

Online Negotiations Techniques and Problems Facing

Yijia Pan

Shanghai Starriver Bilingual School, Shanghai 201100, China

Keywords: Collaboration security, Cognitive bias, Game theory, Framing effect, Sunk cost bias

Abstract: Online meeting is now a common way to start online work. This paper makes a challenge assignment of online meeting from perspective of enterprises and proposes possible solutions.

1. Introduction

This paper will analyze layer by layer and suggest how to better negotiate online, focusing on challenges and potential problems of online meeting, and suggest some solutions.

When humans were totally unsuspecting, the outbreak of COVID-19 has impacted thousands of people, who were either sick or being killed due to the spread of this epidemic. And, of course, it has disrupted the world trade and the global economy. To deal with this situation, most countries, especially China, have taken active measures: people were forced to wear masks on street and restricted from going out during the period of quarantine, which caused several inconveniences to people's daily lives and commercial activities.

In conjunction with this, most people (entrepreneurs) could no longer have face to face meetings or negotiations. To ensure a normal operation of their companies, apps that provide function of online meeting gained much more popularity since they allowed us to negotiate across miles cheaply and quickly. Yet online negotiation also gave rise to special challenges. Staring at the screen or even just communicate with instant messages, negotiators typically lack visual, verbal, and other sensory cues to interpret how their counterpart is feeling.

2. Challenges

2.1 Challenge of Negotiating

Every company negotiates with others hoping to get the best deal for itself and sign a contract that benefits the company. Winning business negotiations requires not only strength, but a lot of negotiating skills. Companies need to test each other and expose yourself again and again. However, forecasting another party's bargaining power and target point seems easier when people are negotiating offline. This is because people can use many external factors, like facial expression, talking mood and actions, to calculate and estimate others bargaining power. When we take online negotiation's current condition into consideration, it is hard for online negotiators to accurately forecast each other's negotiation power only by phone call and also online video meeting, like Zoom. This is because some technology problems, like video response delay, sound lag, and only

shows parts of negotiators' actions.

2.2 Technology Challenge

Technology challenge is also a big problem in online meeting. As I mentioned before, the problem of video response delay, sound lag will also affect negotiation, which will bring some potential negative effects to companies. Additionally, there are also some other technology problems, which will influence quality of meeting and impression of costumers. For example, unstable Wi-Fi will let costumers feel unpleasant.

2.3 Security Challenge

For school classes, after-work get-togethers, or even workplace meetings that stick to routine business, there's not much risk in using online meeting. Kids will probably continue to flock to it, as they can even use some interesting settings, like screen projection and beauty. For instance, people can use Snapchat filters on Zoom. However, when it comes to important meeting and negotiation, there might me some potential problems. The Washington Post reported that there was a major security breach in Zoom. Tens of thousands of private Zoom videos were uploaded to public web pages, and everyone could watch them. The person who broke the news was Patrick Jackson, a former researcher of the US National Security Agency. According to Patrick Jackson, 15,000 Zoom videos were searched in the open cloud storage space at one time. These videos have no common characteristics or origin, including all participants. His name, phone number, and even the company's financial statements and intimate conversations between private individuals! A considerable part of the videos have been uploaded to YouTube! At the beginning of this month, SpaceX and NANS said they stopped using Zoom because of "serious privacy and security issues." On April 2, Yuan Zheng, the founder of Zoom, publicly apologized to the public, and Zoom said it would stop updating new features for 90 days and devote all its security resources to solving the problem of security vulnerabilities. ^[1] This event shows that online meeting still has a lot of potential security problems.

2.4 Cognitive Bias

The big part of the problems might come from people's psychological mind; therefore, the most significant problem we should consider is cognitive bias, which will affect people's decision a lot, especially for online meeting. This is because people cannot know others facial expression, talking mood and actions accurately during online meeting. Now let us look at some typical examples in cognitive bias. For example, framing effect, which means judgment about quality can be changed by irrelevant information, like brand familiarity and price. Therefore, how an issue is framed can significantly affect people' decisions and judgments. Moreover, this effect might be more influential when negotiating online. This is because the first thing negotiators see is ppt when people are negotiating online, and people's video is often smaller than ppt/screen sharing. We know that our brain receives visual information preferentially to non-visual information. Thus, people will create "frame" easier online, just like the situation Figure 1 shows.

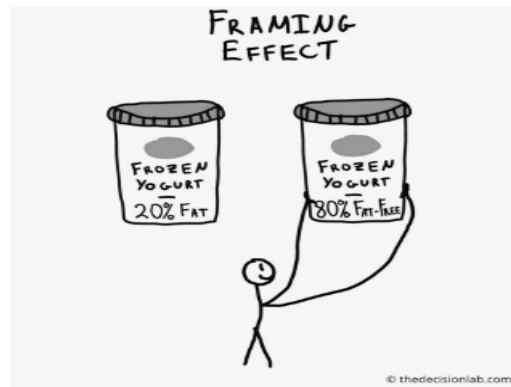


Fig.1 Framing Effect

3. Solutions

3.1 Creating Proper Atmosphere

People often negotiate with each other in meeting room or office when they have offline-meeting. Those places are often more official and serious comparing to people's homes. When people are working at home, there are usually more distractions, which make people less focused and affect the efficiency of negotiations. To solve this problems, people should focus on three parts, working environments, work dress and noises. First, people can vacate a study or set up an independent space, which is separated from life and leisure space. This can effectively eliminate other distractions and temptations, and create a better and more serious work atmosphere. Additionally, this can effectively isolate noises. Some sound insulation cotton can also be placed in the study to effectively screen noises made by family members. This study room is quite important, since employees need to focus and concentrate while working, to produce expected results. It proves to be highly difficult with the distractions of family wanting attention or other household noises. Not every household can provide good working conditions as an office space does. Moreover, a survey released by Glassdoor, where nearly 1,000 American employees were asked about their top concerns when working from home between March 11 and March 13, 2020, reported that roughly 32% of employees say watching TV is a top distraction when working remotely, followed by 27% who say child care is a huge distraction. [2]

Secondly, people should dress more formal when they need to have some meeting. This is because dressing formally for work helps people mentally separate work and leisure time, which could be very helpful for people who need to create stronger boundaries between these two parts of their life. By contrast, if people's dress code is relax when they're meeting a client in an industry where you're expected to dress formally, this opposite could create a sense of distrust and unease. [3]

3.2 Using Official Application

The primary considerations for most people to use online meeting apps are convenience and cost, and many social media apps, like Zoom, are designed to be easy to use. It seems to be free, however, there may be risks of privacy disclosure. People are paying with the personal data they share on the app. New users typically focus on an app's functionality rather than the behind-the-scenes data processing practices. To prevent this, there are some basic steps hosts and users can take to stay safe. Just like a strong account password, keep your "personal meeting ID" secret. If it leaks, anyone else who knows the ID and password can join the meeting. And don't share any of these on social media, which is foolish and pointless.

Moreover, people can use Zoom's "waiting room" facility. This feature means all participants have to be actively allowed by the host to join a conversation, and participants can also be kicked back into the waiting room at any point. [4]

And, last but not the least, download the apps on official websites, as this will bring less advertisements and the apps will not be so easy to be attacked.

4. Conclusion

This paper expounds the challenge of negotiation online, technology challenge, security challenge and cognitive bias in online meeting and negotiation, and provides possible solutions and suggestions to deal with the challenges. As one of the most common meeting form all over the world, people should pay more attention on the potential problems and solutions in online meeting.

References

- [1] "Online video conferencing software Zoom has been exposed as a major security flaw! Tens of thousands of people have had their privacy compromised" (2020). [Online] Available: <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1663280081297892921&wfr=spider&for=pc>
- [2] "Disadvantages Of Working From Home" (2021). [Online] Available: <https://blog.vantagecircle.com/disadvantages-of-working-from-home/>
- [3] "Does What We Wear To Work Affect Our Productivity?", Rollings, W (2020). [Online] Available: <https://hive.com/blog/office-dress-productivity/>
- [4] "Zooming in on privacy concerns", Aiken. A (2020). [Online] Available: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0306422020935792>