

STRATEGIC INFLUENCE ENGINE V1.0

FRAMEWORKS TO CONTROL PERCEPTION, GUIDE JUDGMENT, AND WIN HIGH-STAKES DECISIONS.



STRATEGIC INFLUENCE ENGINE

Navigate complex negotiations with the **Strategic Influence Engine**. This toolkit assists you in:

- Applying behavioural framing in tense discussions
- De-escalating conflict without losing leverage
- Engineering agreement without concession stacking

Master the art of strategic influence with these techniques.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Deal Dynamics Diagnostic	3
Framing Anchors Cheat Sheet	6
The Framing Advantage: Negotiation Psychology Field Guide	8
The Negotiator's Behavioural Checklist	11
Vendor Leverage Tracker	13
Cognitive Leverage in Contract Structuring	15
The Concession Psychology Map	17
Conflict Resolution Playbook	19
Hidden Biases in Cross-Cultural Negotiation	22
M&A Framing Templates (for Acquirers and Founders)	24

DEAL DYNAMICS DIAGNOSTIC

A SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL TO IDENTIFY NEGOTIATION STRENGTHS, GAPS, AND BEHAVIOURAL BLIND SPOTS

Audience: Enterprise negotiators, procurement leads, corp dev, legal teams **Use Case:** Use before preparing a major negotiation, or as a training tool for team readiness

Purpose:

Strong deals come from clear awareness of the dynamics, the players, and your own biases. This tool is designed to sharpen your edge before you even enter the room.

SECTION 1: READINESS SELF-AUDIT

Rate yourself (1 = not true, 5 = always true):

Statement	1	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the emotional drivers behind the other side's ask						
I've identified the real decision-maker(s)						
I've mapped what they fear most about this deal						
I've defined my walkaway point (non-negotiables)						
I've anticipated and reframed my top 3 concessions						

SECTION 2: COGNITIVE THREAT DETECTION Check all that might apply to your current negotiation prep: ☐ I'm emotionally over-invested in the outcome I haven't clarified the other party's incentive structure My fallback plan is vague or untested I'm basing my expectations on previous deals I'm assuming they think like we do **SECTION 3: BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGY CHECK** Choose 2-3 of these to incorporate into your negotiation strategy: Open with a trust signal, not a demand Use cognitive anchoring to frame numbers Reframe objections before they're voiced Use a "future failure" premortem with your team Leave room for them to win something

****** Final Tip:

Complete this diagnostic as a team before a high-stakes negotiation. Then debrief after. The learning loop is where the real behavioural edge develops.

FRAMING ANCHORS CHEAT SHEET

A HIGH-IMPACT REFERENCE FOR SETTING COGNITIVE ANCHORS THAT SHAPE EXPECTATIONS, PRICING, AND PERCEIVED VALUE

Audience: Corporate negotiators, sales leads, pricing teams, vendor managers **Use Case:** Use before presenting offers, numbers, or timelines to control perception and boost positioning

Core Insight:

Your first number, or first frame, anchors the rest of the conversation. This cheat sheet gives you plug-and-play anchors to use across negotiation contexts.

5 ANCHOR TYPES AND HOW TO USE THEM

1. High-Value Anchor

"Our enterprise clients typically invest \$250K+. This is scoped more surgically, so it comes in closer to \$85K."

✓ Use to: Make your current price feel like a smart deal

Principle: Contrast Bias / Price Relativity

2. Time Anchor

"This usually takes 12 weeks, but we've got a slot that could fast-track it to 5."

✓ Use to: Create urgency or justify acceleration fees

Principle: Scarcity and Speed Value Framing

3. Industry Norm Anchor

"Most firms in your sector handle this through outdated [X]. This approach shifts that and gets [Y] instead."

- ✓ Use to: Reset expectations around method or innovation
- Principle: Norm Comparison Framing

4. Risk Anchor

"The bigger risk isn't the cost, it's delaying and running into X outcome."

- ✓ Use to: Shift focus from what they spend to what they avoid
- Principle: Loss Aversion Framing

5. Legacy Anchor

"The reason this works is because we've already done it in 3 firms like yours, with the same complexity, and the same goals."

- ✓ Use to: Build trust and familiarity
- Principle: Cognitive Safety / Social Proof

Framing Tip:

Say your anchor *slowly and early*. It becomes the mental benchmark, even if the deal changes later.

THE FRAMING ADVANTAGE: NEGOTIATION PSYCHOLOGY FIELD GUIDE

A TACTICAL REFERENCE FOR SHAPING PERCEPTION, CONTROLLING NARRATIVE, AND DRIVING OUTCOMES AT THE TABLE

Audience: Enterprise negotiators, corp dev leaders, legal and procurement teams **Use Case:** Use to prep for negotiations involving contracts, M&A, partnerships, or major vendors

Core Insight:

In negotiation, **how** you present something often matters more than **what** you present. This guide unpacks framing techniques that shift power, reduce resistance, and prime favourable terms.

6 PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMING MOVES FOR NEGOTIATORS

1. Default Reframe

"Let's look at this as a strategic partnership, not a transactional agreement."

Why it works: Elevates value, reduces short-term nickel-and-diming

Principle: Framing effect and Relationship Bias

2. Anchoring Advantage

"In similar deals, we've seen X-Y as the standard starting point."

Why it works: Sets psychological range for acceptable terms

Principle: Anchoring Bias

3. Concession Pre-frame

"We're prepared to make X available, assuming we're aligned on Y."

Why it works: Makes the concession feel earned, not expected

Principle: Reciprocity Bias

4. Loss Framing for Urgency

"We're aligned now, but delays can introduce noise, rework, and risk."

Why it works: Loss aversion is twice as powerful as gain framing

Principle: Prospect Theory

5. Social Proof Normalizer

"Our last three partners had similar hesitation. Here's how it played out."

Why it works: Reduces emotional risk by showing others have done it safely

Principle: Social Proof

6. Preemptive Objection Diffuser

"One thing you might be thinking is, 'Why this pricing model?' Let's address that up front."

Why it works: Disarms resistance and builds credibility

Principle: Psychological Reactance Management

Quick Use Tip:

Pick 2–3 of these and script them into your opening positioning or first proposal round. The earlier you frame, the stronger your leverage.

THE NEGOTIATOR'S BEHAVIOURAL CHECKLIST

A READY-TO-USE, PRE-NEGOTIATION CHECKLIST FOR APPLYING PSYCHOLOGY STRATEGICALLY UNDER PRESSURE

Audience: Corporate dealmakers, legal negotiators, M&A teams, procurement leads **Use Case:** Use 15–30 minutes before any high-stakes negotiation to prime mindset, framing, and focus

Core Insight:

Great negotiators don't just prep facts, they prep *framing*. This checklist distills the key behavioural moves that shift perception, build leverage, and reduce reactive mistakes.

PRE-NEGOTIATION CHECKLIST

Mental Framing
I've named my walkaway point and what I will not concede
I've identified the other party's likely core fear
I have at least one anchor ready (price, timeline, scope)
Verbal & Narrative Strategy
☐ I've rehearsed my opening 60 seconds
I've scripted <i>preemptive reframes</i> for 2 top objections
I've chosen a tone strategy (calm, assertive, collaborative, etc.)

Behavioural Leverage
☐ I've identified 1–2 concessions I'm willing to give (and when)
I've planned at least one win for the other side to feel momentum
I've prepped a de-risking close ("Let's test this for 90 days…")
Emotional Intelligence
I've clarified the ego dynamics in the room (status, insecurity, power plays)
I've built mental space for silence, tension, and timeouts
☐ I've rehearsed a reset line if things go off track
"Let's pause and zoom out. What are we really trying to solve here?"
※ Final Note:

Print this out. Run it before every negotiation. It will sharpen your edge, prevent common traps, and make your strategic thinking *felt*, not just spoken.

VENDOR LEVERAGE TRACKER

A PRACTICAL TRACKING TOOL TO ASSESS AND OPTIMIZE YOUR NEGOTIATION POSITION WHEN DEALING WITH VENDORS, SUPPLIERS, OR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Audience: Procurement leads, operations heads, vendor managers, finance teams **Use Case:** Use during RFPs, renewals, or vendor reviews to assess psychological and tactical leverage points

Core Insight:

Vendor negotiations aren't won with hardball. They're won with leverage clarity. This tracker helps you objectively rate and prioritize your power in the deal.

PART 1: VENDOR LEVERAGE CRITERIA

Rate each from 1 (low) to 5 (high):

Criteria	Score (1-5)
Number of viable competitors	
Switching cost to your org (internal)	
Switching cost to vendor (losing you)	
Vendor dependency on your vertical	
Historical performance leverage	
Contract flexibility (terms, renewals)	
Visibility into pricing structures	
Level of executive relationship access	
Current vendor need for revenue	

PART 2: LEVERAGE SUMMARY TIERS

Total Score Range	Your Position	Strategy Hint		
35-45+	High Leverage	Anchor hard, negotiate confidently		
25–34	Balanced	Trade smart, frame wins for both sides		
< 24	Low Leverage	Focus on value framing and soft power		

PART 3: PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURE TOOLS

Use these only when leverage is earned, not forced:

- "We've seen more flexible terms from others. Can you match that?"
- "If this isn't a fit, we're happy to pause and revisit."
- "We're exploring options but would prefer to stay with a partner we trust. Help me make the case."

Pro Tip:

Use this tool across your vendor stack, then create a quarterly leverage scorecard. Great negotiations start with internal clarity, not external tactics.

COGNITIVE LEVERAGE IN CONTRACT STRUCTURING

A GUIDE TO APPLYING BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE IN HOW DEAL TERMS ARE PRESENTED, STAGED, AND AGREED UPON

Audience: Deal architects, legal teams, corp dev, vendor negotiators

Use Case: Use while building or reviewing terms, pricing, and deal stages to maximize

acceptance

Core Insight:

Contracts aren't just legal, they're psychological. How you *present* a deal determines how it's *perceived* and whether it gets signed. This guide helps you structure terms to trigger cognitive comfort and reduce friction.

5 BEHAVIOURAL CONTRACT STRUCTURING PRINCIPLES

1. Chunking Complexity

Break deliverables into 2-3 "milestone" buckets rather than one long block of tasks.

Why it works: Makes the scope feel manageable and measurable

Principle: Cognitive Load Reduction

2. Price Framing with Decoys

Present three packages: anchor high, sell middle.

Why it works: Shifts perception of value without discounting

Principle: Decoy Effect / Anchoring Bias

3. "If-Then" Trust Clauses

Instead of concessions upfront, build clauses that trigger only upon outcomes. E.g., "If milestone A is met, pricing B unlocks."

Why it works: Makes trust conditional, not blind

Principle: Reciprocal Commitment Bias

4. First-Term Focus

Shorten initial term with renewal trigger E.g., 90-day pilot → 12-month auto-renew with feedback gate

Why it works: Reduces perceived risk

Principle: Commitment Gradient

5. Visual Term Framing

Include 1-page term summary with simple graphics showing value path (Timeline, ROI checkpoints, risk blockers)

Why it works: Reinforces clarity, confidence

Principle: Processing Fluency

Pro Tip:

When finalizing a contract, walk the buyer through the *psychological experience* of saying yes, not just the legal flow. Comfort = commitment.

THE CONCESSION PSYCHOLOGY MAP

A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR PLANNING, SEQUENCING, AND FRAMING CONCESSIONS IN A WAY THAT STRENGTHENS, NOT WEAKENS, YOUR NEGOTIATION POSITION

Audience: Negotiators, procurement leads, corp dev, vendor managers

Use Case: Use before entering a pricing discussion, contract revision, or multi-round

negotiation

Core Insight:

Concessions aren't losses. They're leverage tools. When structured right, a concession builds trust, resets perception, and moves the deal forward on your terms.

Part 1: The 3 Types of Concessions

Туре	Description	Leverage Strategy	
Token	Low-cost, high-perceived value	Use early to build goodwill	
Conditional Given in exchange for something else		Always frame with "ifthen" language	
Anchor-Breaker Strategic give to reset expectations		Use to shift pricing or timeline bias	

Part 2: Concession Timing Map

Deal Stage	Concession Strategy	
Early (Discovery)	Small token gives (e.g., extra scope, priority)	
Mid (Negotiation)	Introduce conditions: "If we do X, will you commit to Y?	
Late (Pushback)	Drop anchor-breaker: "We can meet you there, but the payment terms shift"	

Part 3: Behavioural Framing Phrases

- "We don't usually offer this, but I think it fits here."
- "If I get this approved, can we close today?"
- "Happy to flex here, as long as we stay aligned over there."
- "This give has to unlock commitment, not delay it."

Quick Exercise:

List 3 concessions you've made in past deals. For each, ask:

- Did I frame it before giving it?
- Did I pair it with a commitment?
- Did it create leverage, or just cost?

This reflection alone can reframe your entire approach to deal structuring.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PLAYBOOK

A BEHAVIOURAL FRAMEWORK FOR NAVIGATING HIGH-STAKES DISAGREEMENTS AND TURNING TENSION INTO TRACTION

Audience: Negotiators, legal leads, mediators, HR execs, enterprise sales or vendor teams

Use Case: Use when deals hit friction, partners clash, or internal stakeholders are misaligned

Core Insight:

Conflict isn't a breakdown. It's a pivot point. This playbook helps you reframe tension as leverage, using psychology to diffuse resistance and realign goals.

Step 1: Reframe the Narrative

Instead of:

"We're stuck."

Say:

"We've found the edge of alignment, and that's usually where real clarity starts."

- ✓ Use when both sides are dug in
- Principle: Reframing Stalemate as Progress

Step 2: Identify Core Emotional Friction

Ask:

"What's really driving the resistance: fear of loss, lack of control, threat to identity?"

Emotional Driver	Behavioural Fix
Fear of being wrong	Provide external validation or case study
Loss of control	Offer choice between 2 good options
Identity conflict	Acknowledge and respect their values

Step 3: Behavioural Tactics to Defuse Tension

Mirroring:

Repeat key phrases they use. Builds unconscious rapport. "So you're saying this feels rushed?"

Labeling:

Name their emotion to reduce its charge.

"It sounds like this feels like a step backward to you."

Tempo Reset:

Change the cadence of the conversation to regain control.

"Can I take 30 seconds to reframe where I think we're at?"

Step 4: Collaborative Reframe

"Let's not solve everything right now. Let's align on what good looks like 30 days from now, and reverse-engineer it."

- Why it works: Redirects energy forward, not backward
- Principle: Temporal Framing and Goal Reconnection

Final Tip:

The real win isn't avoiding conflict, it's emerging from it with *more clarity, trust, and alignment* than before. This playbook helps you make that transformation repeatable.

HIDDEN BIASES IN CROSS-CULTURAL NEGOTIATION

A BEHAVIOURAL CHEAT SHEET TO AVOID MISSTEPS AND BUILD TRUST IN INTERNATIONAL OR MULTICULTURAL DEAL CONTEXTS

Audience: Global deal teams, international sales leaders, procurement execs, legal advisors **Use Case:** Use before entering negotiations with cross-cultural, multilingual, or multi-regional stakeholders

Core Insight:

Cultural friction isn't just about etiquette, it's about *unseen assumptions*. This guide helps you spot the invisible biases that can derail a deal before they show up.

5 COMMON BIASES IN CROSS-CULTURAL NEGOTIATION

1. Assumed Directness Bias

Assuming clear = honest; vague = evasive.

Danger: In some cultures, directness is seen as rude or aggressive

Fix: Match communication norms. Mirror their pace and style

2. Cognitive Speed Bias

Mistaking pause or silence for disinterest or confusion.

Danger: Slower tempo may be a sign of deep processing or respect

Fix: Normalize pauses; don't rush to fill them

3. Status Signal Misinterpretation

Reading body language or tone through your own cultural lens.

Danger: Eye contact, posture, and deference vary widely

Fix: Focus on *consistency of behaviour*, not moment-to-moment cues

4. Consensus Fallacy

Assuming the person you're speaking with has decision-making power.

Danger: Hierarchies vary, many negotiators are just messengers

Fix: Always ask about the decision chain and internal approval flow

5. Time Horizon Mismatch

Assuming urgency = seriousness.

Danger: Some cultures view fast deals as reckless or disrespectful

Fix: Align timelines to their perception of risk, not yours

****** Bonus Tip:

Before any cross-cultural negotiation, ask:

"What assumptions am I making about how trust, power, and agreement are expressed here?"

That question alone can change the entire tone of your deal.

M&A FRAMING TEMPLATES (FOR ACQUIRERS AND FOUNDERS)

A SET OF DEAL-STAGE FRAMING TEMPLATES TO BUILD TRUST, MANAGE EGO, AND REDUCE RESISTANCE IN MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS

Audience: Corporate development teams, founders, private equity, investment bankers **Use Case:** Use during acquisition or merger talks, especially in founder-led or emotionally charged deals

Core Insight:

In M&A, the hardest part isn't valuation, it's psychology. You're not just buying a business, you're negotiating identity, legacy, and fear. These frames help you steer the emotional landscape.

FRAMING TEMPLATES BY DEAL STAGE

Opening Position (Acquirer to Founder)

"We're not here to take over. We're here to help you scale your legacy in a way that honours the foundation you've built."

- of Use: When meeting a founder for the first time
- Principle: Identity Preservation, Status Framing

Valuation Framing

"This valuation reflects not just the numbers, but the risk we're absorbing and the scale we believe we can unlock together."

Type: When justifying a below-expected offer

Principle: Risk Anchoring, Strategic Justification

Cultural Integration (Pre-Diligence)

"We're not here to 'corporatize'. We're here to protect what makes your team special while removing the bottlenecks."

Type: When founders worry about post-acquisition impact

Principle: Familiarity Bias and Emotional Reassurance

Timeline Urgency (without pressure)

"Deals like this lose energy when they drag. Momentum matters, and we want this to feel smooth for everyone."

Tue: Mid-negotiation when pace is slowing

Principle: Temporal Framing and Decision Fatigue Avoidance

Walkaway Framing (Closing Leverage)

"If it's not the right time, we totally respect that. We have two other deals in motion, but we want this one to work."

Type: Final stages to subtly reclaim power

Principle: Scarcity Bias, Controlled Indifference

Pro Tip:

Use these frames in **both written and verbal** form: email recaps, LOIs, and verbal debriefs. Founders need both clarity and care.

WHAT'S NEXT?

If you found this toolkit valuable, here are three ways to go further:

1. Book a Strategy Call:

Let's map these frameworks directly to your current challenge.

<u>Book Your Call Here</u>

2. Download Another Toolkit:

Explore toolkits for sales, leadership, persuasion, and negotiation.

See our Tool Kit Library HERE

3. Subscribe to the 5-Part Enablement Series:

Get deeper behavioural strategies, templates, and case studies delivered in 5-minute reads. Sign up <u>HERE</u>.

Questions? Feedback?

Reach out directly: Tom Reilly

tom@limbinic.com

imbinic.com | reillysalesconsulting.com



Limbinic Consulting

"The Science of Influence for High-Stakes Professionals."

Limbinic empowers leaders in law, consulting, financial services, and other high-stakes industries

to master the art and science of influence.

Our frameworks combine cognitive science, courtroom persuasion tactics, and elite-level strategic communication to help you shape outcomes where stakes, and scrutiny, are highest.

From closing multi-million-dollar contracts to winning high-risk negotiations, Limbinic gives you the tools to influence like a superpower.



Reilly Sales Consulting (RSC)

"Where closing psychology meets bulletproof sales systems."

Reilly Sales Consulting helps B2B sales teams close faster, with less friction, and greater predictability.

We install frameworks rooted in behavioural science that unlock complex buying groups, surface hidden objections early, and engineer decision-making confidence without the pressure tactics that buyers resist.

Whether you're scaling SaaS, professional services, industrial manufacturing, or founder-led growth, RSC gives your team the psychology-driven edge to win faster, bigger, and more often.