

**“BEHIND THE TABLE” IN NEGOTIATION:
BEHAVIORS AND FUNCTIONS OF
EFFECTIVE EXTERNAL LEADERS**

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Abstract

Negotiation group dynamics research has focused on the negotiators at the bargaining table, while limited attention has been given to those who manage the negotiators. This study used an inductive exploratory approach to investigate the behaviors and functions of effective external leaders in a negotiation setting. Thirty experienced negotiators and external leaders from large multinational organizations were interviewed, and the transcripts were analyzed for consistently identified behaviors.

In addition to negotiator-focused behaviors (*strategizing*, *empowering* and *developing*), and intra-organizational behavior (*championing*), inter-organizational behaviors (*scene-setting* and *intervening*) were also identified. This finding is significant because previous research in a manufacturing setting did not identify inter-organizational behaviors, and the behaviors that involve directly engaging with the negotiation counterparty are important for an effective external leader in a negotiation setting.

This study highlights the importance of considering the behaviors and functions of external leaders in a negotiation setting, and has implications for previous negotiation team research that ignored the external leader's contribution as part of an "expanded team". Implications for practitioners at the negotiator and external leader level are presented, as well as the potential for external leaders to play an important role in developing negotiation as an organizational capability. Finally, a research agenda is proposed to better understand how external leaders of negotiators contribute to successful negotiation outcomes for organizations.