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Author Yuan-Ling Chiu
Author's Email Address No Public.
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Abstract
Negotiating competency is one of the most crucial proficiencies to possess in the 21st century. Not only is it vital to one's success career-wise, one also has to negotiate in many daily activities. Many books, seminars, and other resources already exist readily on negotiation skills and tactics; however, not a large proportion of those are dedicated to negotiation competencies that are particularly essential for top managers. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the negotiation skills most needed by top managers, especially for those in trading companies in Taiwan.
This research employs the Delphi Method in three consecutive questionnaires, with 18 experts ranging from sales managers to owners of trading companies in Taiwan, to explore this topic. The trading companies are varied in location and the top managers varied in sex. From the results of the t-tests conducted on the comparison of negotiation strategies chosen by the top managers, there was no significant difference indicated. This implies that the awareness and use of business negotiation is reasonably solid and consistent among top managers in Taiwan.
Out of the 18 top managers, 83.3% considered the collaborative negotiation style as the preferred business practice for conflict resolution in general. The experts generated 70 negotiation competencies in total. There were 53 competencies that had an average ranking between 1 (Strongly Agree) and 2 (Agree), which means that these were viewed as very important by the managers. A further 14 competencies (up to number 67) had a mean ranking between 2 (Agree) and 3 (No Comment), which also means these were also considered significant. That only leaves three other competencies that were ranked between 3 (No Comment) and 4 (Disagree). These three can still be used as a reference though, since they were thought to be noteworthy by a number of the experts.
A final comparison of the means of each question item reveals that the opinions of the experts on business negotiation were quite analogous between the male and female groups; as well as between the companies located in the north and south. This further sustains the consistency of the overall results obtained from the experts.
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