Early on in this book we divided the virtually limitless variety of negotiation possibilities into two basic categories: distributive and integrative. Distributive bargaining we presented in Chapter 2. This is the best-known form of negotiation and as such most people have had experience of it. It goes without saying that here too the success rate can be considerably increased by thorough training and an improved negotiation technique. That is what we have attempted to impart here. But if that were the entire secret of the art of conducting negotiations, this book would be nothing but a manual on haggling techniques, and there would soon be nothing more to say. But that is not the case. While it cannot be denied that some form or another of distribution and hard bargaining may be involved in resolving conflicts, the real art of the process is to assure that all parties end up equally happy with the result. This chapter will take up and further develop the concept of the various needs and wishes introduced in Chapter 3, and use it to present the fundamentals of integrative bargaining.

No losers

A really successful negotiation leaves no losers. This is quite a high principle to aim at, and it will accompany us throughout the book, as it should perhaps in real life. Just think back to your most unpleasant experiences with negotiation. They are likely to be occasions when you had something of a sneaking feeling that you had been taken for a ride. One or another of your colleagues probably confirmed this with a knowing smile. Or you preferred to keep the whole thing to yourself, to avoid
being made fun of. The fact that you can still remember it so well today, however little real importance it had at the time, speaks volumes. No one likes to be a loser. And especially so, when he (or she) can’t or doesn’t want to recognize the winner as being superior. But even if we consistently come out on top, because we have power or persuasion skills, confrontation is a risky strategy. Then there will always be someone else who loses out, simply the same thing in reverse. Others don’t like to lose either, and are likely to keep out of our way in the future. In the long run, confrontation is not the answer, even if it regularly brings a short-term gain. How much better it would be for both sides if they could come to an agreement that makes both of them winners. But how does that work?

**Give and take**

The most important condition for an integrative solution is the presence of several issues that can be negotiated as a package. To come back to the example of buying a car, if we confine ourselves to the price, then it is impossible for both sides to win. Other elements that can be used as concessions against the price, or against one another, need to come into the picture. These other objects are not generally on the table as and of themselves, nor are they there at the beginning, but they have first to be created or brought in with intention. For this an important ingredient is necessary which is often neglected: creativity. Even when both sides are interested in shifting the emphasis of their negotiation from a difficult issue to a number of simple issues, these simple issues still have to be found in the first place.

It seems that the dealer who wants to sell us a car is unwilling to offer us more than the usual discount. The discussion does not seem to be getting anywhere. After a long pause, he comes out with the idea that he could offer us a set of winter tyres, or voluntarily upgrade the standard guarantee issued by the manufacturer. Both of these cost him less than they cost us; that we know. But neither the tyres nor the guarantee are something to be sneezed at. In turn we may then offer to pay in cash, and ask about the price of other extras, such a sunroof, which we had intended to order anyway. He is also clearly pleased when we talk of possible future dealings with him, especially since we need a new car quite frequently for business use. With so much willingness on our part, he suddenly