

The Seven Element Framework

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1. **Interests:** The concerns, wants, needs, hopes and fears that underlie and motivate our positions, demands, and contentions

2. **Options:** All possibilities on which we might reach agreement; an agreement is best if it explores all potential solutions for mutual gain

3. **Legitimacy:** The fairness of an agreement as measured by criteria, benchmarks, principles, laws, regulations, standards, practices

4. **Alternatives:** Available walk-away possibilities in case we do not reach an agreement; neither party should agree to a deal that is worse than its Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)

5. **Commitments:** Statements about what we will or won't do; good agreements are well planned and crafted to be practical, durable, easily understood, and verifiable

6. **Communication:** The message and media through which we convey information; we understand each other even if we disagree, and we minimize resources spent in coming to agreement

7. **Relationship:** The overall pattern of interaction among the other parties within and outside the negotiation and us; interactions should improve, not damage, our relationships