

GARAGE SALES

Learn to Negotiate

Part of the fun of going garage sale shopping for some people is scoring a good deal. And that often means negotiating for a better price on the items they want.

For some people, negotiation is intimidating. But that's no reason not to clear out some clutter by holding a garage sale. You just have to practice these techniques to make sure you get the best bang for your buck.

FOR SELLERS

If negotiation intimidates you, before you hold your own sale, visit a few of your own. Make some purchases and try your own hand at negotiation.

Alison Wood Brooks, a professor at the Harvard Business School, suggests reframing any anxiety about negotiation as excitement. This turns the negative feelings around anxiety into positive feelings of excitement, which can lead to improved performance in the upcoming negotiation.

As you open negotiations, remember to be polite but firm in your conversations,



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even if the potential buyer is negative or you are increasingly anxious. Don't be afraid to take a break by saying something along the lines of, "I'm sorry, but I see a person that needs my help. Please hold that thought. I'll be

right back."

FOR BUYERS

The golden rule of negotiation for buyers is not to get emotionally attached to whatever it is you want. If you get too attached, and especially if

a seller notices, you're liable to end up paying more than you intended for your item. Remember, there's likely more than one of whatever item it is out there. You will come across it again if you look hard enough.

If negotiation intimidates you, before you hold your own sale, visit a few of your own. Make some purchases and try your own hand at negotiation.

Next, try to be well-informed. Don't lob out lowball offers; this can offend the seller and shut the conversation down early. Know the market for the item you're looking for and make fair offers. It could be that, after research, you find out that you're getting a really good deal after all. And by research, it could be as simple as pulling out your phone and seeing what similar items are going for on eBay. Not scientific, but it will give you a good general idea.

FOR BOTH PARTIES

Have a good idea of a compromise that you'll accept when you open the negotiation. Work toward that as you talk to the other party. Both sides should remember that honey catches more flies than vinegar — be polite, even if the negotiation gets contentious. Walk away before it gets too heated.

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SELLER'S TIP

Solving Pricing Conundrums

If pricing is really throwing you for a loop, consider putting some items (or all of them) up for sale for whatever the buyer feels is fair. You might be surprised at what some people are willing to pay for your stuff! This would also work nicely if you're holding a garage sale where you're donating the proceeds or a portion of the proceeds to a charitable cause. Make sure you advertise exactly what organization you're giving to and also let that organization know so they can advertise for you.

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