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My Way: Strategic Preferences Vary by Negotiator Role and Regulatory Focus

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Negotiators may use vigilant, loss-minimizing strategies or eager, gain-maximizing strategies. The present study provides evidence that preferences for these different strategies depend on negotiator role and personal orientation. In a price negotiation, buyers and prevention-focused individuals prefer vigilant strategies whereas sellers and promotion-focused individuals prefer eager strategies. When there is a match between the strategy and the role (*role-strategy fit*) or between the strategy and the individual's regulatory focus orientation (*focus-strategy fit*), the negotiator experiences more fit and plans to be more demanding in the negotiation. By manipulating strategy in a real, binding negotiation, we reveal its importance in determining negotiators' subjective experiences and planned demand. Our results show that shared strategic preferences between different motivational orientations—negotiator role and personal regulatory focus—can create self-regulatory compatibility.