

Overview:

In this activity, students will practice their negotiation skills by role-playing a negotiation between a US military advisor and the provincial governor of the Ghazni Province, Afghanistan.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop ability to discuss complex issues and ideas with people of different views, learning to speak with clarity and respectfulness.
- Build interpersonal communications skills to listen and respond to various types of conversations and materials to participate in respectful discourse.
- Build negotiation skills.

Information for Instructor:

There are three student handouts included with this activity:

“Negotiation Exercise Introduction” student handout

“Role #1 – US Advisor” Handout

“Role #2 – Senior Advisor, Office of the Provincial Governor, Ghazni” Handout

Instructions:

Tell the class they will be doing a negotiation exercise and give them “Negotiation Exercise Introduction” handout. Read through it as a class and clarify any questions or concerns.

Divide class into two groups, assign roles, and give group members the handouts associated with their roles. It is important that both groups see *only* their own handouts.

Before the negotiation, groups will need time to prepare. The suggested time is 10 – 15 minutes, but this can be adapted based on the time available to the instructor. Students must talk through the following questions, also found on their handout:

- What are my counterpart’s interests?
- What leverage do I have?
- Should security considerations play a role in the decision?
- What consequences and trade-offs need to be considered?
- Who are the stakeholders regarding this issue? How should they be considered?
- What information do we lack?

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Have a select number of representatives from each group (the suggested number is 1 – 3 representatives from each group) meet at the negotiation table and begin talking. Representatives might wish to pause and discuss with their group mates throughout the negotiation. Let the negotiation run as time allows. The instructor may pause and redirect the students periodically to guide the negotiation.

Applications: This activity can be used to engage students outside of the standard curriculum - between units, near the end of the school year, after standardized testing, or at an after-school club. It is a great way to introduce the practice of negotiation and the power of talking to and humanizing those who we perceive as our enemies. The activity can also be used to exemplify that cooperation is possible (and sometimes necessary) between those who would not otherwise want to work together, which can also be tied into units in history, social studies, government, and leadership.

Negotiation Exercise

Promoting Health Care in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan¹

Introduction: The United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA) strongly believes that establishing a better health care system in Ghazni Province in Afghanistan will help increase legitimacy for the provincial governate. UNAMA is looking to gain both the support of the US government and the Governor of Ghazni for a unified plan to expand health care delivery.

While Ghazni Province does have four hospitals and many more health clinics, most of this predominantly rural province is without access to any consistent health service. The majority of the population remains over a half day of travel from the nearest health facility (doctor's office, clinic or hospital). UNAMA's goal is to expand the reach of Afghanistan's Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) to more areas of the province in order to reduce the strength of the Taliban and increase the credibility of the government. The two proposals on the table are to expand significantly the hospital in the city of Ghazni and build two additional hospitals in two of the more remote districts with strong Taliban ties or to establish a mobile health care system that would travel from district to district and within districts. Additional hospitals would be more expensive but would also be permanent; the mobile health care system would provide access to health care to many more people but would be transitory. Roads in some of the districts are still mined and patrolled by the Taliban and the local warlords.

Ghazni Province is in the central/southeastern part of the country and is characterized by a good deal of tension between the two major ethnic groups, the Pashtun and the Hazara. It has a strong Taliban presence and the Taliban remain a strong factor in daily life.

For this exercise, a US military adviser and a senior advisor to the provincial governor of Ghazni will meet to discuss the two plans. The governor strongly supports the hospital expansion plan while the US is urging UNAMA to adopt the mobile clinics.

During the meeting with your counterpart, please consider the following:

- What are my counterpart's interests?
- What leverage do I have?
- Should security considerations play a role in the decision?
- What consequences and trade-offs need to be considered?
- Who are the stakeholders regarding this issue? How should they be taken into account?
- What information do we lack?

Role #1—US Advisor

As a US advisor you have been asked to meet with the senior advisor on health care in the provincial governor's office. The United States wants UNAMA to help the Afghanistan Ministry of Health create a mobile health care system and the U.S. will contribute resources to its development. You are tasked with convincing the governor's office to support the proposal. Mobile clinics will have a greater reach into areas of the province that have received little governmental assistance. Not only will mobile clinics raise the credibility of the government and Ministry of Health among the people of Ghazni, but it will also increase the effectiveness of promising programs to expand health care delivery. For example, this will enable the effective use of midwives, who are being trained in many parts of Afghanistan, including Ghazni, through the financial and technical support of international NGOs. These midwives are now registered with the Ministry of Health and the midwife program is being lauded as a major success by the ICRC, USAID and other international actors and continues to attract significant international funding. Other international NGOs such as Save the Children are already training and supporting community health workers living in some of the poorest and most remote areas of Ghazni. Mobile clinics will also enable a wider dissemination of important health information as well as greater access to essential vaccines and other pharmaceuticals. It is not clear how long the support of the government in Kabul will last for the mobile clinic idea, so it is important to get the provincial governor's consent as soon as possible.

Role #2—Senior Advisor, Office of the Provincial Governor, Ghazni

You and your boss, the provincial governor, strongly prefer the expansion of the health care system by building new hospitals. This will help the local economy by providing construction jobs and then more staff jobs for the hospital. In addition, mobile clinics will need a greater security umbrella to ensure the safety of both health care providers and patients. Such clinics will more likely be vulnerable to Taliban exploitation and influence. It will also be very difficult to ensure the quality of health care that is provided and you are concerned that drugs and vaccines can be stolen or diluted and then re-sold on the black market. Rather than mobile clinics it would be much better to develop and build access to safe water and better transportation infrastructure, which can serve two interests, economic development and a better health care system. And, clean water is one of the best means of preventative health. In addition, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) runs seven physical rehabilitation centers in Afghanistan but currently has no centers or hospitals in Ghazni and is interested in expanding into the region. You also want more time in order to gain more support for the hospital option, particularly by demonstrating to local groups and district leaders that they can benefit from the governor's preferred plan.