (one being disqualified for technical reasons), and its price was the highest of all. However, the representative of Packing Inc. said he would give him the preference, making the following counterproposal: (1) \$ 400,000; (2) 85% until project delivery and 15% linked after a warranty period of 6 months, in addition to (3) the intellectual property of all knowledge produced. Its board then sets the limits for trading: (1) ZOPA between \$ 435,000 to \$ 410,000 (minimum acceptable). (2) 100% of the proposal and (3) intellectual property only of Delivery. In summary:

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| 1- ZOPA: \$ 435,000 to \$ 410,000 |
| 2- Payment: in full (unacceptable two installments, 85% + 15%) |
| 3 - intellectual property: joint intellectual property rights (unacceptable exclusive IP rights) |

You have to work hard. The meeting was confirmed only for the following week. You suspect that Packaging Inc. is trying to lower the price with the competition (you know who they are: Surplus and Beta.com companies), which would pose a danger to the closing of the deal, six months of wasted negotiation, plus the catastrophic effects of the project's loss to the competition. Prepare for final negotiation with the representative of Packing Inc.



PART 2
◆◆ REPRESENTATIVE OF PACKAGING INC.◆◆
CONFIDENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS

You are the representative of the company Packing Inc. and called the manager the XDR six months ago to talk about a challenge: develop a system to take stock global and all its manufacturing units. At his moment, there was as reference only project form with a macro description of the system (one of the Scanning Master Plan products that Packing Inc. had hired last year, at which time ten priority initiatives for development were mapped in the next two years).

After fifteen days of working with the XDR manager, you received a budget proposal for the conceptual project, but your board did not approve and requested that the details be done in the proposal phase.

The value of the proposed conceptual project was \$ 30,000 (for execution in 2 months). You conducted a series of meetings and internal alignments. After a month, you received the budget proposal for the system's development, in the amount of \$ 250,000. After several alignment meetings, the team began to be assembled to meet the demand of Embalagens SA. The budget proposal was revised and reached the value of \$ 350,000 because of the increase in the project's scope.

You then submitted a Technical Specification document for equalization of vendor proposals and defined some IT (architecture) criteria for finalizing the proposal. A month ago, the proposal was revised and reached the value of \$ 435,000. The difference in the initial project was due to the increasing complexity of the project. The discussion then reached the board. You have received help from the XDR manager to defend the proposal before your peers, especially with the technical arguments due. In the meantime, you receive a quotation from four IT companies. Outgoing, a company was dropped from the process for not meeting the technical criteria raised. Therefore, your decision is between:

(1) XDR = \$ 435,000; (2) Surplus = \$ 430,000 and (3) Beta.com = \$ 415,000
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The board understood that: (a) XDR was technically best qualified among the three competitors. (b) Beta.com be your BATNA, as it is the cheapest proposal of all.

It happens that, for this year, Packing Inc. has \$ 400,000 (\$ 415,000 maximums, with approval of additional funds). However, you acknowledge that it would be complicated to persuade any of the competitors to reach the \$400,000 budget ceiling. Everyone is apprehensive because the project is strategic for Embalagens SA, and the non-closure would result in a one-year delay for the restart of it, where everything could change. The timing is crucial.

The board gave him carte blanche to negotiate with XDR: (1) ZOPA between \$ 400,000 and \$ 415,000; (2) billing: 85% until Delivery of the project and 15% linked after a warranty period of 6 months - which would give you time to negotiate the contribution of additional funds or payment of 100% of the project. Finally, (3) the intellectual property of all knowledge produced, or at worst, only of Delivery.

You then make a counterproposal to the XDR manager: (1) \$ 400,000; (2) that 85% revenue slated until delivery of the project and 15% linked after a warranty period of 6 months, in addition to (3) intellectual property: exclusive or shared.

1- ZOPA: \$ 400.000 to \$ 415,000
2- Payments: two installments 85% + 15% (after the end of the 6-month warranty) or full payment
3 - Intellectual property: exclusive license agreements or joint intellectual property (IP) rights.

To make certain suspense, you set the meeting with the XDR representative for the following week. In the meantime, you know you are going to have to work hard. Prepare for final negotiation with the XDR representative.