



Never Make the First Offer: (Except When You Should) Wisdom from a Master Dealmaker

By Donald Dell, John Boswell

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"On a handshake, I've trusted Donald Dell with my life." -Arthur Ashe, U.S. Open champion

Good negotiators know the rules. Great negotiators know when to break those rules. And then there are the true master dealmakers, like the pioneering sports lawyer Donald Dell. Over the last four decades, he has fought for some of the biggest stars in the world—Michael Jordan, Jimmy Connors, Patrick Ewing, Andy Roddick, Stan Smith, and dozens of others.

Dell is tough enough to look the general manager of the L.A. Lakers in the eye and say, "We can talk about the weather or the movies or your sex life, whatever you want, but we're not going any further until you make an opening offer." On the other hand, he's shrewd enough to know when the managing partner of the Chicago Bulls was about to lowball Michael Jordan by \$40 million—unless Dell could grab the advantage by naming his number first.

Now Dell reveals the advanced strategies and tactics that he has developed over a lifetime of high-stakes deals. Whether you're making endorsement deals for superstars, negotiating your next salary, or just trying to sell your old car, Dell's wisdom will help you get every possible advantage.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. Legendary sports agent Dell reveals the secrets to successful negotiating in this spellbinding, behind-the-scenes look at deal making in the high stakes world of professional athletics. The treasure trove of practical advice is backed up by mesmerizing tales of the deals Dell closed on behalf of such stars as Arthur Ashe, Michael Jordan, Jimmy Connors and Patrick Ewing. The author drives home simple yet powerful business lessons: he recalls how his negotiation for a new Michael Jordan basketball shoe reached an impasse until Nike exec Peter Moore blurted out a clear concept for a line called Air Jordan, which subsequently became the biggest licensing deal in history; and his own temper cost him a deal signing a promising young tennis star. Sidebars offer advice from athletes, politicians and dealmakers including former senator and Basketball Hall of Fame player Bill Bradley and former senator George Mitchell, who negotiated the Good Friday peace agreement of 1998 in Northern Ireland. Dell reveals that successful deal making requires strong relationships, trust, self-awareness—the very qualities his star clients embody. (Aug.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

About the Author

Donald Dell is the cofounder of the Association of Tennis Professionals and the founder of ProServ, a leading sports agency that has represented hundreds of star athletes. He is also a former captain of the U.S. Davis Cup tennis team, the founder of the Legg Mason Tennis Classic, and a television tennis commentator.

John Boswell has written or cowritten seventeen books including *What They Don't Teach You at Harvard Business School*.

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