

Developing a Bargaining Culture

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Whether you know it or accept to believe it, it is an established fact that people engage in some form of bargaining on a daily basis. It is normally done unwittingly and sometimes unintentionally. The word bargaining is something that people should perhaps engage more readily as part of their daily lives.

Although the word "bargaining" is generally associated with the trade union movement, there should however be a distinction made between the type of bargaining done by trade unions and that undertaken by the individual.

Trade unions enter into a process known as collective bargaining. This process is engaged based on an established set of principles, guidelines and procedures. It differs fundamentally from the general bargaining process, as in this instance the focus is on collective representation, where the group dynamics is at the forefront. The focus in the type of bargaining is on workplace issues, which include conditions of services, wages and salary issues, workers' rights, workers' protection, and indeed the employer – employer relationship, which addresses the rights and responsibilities of both the employer and the employee.

Bargaining has traditionally been part of life. It dates back to the days of early civilization when the barter system was used. This system allowed persons to engage in a form of trade, where they agreed on the exchange of items in lieu of the use of money, as we know it today. Based on the scarcity of money to do business it may not be a bad idea to revert to a system that once worked. It may seem prehistoric to a contemporary world, but it appears to make sense.

The standard of living which we experience today has enabled many people to accumulate a lot of materials goods that they really don't need. However, instead of stockpiling these items and allowing them to lose their value and deteriorate, maybe there can enter into a bargaining process with an individual who has something they need and who for whatever reason or purpose may be interesting in the exchange arrangement. Since money today is somewhat of a scarce commodity, the move to using what may be seen as an archaic practice might not turn out to be a bad thing after all.

In a world where retail business is a prominent feature, there is every opportunity for persons to seek to get the best deals they can by using what leverage they have to bargain for the purchase or sale they wish to make. The competitive nature of this form

of business should offer the opportunity for the average person to be able to stretch their disposal income. Far too often persons are willing to accept the advertised price for an item, and pay without making the effort to cut a deal. There is nothing to say that the effort will always work, but it is certainly worth a try.

In the current economic climate, it is difficult to see how any proprietor or a manager in a retail business could resist a sale, know that the potential client loss means that his competition stands to gain. To adopt this approach may seem farfetched, but it seemingly makes sense if persons want to maintain lifestyles which warrant that they outlay cash that they can't afford. It would be expected that retailer businessmen would seriously look at their options, particularly if it makes a difference with respect to their keeping their enterprises open.

Bargaining can be described as a healthy tool. If effectively used, it can lead to both beneficial and rewarding experiences. There is absolutely nothing to fear about engaging the bargaining process. Bargaining is one sure way to help the individual manage his/her spending and create some savings in the process. It is a way of purchasing the perfect item for which the price is right.

In bargaining a sale price for an item, buyers should remember to give themselves room to negotiate. Never settle for the first offer. The act of bargaining is simply an art. You can only perfect it by way of constant practice. May be it is time that retail outlets in places like Barbados move to adopt the Chinese way of shopping, where it is expected that buyers are prepared to bargain when making their purchases.