Every negotiation begins with a desire. One of the participants at least wants to achieve something he has not yet achieved. Why else would he want to enter into a negotiation? Often the motive is quite obvious, in the case of a purchase or a sale, for example. But even then there are underlying differences: how urgent is the sale or purchase for the other party? Does he have several alternatives? The balance of negotiating power depends significantly on the answer to these questions. The side that has more time and choice always has the edge on the other. That we all know. But the needs and wishes of the parties involved influence a great many other aspects of the course and outcome of a negotiation than the question of power alone. If these needs are accurately appreciated and accounted for by the other side, it is possible to pass from purely distributive bargaining to a mutually favourable exchange. The subject of the negotiation broadens from discussion of a single issue (such as the price) to several issues (the other desires). In terms of the behaviour involved, it passes from confrontation to cooperation. But for such an exchange to function, both sides have to harbour other needs that have not yet been satisfied, which may be spontaneous or have come about specifically on this occasion. The question can thus be formulated as follows: is the other party interested only in the main issue of the negotiation, or does he have other needs?

Meticulous preparation, attentive observation and skilful questions put before and during the course of the negotiations, or better still, over an informal meal together, will doubtless soon provide an answer to this question. This task will of course require a minimum knowledge of human nature and the ability to empathize with the other, plus a little imagination. The chief motivations, in fact, often have no apparent con-
connection with the current negotiation and first need to be put into the right context. The same is true of our respective values, what I and my opposite number consider to be good or bad, ethical or immoral, right or wrong. Once we have discovered the real interests, needs and values of our adversary, we come to what is actually the most important question of all: How can they be used for our negotiation, as far as possible to the advantage of both sides. This chapter will propose some answers to this question.

What do I need?

Everybody has needs – starting with the things that are essential to life: air, water and food. Without these we cannot survive. Equally fundamental is a need for peace, clothing, a roof over our heads, and the exercise of our sexual drive. Only once these basic needs have been met, according to the social psychologist, Maslow (1954), do people turn to other, less immediate desires. It has been said that man lives by bread alone only when there is no bread, but that if he regularly has enough to eat, hunger is no longer a real motivation. From this standpoint we can establish a hierarchy of human needs classified in descending order of their significance for sheer survival. Maslow divided these needs into five classes, which he represented graphically in the form of a hierarchical pyramid (Figure 3-2).