

NEGOTIATION SUMMER SCHOOL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2026

Psychology.
Artificial Intelligence.
The End of Win-Win.

Schranner Negotiation Institute
28 August 2026



CONTENT OVERVIEW

02 | Introduction

Negotiation Summer School 2026

03 | Embrace the Conflict: The Psychology of the Right Mindset

With Psychologist Lina Malyshkin and moderated by Dr. Marzia Marastoni.

07 | The AI Negotiator: Risks and Opportunities

With COO Fabio Falkenstein and AI Expert Phillip Trummer

10 | The End of Win-Win: The Shift from Values-Based to Interest-Based

With CEO Matthias Schranner and moderated by Parvina Stelovska

13 | Summary & Resources

NEGOTIATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

EMBRACE THE CONFLICT

Session 1 | 13 August 2026

Introduction

At the heart of every difficult negotiation are two elements: conflict and mutual dependence. The parties may disagree, but they still need one another to resolve the conflict.

This is why avoiding conflict is rarely a solution. In many cases, avoiding the conflict simply means avoiding the negotiation itself.

In the first session of the Negotiation Summer School, psychologist Lina Malyschkin explored what happens psychologically when we avoid conflict, why this becomes expensive over time, and what strong negotiators do differently.

The starting point is important: the goal of a negotiation is not to prove who is right or wrong. It is to get to a sustainable solution.

The Cost of Avoidance

Conflict avoidance has both a monetary and a psychological cost.

The monetary cost is often visible: unfavorable conditions are accepted, demands are lowered too early, or important issues remain unresolved.

The psychological cost is less visible. When we postpone a difficult negotiation, the conflict does not disappear from our mind. Instead, we begin to ruminate, catastrophize, and imagine everything that could go wrong.

Avoidance also creates negative reinforcement. By postponing the conflict, we experience short-term relief. This makes it more likely that we will avoid the next difficult situation as well. Over time, the negotiation becomes bigger, both in reality and in our own minds which can lead to a cycle of avoidant habit.

Tolerance of Ambiguity

Often, this process begins before the negotiation has even started. We think about what we want, but we also often begin predicting what the counterpart will want. We anticipate pushback, we make assumptions, and then the self-haggling begins.

Imagine a negotiator may want a 10% increase, but before speaking to the other side begins thinking: They will never accept that. Maybe I should only ask for 5%...

The counterpart has not said anything yet, but the first concession has already been made.

Lina described this as anticipatory cognitive dissonance: the discomfort created by anticipating two contradicting positions before they have even been discussed. People with a low tolerance of ambiguity often try to remove that discomfort quickly, sometimes by making premature concessions.

The Schranner Concept® takes a different approach: Increase your tolerance of ambiguity and learn to Embrace the Conflict.

Strong negotiators can sit with contradiction, uncertainty and tension without rushing to resolve it. They do not need an immediate answer. They can delay a decision, gather information and stay in the gray area for longer.

Embracing the Silence

Tolerance of ambiguity also means becoming comfortable with silence. In difficult negotiations, the instinct is often to answer immediately, especially when a demand creates pressure or irritation.

The Schranner Concept® encourages the opposite: slow the pace. pause, lean back, take notes and give yourself time before responding. This helps reduce the immediate emotional reaction and supports one of our central principles: Act, Don't React.

The goal is not to eliminate emotion, but to prevent it from determining the next move.

Loss Aversion Bias

Another psychological factor is loss aversion: our tendency to focus more strongly on what we might lose than on what we might gain.

In negotiation, this can quickly create a play-not-to-lose mindset. We focus on losing the client, the contract, the relationship or the desired conditions. The more attention we give to the worst-case scenario, the more it begins to influence our preparation and behavior.

The first step is therefore to recognize when fear of loss is shaping the negotiation more strongly than the objective itself.

Play to Win

The Schranner Concept® shifts the focus from Play Not to Lose to Play to Win.

This does not mean ignoring risk. It means testing negative assumptions, preparing strategically and entering the negotiation with clear, positively formulated demands.

Instead of focusing primarily on what must be avoided, focus on what you want to achieve.

Self-Efficacy

Whether we enter a difficult negotiation at all is also influenced by self-efficacy: our belief in our own ability to handle the situation successfully.

Confidence in negotiation is therefore not simply a matter of personality or optimism. It grows through competence, preparation and practice.

The more clearly a negotiator understands the process and has practiced how to operate under pressure, the easier it becomes to engage with difficult situations instead of avoiding them.

In this sense, mastering a negotiation process does more than provide tactics. It gives the negotiator something reliable to fall back on when the situation becomes uncertain.

Agenda-Setting: Taking Control of the Process

One of the clearest ways to take control of the process is through agenda-setting. The agenda creates structure before the negotiation begins, defines the key issues to be discussed and helps the negotiator establish themselves in the driver's seat.

The principle behind it is broader than the agenda itself:
You cannot control the other side. You can control yourself and the process.

That combination: mindset, preparation and process control, is what allows negotiators to embrace conflict rather than avoid it.

The Core Idea

The challenge in difficult negotiations is not to remove conflict, uncertainty or pressure. It is to remain able to negotiate effectively despite them.

That requires a clear mindset and a process you can rely on: tolerate ambiguity, do not react too quickly, focus on your demands and stay in control of the process.

Embrace the Conflict means entering the negotiation prepared to lead through tension, rather than avoiding it.

NEGOTIATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

THE AI NEGOTIATOR

Session 2 | 20 August 2026

Introduction

AI is entering negotiation quickly. The discussion, however, is often oversimplified.

Using AI in negotiation is not simply a question of finding the right prompt. It raises a much broader question: what part of the negotiation can actually be supported or even carried out by AI — and where does the human negotiator remain essential?

In the second Negotiation Summer School session, Fabio Falkenstein and Phillip Trummer explored this question by separating negotiation into two very different environments: Repeated Negotiations and Blue-Ocean Negotiations.

The distinction matters because the conditions under which AI operates change significantly between the two.

Repeated Negotiations

Repeated negotiations happen regularly and under relatively familiar conditions. The parties may know one another. Similar teams are involved. Previous negotiation data is available. The process and structure are familiar, and many of the issues return from one negotiation to the next.

Retail, automotive supply and aviation are typical examples.

This makes repeated negotiations one of the clearest environments for AI.

Research, data processing and preparation can be accelerated. In some cases, parts of the negotiation itself could potentially be automated. But this does not mean that AI automatically produces a more rational, fair or objective outcome.

AI vs. AI

In AI-to-AI negotiation, model capability matters. Stronger models can achieve better outcomes, while different models show different behavioral patterns. You must also be aware of AI-specific tactics such as prompt injection which create a new attack surface.

AI vs. Human

AI behavior is highly sensitive to the role it is given, the context it receives and how the negotiation is framed. Humans can therefore exploit how the AI interprets the negotiation.

Human vs. Human | AI

If AI is used as a mediator, information divulged and framed between two or more parties remains strategic and manipulative.

The AI cannot reliably distinguish between genuine information and input that has been tactically prepared. Its output also depends on how the AI itself has been configured.

Blue-Ocean Negotiations

Blue-Ocean negotiations are fundamentally different. They are often first-time negotiations with unfamiliar teams, little or no historical data, high information asymmetry, no established process and a high level of ambiguity.

Examples include M&A transactions, labor disputes and peace negotiations.

In these situations, AI cannot be relied upon as the autonomous negotiator. There is simply not enough historical context to ground the system reliably. Which is why human execution remains utmost critical for these types of negotiations.

AI-Accelerated Preparation

This is where AI can create the strongest value in Blue-Ocean negotiations: before the negotiation begins.

On the content side, AI can support research on the counterpart, market and context, help structure the agenda, objectives and possible scenarios, and challenge assumptions or blind spots.

On the practice side, it can simulate different counterpart behaviors, stress-test difficult questions, resistance, Deadlock and unexpected demands, and provide feedback afterwards.

Used this way, AI becomes a tool to strengthen both content preparation and practice preparation.

The Core Idea

AI will not remove negotiation. In repeated negotiations, it may increasingly become part of the negotiation process itself, but outcomes will still depend on the model, the information it receives, the objectives it is given and how the situation is framed. In Blue-Ocean negotiations, where ambiguity and information asymmetry are high, the human negotiator remains critical.

The real advantage of AI lies in Preparation: helping negotiators research better, challenge their assumptions, practice difficult scenarios and enter the room better prepared.

NEGOTIATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

THE END OF WIN-WIN

Session 3 | 25 August 2026

Introduction

For decades, Win-Win has shaped how many people think about negotiation: cooperate, build trust, search for common ground and create value for both sides.

But difficult negotiations do not always work this way.

In the final session of the Negotiation Summer School, Matthias Schranner explored what happens when the counterpart is not interested in cooperation, when interests collide, power is used openly and concessions are interpreted as weakness.

This is the environment behind Matthias' new book, *The End of Win-Win*.

The central idea is not that Win-Win has become irrelevant. If both parties have a genuinely trustworthy relationship, share information openly and are committed to cooperation, Win-Win can still work.

The problem begins when only one side is playing by those rules.

In interest-based negotiations, the counterpart may use information tactically, push their own demands and use power rather than cooperation to achieve its objectives. In these situations, the negotiator needs a different approach.

This is where Matthias introduced seven principles for difficult negotiations.

1. Attitude

Difficult negotiations involve a power struggle. The other side may try to create the impression that you are weaker than you are.

Do not avoid the conflict or rush into compromise. Be prepared to send your own signals of power and negotiate from a position of strength.

2. Future

Negotiating the past quickly creates blame, emotion and arguments about who was right.

Keep the negotiation focused on what needs to happen next. Negotiate the future, not the past.

3. Expectations

Wrong expectations create disappointment and weaken your position.

Be realistic about how the counterpart may behave, define the right target and storyline, and manage their expectations before the negotiation begins. Every word shapes the expectation of the negotiation.

4. Role

At the table, you are not negotiating as a private person. You are fulfilling a professional role.

Stay target-oriented, respectful and disciplined, even when the situation becomes emotional. Let the role guide your behavior, not your emotions.

5. Interests

Do not assume you fully understand the counterpart — and do not try to convince them that your values are better.

If they negotiate through interests, respond with your own interests and demands. Put the Fish on the Table.

6. Being Right

Being right does not solve the conflict.

Arguments create counterarguments. Instead, both sides state their demands and create the playground in which an agreement can be negotiated.

Do not negotiate who is right. Negotiate your demands.

7. Diversity

Different perspectives create different demands, different options and ultimately a larger playground for the negotiation.

Diversity therefore becomes especially important during Preparation: bringing together different genders, generations, cultures and backgrounds challenges established thinking and can reduce risks later in implementation.

More Women, More Peace Initiative

Matthias then mentioned the Institute's campaign for more diversity at the negotiation table: "More Women More Peace" which brings together more than 20 women from five continents, across the private and public sectors, to examine how more women can be brought into high-stakes negotiations.

The message goes in both directions: decision-makers need to create the opportunity, and women need to raise their hand and take the seat at the table.

Different perspectives create different options, and difficult negotiations need both.

The Core Idea

The End of Win-Win is not the end of cooperation. It is the end of assuming that cooperation will always be reciprocated. The seven principles provide a guideline for this new environment.

NEGOTIATION SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

SUMMARY & RESOURCES

August 2026

Thank You for Joining the Negotiation Summer School

Across three sessions, the Negotiation Summer School explored difficult negotiation from three very different perspectives.

We began with the psychology of negotiation and the importance of embracing conflict rather than avoiding it. We then examined AI in negotiation, where its strongest current role lies in strengthening Preparation rather than replacing the human negotiator. Finally, with *The End of Win-Win*, we looked at the shift from value-based to increasingly interest-based negotiations and the seven principles Matthias Schranner proposes for navigating this new environment.

The question is not whether the changing world of negotiation is good or bad, the question is whether we are prepared for it. Difficult negotiations are changing, and negotiators need to understand what that means for their mindset, their use of technology, and the way they respond to power and competing interests.

Continue with *The End of Win-Win*

The ideas explored throughout the Negotiation Summer School come together in Matthias Schranner's new book, *The End of Win-Win*.

The book goes beyond the seven principles introduced in the final session; it examines the shift from value-based to interest-based negotiation, the growing role of power and competing interests, the use of technology, and what negotiators need to do differently when cooperation can no longer simply be assumed.

Take Your Complimentary Negotiation Style Profile Test

The Schranner Concept® Online platform brings the methodology from the Summer School into a structured development journey.

It begins with the Negotiation Style Profile (NSP), which assesses your negotiation style across the 17 Schranner metrics and gives you a baseline of your current strengths and development areas.

From there, you can learn the full Schranner Concept® through the on-demand program, practice difficult negotiations through AI negotiation simulations, receive feedback based on the same 17 metrics and track your development over time.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who joined us throughout the Negotiation Summer School, contributed questions and helped make the discussions so engaging.

This was created as a limited-edition series, and we look forward to bringing our community together again for the next edition.