Best Practices for Building Trust in Virtual Business Negotiations

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ABSTRACT: *Virtual discussions have become a common practice in the corporate sector. This article aims to outline the most effective strategies that can be used to establish trust in virtual discussions. To achieve this goal, several techniques were employed, including direct observation, interviews with negotiators, analysis of 2,000 virtual conversations, and monitoring a company's virtual negotiations for around 24 months. Based on a thorough analysis of the content, the main findings highlighted effective strategies that can build trust in remote negotiations. These include selecting the appropriate form of virtual communication, providing multiple contact options, ensuring reliable and high-quality connections, maintaining constant accessibility, and creating an organized and conducive environment for communication, free from interruptions. This article offers a fresh perspective on virtual business negotiations that is useful to academics, negotiators, and other professionals. It presents practical strategies for establishing trust in virtual negotiations.*

KEYWORDS: trust, online business negotiation, virtual work, business negotiation, best practices,technology.

INTRODUCTION

Business negotiations encompass purchase inputs, sales, or other purposes, addressed in this article. Negotiation is the key element that provides communication between parties to reach an agreement that satisfies mutual objectives (Thompson et al., 2010). In the coronavirus pandemic and social isolation due to sanitary measures worldwide, the necessity for improvement in remote, virtual negotiations became prominent.

Technological advancements have influenced communication and business processes, leading to increased remote negotiations. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this process, making it crucial for companies to build trust in virtual negotiations (Morrison-Smith & Ruiz, 2020). For-profit companies aim to maximize results and market share, focusing on critical areas like sales, inputs, raw materials, and service contracts. Trust is a fundamental pillar for achieving satisfactory results in negotiations, and best practices to enhance trust building in virtual negotiations are paramount. This research aims to identify best practices for trust-building in Brazilian virtual business negotiations, focusing on behaviors and practices that generate trust and avoid distrust generation. The goal is to create a guideline for companies to apply these best practices in virtual negotiations. Considering trust as one of the fundamental pillars for achieving satisfactory results in a negotiation (Koeszegi, 2004), best practices that enhance trust building in virtual negotiations became paramount.

This study is structured into six comprehensive sections, with each section contributing to a thorough understanding of the topic. The first section, 'Theoretical Background,' establishes the theoretical foundation of the research and builds upon previous work in the field. The 'Empirical Context' section presents the relevant business scenarios explored. The 'Methodology' section outlines the research methodology used, ensuring the validity and reliability of the findings. In the 'Analysis of Findings' section, a critical evaluation of the results is provided, followed by a discussion of the implications and managerial recommendations. The 'Future Research' section highlights the potential for further study in this area. Finally, the study concludes with declarations of conflicts of interest and funding, which ensures transparency and accountability.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

We expect companies to work hard to succeed in their market niche. The search for new commercial, financial, and process strategies is fundamental for any company, regardless of its activity. Several papers have been published in this field of business strategy in recent years (Adner et al., 2010; Barney, 1991; Kim, 2005). One of the most recognized works by Porter (2008) shows that corporate strategy should be built based on five forces: (a) The rivalry between companies in the same market, (b) the threat of new companies in your market, (c) bargaining power with suppliers; (d) bargaining power with customers; (e) the threat of new products or services that will replace your service/product. Notably, at least two of the five forces correspond to bargaining power related to negotiating skills. It shows that it is fundamental for a business strategy to have successful negotiations. An understanding of this resource is necessary to facilitate the negotiators' work. Since trust is one of the main pillars affecting negotiation, we will explore the theories about negotiation and trust in virtual negotiations. From there, we create a basis for our practical study.

Negotiation has been researched from different perspectives and fields, such as social psychology, behavior, management, political science, and behavior. The multidisciplinary approach generated a body of theoretical knowledge to complement the ideas developed by empirical findings. Negotiation research has different phases and influences over time. Game and behavioral decision theories gained ground in the 1980s (Raiffa, 1982). In the 1990s, most negotiation studies were studied through the lens of social psychology (Komorita & Parks, 1995).

Notably, both disciplines have become more correlated through the perspective of social and behavioral psychology. For example, in the negotiation context, some authors define trust as accepting vulnerability and expecting positive intentions from others (Rousseau et al., 1998). This acceptance tends to a higher sharing of information and interests that facilitates the creation of solutions that suit the parties (Kimmel et al., 1980; Pruitt & Kimmel, 1977). In contrast, distrustful negotiators tend to be more reluctant to share information with the negative expectation that the information provided could be used against them.

Organizations are usually a good study scenario for both subjects since the practical knowledge and the reality experienced can be analyzed through the academic perspective, generating theories, testing, and applying them (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001). A study conducted in organizations by Elangovan & Shapiro (1998) shows that despite the importance of trust in negotiations, it is common to see in business the violation of trust in different aspects. This type of conduct compromises the negotiation outcome of the lack of integration between the parties. It is attractive for negotiators to maximize their gains, even though this could compromise trust and future negotiations. For example, Valley et al. (1998) suggests that the greater the economic gain for a negotiator, the more likely he is to lie to achieve his objective. However, lies compromise a negotiator's reputation and make future trust more difficult.

Maximizing their gains tempts the negotiator to use bluffing and disclaimers. However, a study (Shapiro & Bies, 1994) shows that this conduction leads to a more competitive and less collaborative negotiation compromising the outcome due to the generation of distrust. On the other hand, some studies (Schweitzer et al., 2006; Butler, 1995) affirm that negotiators who trust each other tend to exchange priorities, information, and preferences, leading to an integrative outcome. Considering that there are tactics like these used in negotiation that negatively affects trust, it would be critical to have the opposite, a tactical plan that assists in trust creation during negotiations. Moreover, it is precisely this perspective that our study focuses on. It is also considering the virtual environment as a negotiation table.

Researchers have also studied dirty negotiation tactics. One of the known tactics is proposed by Fisher & Ury (2011) through an integrative model that aims at collaboration between the parties to increase the efficiency of the negotiation result. They exemplified that through two

sisters with an orange tale. Both sisters wanted the orange. In the first scenario, they are not collaborative; in this case, they divide the orange in half, each taking one half. According to Fisher & Ury (2011), neither came out satisfied with the agreement since the interests behind it were not met. In the second scenario, the sisters collaborate and exchange information on each other's interests. While one wants the juice of the orange, the other only needs the peel. In this way, the result of the negotiation fully complements their interests, unlike in the first scenario. In summary, Fisher & Ury (2011) suggests that the more collaborative the negotiation, the greater the possibility of achieving mutual interests and, thus, a better result. This type of collaboration can only be achieved with trust among parties (Thompson et al., 2010).

According to Fisher & Ury (2011), a powerful strategy to gain negotiation power is to have a BATNA (best alternative to a negotiated agreement). This feature aims to have a good alternative if the negotiation does not agree. Other studies defend opposite tactics (Keltner et al., 2003; French & Raven, 1959). Instead of using the exchange of information collaboratively, the idea is to use bargaining power to get the best results only for oneself. They argue that the negotiator is more apt to accept less satisfactory results for closing a deal since there is no other reasonable option in case an agreement is not reached. Conversely, if there are options outside the negotiation, his decision power on whether or not to close the deal increases, allowing higher bargaining power, depending on the situation; using this feature and increasing power during the negotiation, the negotiator can impose himself more. However, this can break the trust between the parties (Shapiro & Bies, 1994). Some authors have investigated if negotiators were more propensity to reach a satisfying agreement in face-to-face negotiations than in remote negotiations (Naquin & Paulson, 2003; Purdy et al., 2000). Both studies suggested a lower level of trust among remote negotiators than face-to-face negotiators. The lack of trust in remote negotiations implied less satisfactory results. In addition, negotiators were less likely to negotiate again virtually.

Some specialists defend that trust is more challenging to generate and maintain in virtual environments (McDonough et al., 2001; Olson & Olson, 2006; Sarker et al., 2011). The absence of visual cues added to reduced physical interaction interferes with people's perception in identifying the real intentions of the other (Jarvenpaa & Leidner, 1999; Eisenberg & Krishnan, 2018). According to Kraut et al. (2002), remote interactions tend to be more formal. This type of conduct makes it difficult to create empathy, which leads to reduced information exchange between the parties. Following the same line of reasoning, other authors complement this by saying that the difficulty of virtual interactions is related to the challenge of creating relational and emotional bonds (Kraut et al., 2002; Herbsleb & Mockus, 2003; Robert, 2016). Such ties are essential for exchanging experiences and negotiating tasks (Raymond, 1999).

During our research, we saw several negotiation papers, and some focusedon trust in negotiations. We also saw several papers about trust in virtual teams (Morrison-Smith and Ruiz,

2020, Handy, 1995, Coppola et al., 2004). However, only in a conceptual literature review article was one of the topics mentioning the virtual environment (Thompson et al., 2010). Nevertheless, we have yet to see any specific information from the virtual scenario that would contribute to this subject. Also, we have yet to find any papers focused on trust in virtual negotiations. This deficiency made us realize that the business and academy needed a helpful article that detected the best practices to generate trust in virtual negotiations. With this thought and after exhaustively studying the predecessor concepts of trust in virtual negotiations and work, we stepped inside a company for practical analysis. In the following topic, we will present the study's practical context.

Empirical Context

In summary, the study focused on a company that operates in the Brazilian salt market. Salt is a low-value-added commodity with very few competitive differentials and no prospects for innovation. Companies in this segment have similar products and processes, and their sales largely depend on their sales team's negotiation skills. Based on observations, countless segment customers view the salt market with suspicion. Therefore, one of the company's main strategies and policies is to be reliable in a discredited market. This particular proposal was one of the reasons to choose this company for the case study focused on trust practices in virtual business negotiation. The rationale for conducting research within the selected company is displayed in the following Table 1:

Table 1 *Reasons for conducting the study at the chosen company*

Topic	General	Negotiation	Trust
Brazilian Salt Market	B2B Costumers	Virtually and Face-to-face	Seen as a low-trust market
Company's Market Strategy	Do not compete with prices and deliver the best product quality and service to the customer	Have four branches located in specific regions of the country to conduct as many presential negotiations as possible	"To be a reliable company in a market without credibility."
General Company Information	Top Five Salt Industry in Brazil	Costumers with different negotiation profiles	Reference company in the sector in terms of reliability
Other information	More than 30 years in the market; Operates in all national territory	Negotiations that were carried out strictly in person are being conducted virtually after Covid-19	The sales team and buyers team have struggles and successes in establishing trust in virtual negotiations

*Note: The company conducts daily virtual and face-to-face negotiations; however, we will focus only on virtual negotiations.

METHODOLOGY

This section explains the research design, including philosophy, data collection, analysis, and conduct. The study uses qualitative research, abductive reasoning, and extensive research on negotiation, trust in negotiations, and remote work. The findings are compared with literature content, and practical and theoretical approaches are suggested to generate trust in virtual negotiations. The study aims to provide insights into remote work practices.

After extensive analysis of the mentioned literature, we chose to carry out a case study observing extensively the negotiations performed by a company in the Brazilian salt industry. We based our choice on the fact that we could analyze more in-depth the experiences of a company that perfectly fit the standards required for the research, as shown in Table 1. Renowned authors support this method. Yin (2009), for example, defends the relevance of the single case study with one unit of analysis. Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) postulate that case studies are a way to build theory by replicating logic. They affirm that this is one of the best methods or even the best to build a theory because of the richness of the data collection, making abductive cases research consistently. Similar to a well-recognized study in the field research area (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997), we combined three different resources for data capture:

Observations: We could follow the daily routine of the company's commercial and purchasing sectors. For more than 24 months, we could follow the employees of each of these sectors daily. Negotiations were accompanied by videoconferencing being on the negotiators' side, negotiations via cell phone through the speakerphone, and negotiations via e-mail and messaging applications through the collaboration of each one. Regarding those involved, we witnessed the virtual negotiations between the suppliers, the supply manager, and the buyer in the purchasing sector. In the commercial sector, we could follow the negotiations of the commercial manager, the commercial supervisor, and six other salespeople. On the board's side, we could observe some commercial director's negotiations and others from the company's CEO.

In summary, we had access to 12 professionals that negotiated daily, on average, eight negotiations per day each. Of these eight, around six were remote. Face-to-face negotiations were not part of this study since the focus is exclusively on trust in virtual negotiations. We can affirm that we observed more than 2,000 virtual negotiations, from the quickest and most straightforward to the most complex and prolonged. Most were of low complexity and were usually faster, taking between 5 and 10 minutes from beginning to end. The most complex involved a contract and several rounds of negotiation. This one took approximately 1.5 years. Informal Discussions: We have had hundreds of informal conversations with employees. Usually, after a virtual negotiation, it was customary for us to discuss their perception regarding trust between the parties and the perceptions of each one related to the increase or decrease of trust during the negotiation. These conversations also included the tactics that each used to

increase trust, which worked, and which failed. While also covering topics such as preparation and post-negotiation. We also had the opportunity to talk informally with some clients to get feedback regarding trust-building and distrust.

Internal Documents: In addition to informal conversations, we had access to internal company documents related to sales and purchases to increase the validation of our observations. With these documents, we could verify order closings, evaluate previous and new prices, and confirm our assumptions during the observations. These documents even included competitors' price information provided by the customer. The competition often offered a lower price for the same product. However, the customer's trust in the company's salesman was the determining factor for closing the order, even at a higher price. In other cases, there were other factors besides trust for closing the orders.

The study focused on generating trust in virtual negotiations through recurrence and diversity. Data was gathered from observations, notes, informal conversations, and internal documents. The findings were then sent to participants, including sellers, managers, directors, and buyers. The study found that the large volume of negotiations led to the identification of behavioral patterns that increased and reduced trust. The next topic will present the findings and analysis.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This section shows the careful analysis of the key findings. At the end of this topic, we will present our suggestion of best practices for trust building in virtual negotiations based on the in-depth analysis of the negotiations carried out within the organization. A large number of negotiations observed led us to identify behavioral patterns that we relate to and describe according to the following Figure 1:

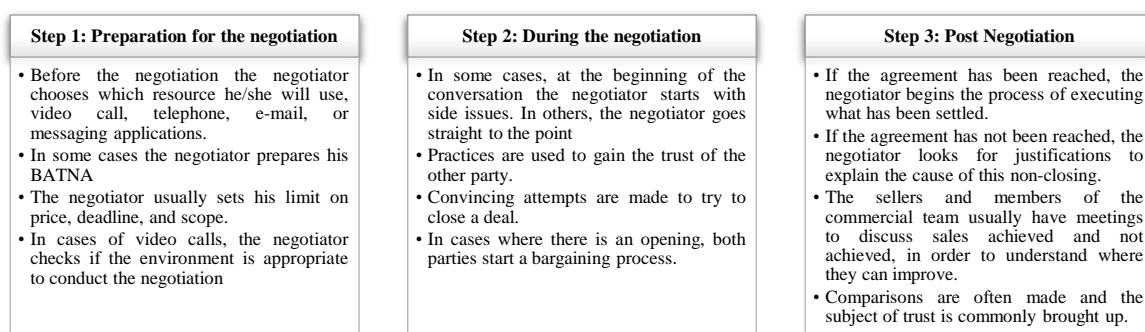| Step 1: Preparation for the negotiation	Step 2: During the negotiation	Step 3: Post Negotiation
• Before the negotiation the negotiator chooses which resource he/she will use, video call, telephone, e-mail, or messaging applications. • In some cases the negotiator prepares his BATNA • The negotiator usually sets his limit on price, deadline, and scope. • In cases of video calls, the negotiator checks if the environment is appropriate to conduct the negotiation	• In some cases, at the beginning of the conversation the negotiator starts with side issues. In others, the negotiator goes straight to the point • Practices are used to gain the trust of the other party. • Convincing attempts are made to try to close a deal. • In cases where there is an opening, both parties start a bargaining process.	• If the agreement has been reached, the negotiator begins the process of executing what has been settled. • If the agreement has not been reached, the negotiator looks for justifications to explain the cause of this non-closing. • The sellers and members of the commercial team usually have meetings to discuss sales achieved and not achieved, in order to understand where they can improve. • Comparisons are often made and the subject of trust is commonly brought up.

Figure 1 Process Patterns Identified in a Virtual Negotiation

After extensive monitoring of the company's virtual negotiations routine, we could identify through repetition the consequences of the negotiators' actions and how these actions affected trust among parties.As the data analysis followed, we could identify how trust-generating and mistrust-generating practices fit into the negotiation flow. Figure 2 demonstrates that trust between the negotiators is a product of the practices that generate trust and mistrust between them. Furthermore, we saw that the degree of trust directly affects the negotiation outcome. The data suggest that the higher the degree of trust, the more collaborative the negotiation is. Consequently, the more satisfied the negotiators are regarding the outcome, corroborating with previous studies (Schweitzer et al., 2006; Fisher & Ury, 2011; Shapiro & Bies, 1994).
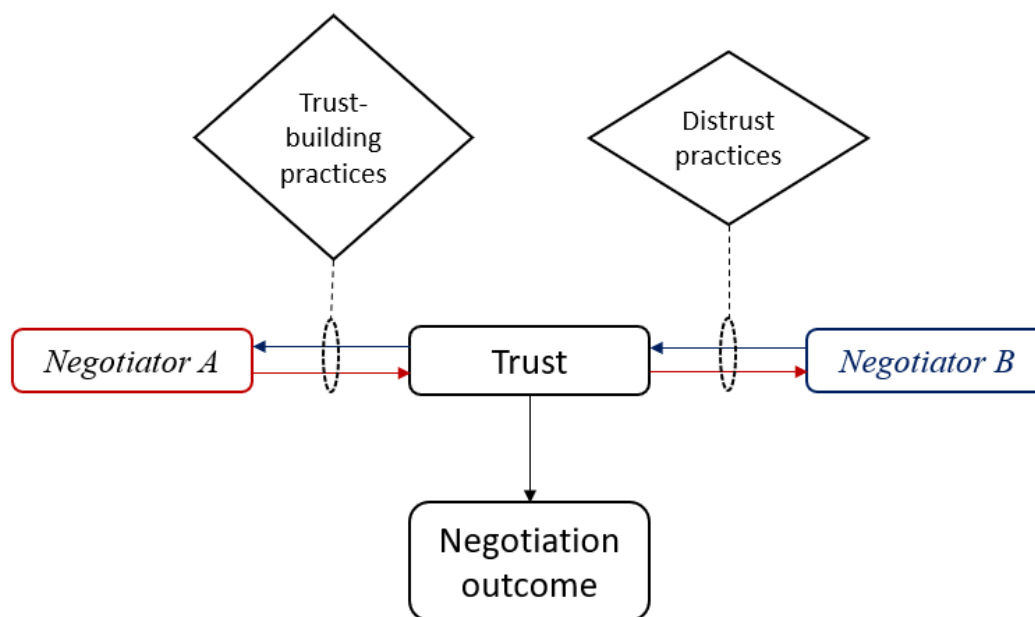
Figure 2 Flow of trust-related practices between traders during virtual negotiations.

From these patterns, we could suggest practices to increase trust and reduce mistrust in negotiations that occur in remote environments. To improve the understanding of each item, we will exemplify situations in the company's day-to-day. To optimize the understanding, we have divided the activities into a group of steps related to the negotiation period. The practices that precede the negotiation are included in Step 1. The practices that occur during the negotiation are in Step 2. Furthermore, the practices that occur after the negotiation are in Step 3. Finally, we recommend trust-building practices in virtual negotiation based on our research.

STEP 1: BEFORE NEGOTIATION

Preparing for negotiation in the virtual environment is as important as the negotiation itself. Through the observations made during this study, it was possible to see points of attention related to trust in remote negotiation environments and suggest practices that optimize trust and avoid the generation of distrust.

Reputation

The first aspect of being mentioned is reputation. The negotiator must search for the reputation with whom he or she will negotiate virtually. The research should include the reliability of the other company in the market and be extended to the participants. It is also important to emphasize that the other party will likely perform the exact consultation to verify the counterpart's reputation and company. It is important to avoid organizations that do not have a fine reputation or that already have a history of not honoring the agreements stipulated in previous negotiations. For example, there was a situation during a negotiation via videoconference. The purpose was to purchase raw materials, and in the end, an agreement was reached. However, the next day the company that was selling suspended what was negotiated, and another agreement had to be renegotiated. Numerous similar cases occurred during this study where companies sold the raw salt but not delivered the goods afterward. This type of conduct drastically reduced the trust among these companies to the point that any subsequent commercial relationship was suspended.

Connection

The second point of interest is related to the type of connection. Communication during virtual negotiations can occur synchronously as video calls, voice calls, or text messages with simultaneous replies. It can also occur asynchronously via e-mail, phone messages, and voice recording.

Understanding which type of communication best suits the situation. Within an organization, there may be different kinds of virtual negotiations. They can be with clients, suppliers, or others. Each situation demands a specific degree of speed, formality, and importance. In ordinary situations, it is common to see negotiations between companies instantaneously via telephone or video call. However, we also can see less common situations where negotiations occur formally via e-mail. The negotiator must know what type of communication he or she will suggest for the negotiation. He must understand which situation will demand more incredible speed to avoid losing the timing and which will demand less speed and a higher degree of formality. The observations indicate that if there is no previous planning, it can generate mistrust.

On the other hand, it is possible to increase the degree of trust if the type of communication is appropriately established. For example, in one of the negotiations held between the commercial

manager and a customer, it was observed that this medium-sized industrial customer used to negotiate with its suppliers informally and by telephone. The company initially started its approach this way. However, after the negotiation, the sales team formalized a proposal by e-mail. This simple conduct generated greater confidence in the new customer who placed the order even though the price was higher than the competitors.

Building multiple options for connecting and being contacted. Each company, customer, or supplier has one or more preferred communication and negotiating methods. It was observed during the study that different customers have different methods and tools to negotiate with their suppliers. Large retail companies, for instance, conduct product purchase negotiations utilizing video calls through applications that record the negotiation, such as Microsoft Teams and Google Meetings. On the other hand, large companies in the industrial segment, such as industries of cleaning products, negotiate strictly by phone call or via text message through the application WhatsApp. This application records the entire written conversation. Other organizations varied between call, e-mail, and messaging apps, but few used video resources. The observations indicate that when the supplier does not have one or more connection options with the buyer, doubt is generated related to the company's size, which may generate distrust. It was also observed that having multiple contact options generated a more significant impression of security in customers' perceptions. The reasoning is that in case of any post-sales problem, they would have the facility to reach the company via multiple communication channels, increasing trust within the virtual negotiation.

Ensuring quality connections and backups. We observed that the stability of telecommunication between the parties might influence trust in a virtual negotiation. This aspect refers to interferences that may occur during the negotiation, so it is essential to prepare in advance. Thus, there are no problems with the connection during the event, especially for synchronous ones (video and telephone calls). On the other hand, the instability of a connection may not only irritate the participants but may also negatively influence the perception of the organizational infrastructure. For example, observations suggest that when there is a cellular signal failure during a voice call negotiation, as well as a constant internet outage on the part of a participant, they tend to create a view of a company without adequate infrastructure, which leads to distrust. In one of the cases observed, a customer raised a question as to what extent the connection drop was really due to network failure or whether it was a purposeful strategy to gain time during the negotiation and return with a different strategy. This type of situation generated discomfort and distrust on the part of this negotiator.

Communication
Always be accessible to be contacted. The observations corroborate the common sense that the more difficult a person is to be contacted, the less confidence there is in closing a deal with him/her. The practical understanding was that in case of any post-sale problem, solving the

situation would be difficult and stressful due to the possible difficulty of contact. Therefore, it is essential always to be available for negotiation. Of course, it is only possible to be available at some times. However, we saw that if it is not possible to attend the service at the moment, the recommendation is to provide an explanation informing the other about the unavailability and return later. This simple conduct may avoid possible distrust.

Pay attention to the frequency of communication. It is common to see negotiations with different resolution periods. For example, in an organization, virtual negotiations take only minutes from start to finish, and others take hours, days, months, and even years. During this period, there may be several rounds of bargaining and several forms of approach, such as phone calls, e-mail, or a combination of several. In this situation, knowing the best communication periodicity between the parties is interesting. "Why the hurry? Is there something hidden or some information being withheld that compromises the agreement in the long term?". Likewise, if the frequency of communication is lower than expected, it may generate an idea of a lack of interest by one of the parties involved in the negotiation.

Presentation

When negotiating by video call, the negotiator should ensure that he or she is in an organized environment. Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, companies chose to conduct their negotiations remotely. The growing demand for videoconferencing has led some companies to set up specific physical structures for this type of negotiation. Many companies have adopted the home office system, and negotiators can conduct their activities directly from home. As in a face-to-face meeting, the surrounding environment can influence the perception of a company's organization, which can affect trust during the negotiation. In video call meetings with the original background without blur or digital alteration, the environment must be organized, clean and consistent with the formality required for that negotiation. The observations indicate that the visual analysis of the environment is related to the infrastructure and the company's size. This perception may positively influence trust if organized or negatively if disorganized. For example, during a video call where the supplier's background was digitally altered by software, it was commented by the buyer, after the negotiation, that if the supplier was distorting his natural background, it was "a sign that he was hiding something." This negatively influenced his trust in the supplier, making it difficult to close the deal. Through this reported episode, we recommend avoiding changing the background digitally and constantly seeking an organized and coherent environment, as is expected if the negotiating was face-to-face.

Maintain a dress code appropriate to the occasion when negotiating by videoconference. As mentioned above, many companies have adopted the home office work regime. For some professionals, it has become more practical and convenient due to the informality and practicality of the home environment. However, it is essential to highlight the importance of

facing a negotiation in a virtual environment in the same way that would handle a face-to-face negotiation. Therefore, the dress code must be the same. It is necessary to maintain an appropriate dress code according to the formality of the negotiation not to generate discomfort and distrust from the other negotiator. Observing the behavior of the members of the commercial and supply sectors of the company, it was clear that in negotiations via video call, the negotiator's clothing is one of the elements that may influence the perception of organization and commitment. It indirectly affects the trust between the parties. For example, in a specific negotiation in the sales sector via videoconference, a client was supposed to be a buyer for a large sanitation industry. As soon as the meeting started, he was seen to be in an organized working environment. However, his casual attire did not match the venue he was participating. Without any apparent justification, a slight distrust was created, which made the commercial team do further research and, together with other information, decide not to make the sale.

STEP 2: DURING THE NEGOTIATION
We address in this part the aspects and recommendations related to practices that increase trust or reduce mistrust during the negotiation process.

Honesty and transparency are crucial in both face-to-face and virtual negotiations. The negotiator must be transparent about the information and agreements reached, and be clear about the limitations of the offer. Honesty in the sales department fosters trust and sales success, as customers feel safe placing orders even with higher values than competitors. In Brazil, negotiations often involve conversations about personal and general topics to create empathy. It's crucial to understand the other negotiator's preference for objectivity and whether it should be longer, shorter, or not at all. Objective negotiators may be concerned about excessive side issues, which can affect trust and perception. Less objective negotiators may feel less confident without such interaction. Understanding this aspect is essential, especially in virtual negotiations.

Use appropriate language. As discussed earlier, the negotiation context will define the formality of the language used. The distance and the mode of communication (text message, voice, or video) should not define the vocabulary used during the negotiation. It is the context that will help in this definition. This one should be used if the context indicates a less formal vocabulary. During the observations, the reduction of formality in negotiations conducted through text messages and phone calls was notorious, even if the situation required a less colloquial vocabulary. In one of the specific cases of the purchasing sector, there was a new possible supplier who became annoying because he used very informal language, trying to demonstrate a close relationship that did not exist. This fact alone generated distrust concerning the professional he and his company were.

In the sales sector, longer-term relationships often lead to less formal negotiations. It's crucial to maintain correct writing and have decision-making autonomy in negotiations. Companies often use a staggered virtual negotiation tactic, where an employee starts negotiations and reaches the other negotiator's limit. This strategy can compromise the agreement but may generate distrust and compromise future negotiations. For example, a health plan supplier blocked future quotations and a plastic packaging supplier left a salesperson with limited autonomy in negotiations. This culture devalues lower-level professionals and increases negotiation volume in higher positions.

Anchoring with caution. One of the tactics commonly known in the negotiating arena is anchoring. Anchoring refers to the first value stipulated in a negotiation to serve as a base for future escalating values. In simplified terms, let us imagine the sale of a vehicle. The average price of that vehicle on the market is $50,000. The buyer comes in with an offer of $42,000.00. This means that from then on, the following pricing rounds will probably occur between $42,000.00 and $50,000.00. However, if the buyer offers $48,000.00, the following pricing rounds will likely be between $48,000.00 and $50,000.00. It is a very effective negotiation tactic if used correctly. However, if the anchoring is disproportionate to the expected value, it risks becoming even more insulting. In a face-to-face negotiation, if this occurs, one of the parties may get up and walk away from the negotiating table, which is usually more challenging to occur given the effort of being face-to-face and withdrawing. In virtual negotiation, whether by phone, video conference, or written, it is easier to shut down communication, so use this resource with caution.

Emotional control and clarity. In particular, for negotiations that take place via writing, such as e-mail and mobile phone messages, there is a reduction of visual perception, absence of body expressions, and verbal communication. Negotiations via writing, such as emails and phone messages, can be fast and formalized but may not always be clear due to the lack of human aspects. Emotional stability and clarity are crucial for effective communication. Miscommunications can negatively impact trust, so it's essential to be straightforward and avoid miscommunication. To address miscommunication, phone calls can be used to clarify the issue.

STEP 3: POST NEGOTIATION
Corporate negotiations often occur recurrently, and trust in future negotiations is influenced by the following aspects. First, it is crucial to comply with the agreed terms, as the outcome of the previous negotiation will shape the trust in subsequent negotiations. The reputation of a company in the market is also influenced by compliance with agreements from previous negotiations. Companies that consistently fail to deliver on their promises have a low level of confidence and a negative reputation. Conversely, companies that honor their agreements have

a higher level of trust and a better reputation. Trustworthy companies can close more orders, even with higher values than competitors.

Reviewing the key points of the negotiation, such as the lesson-learned document, helps identify strengths and weaknesses of trust during the negotiation. This analysis aims to improve weak points for future negotiations and study strong points for replication. Organizations often have people who coordinate recurrent negotiations, recording tips and points of attention for future negotiation execution.

ANSWER TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

This section provides the answer to Research Question "What are the best practices for trust-building in virtual negotiations?"

The answer to the question is: we found evidence that the best practices for trust-building in virtual negotiations are in minimum fifteen. Evidence was found in the research to support that the fifteen practices to trust-building in virtual business negotiations are (a) The negotiator should understand which type of communication best suits the situation; (b) The negotiator should have multiple options for being contacted; (c) The negotiator must make sure that he has quality connections and backups; (d) The negotiator should always be accessible to be contacted; (e) The negotiator must pay attention to the frequency of communication; (f) When negotiating by video call, the negotiator has to make sure that he is in an organized environment; (g) Negotiators must maintain a dress code appropriate to the occasion when negotiating by videoconference; (h) Negotiators must always seek honesty and transparency during the process; (j) Negotiators should always maintain the objectivity of the negotiation; (k) The negotiator must always use appropriate language; (l) The negotiator should have autonomy to negotiate; (m) The negotiator should anchor with caution; (n) Negotiators must have emotional control and clarity; (o) Negotiators must comply with what has been agreed; (p) Negotiation teams should review the key points of the negotiation.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Our study aimed to recommend effective methods for building trust during virtual negotiations. We hope these suggestions will help other negotiators improve their remote negotiations. Additionally, our goal was to create new knowledge for the academic community, with potential hypotheses for future research. These observations have several implications for research into different fields of research, such as (i) business mediation (Dias, M., 2018); (ii) negotiations with governmental agents (Araujo, C.; Dias, M., 2022; Correa, Teles, Dias, M., 2022; Dias & Navarro, 2018); (iii) debt collection negotiations (Dias, M., 2019, 2019b; Dias, M. and Albergarias, 2019; Dias, M., 2022; Teles, A., Dias, M., 2023; Schimtz, T. & Dias, M., 2023); (iv) retail business negotiations (Dias, M. et al., 2015; Dias, M. et al., 2015, 2014,

2012); (v) industrial negotiations (Dias, M., Navarro and Valle, 2013, Dias, M., et al., 2014; Dias, M., et al., 2013; Dias, M., & Davila, 2018); (vi) interbank negotiations (Dias, M.; Pereira, L; Vieira, P., 2022), to name a few.

To accomplish this work, we combined theoretical knowledge with an in-depth field study and identified the practices and behaviors that generated trust. We also identified the behaviors that generated mistrust, and that should be avoided. From this, we created 15 recommendations for negotiators to use to generate trust and avoid the generation of mistrust. The recommendations are summarized as follows:

The negotiator must try to understand which type of communication best suits the situation.
The negotiator must try to have multiple options for connecting and being contacted.
The negotiator must make sure that he has quality connections and backups.
The negotiator should always be accessible to be contacted.
The negotiator must pay attention to the frequency of communication
When negotiating by video call, the negotiator has to make sure that he is in an organized environment.
Negotiators must maintain a dress code appropriate to the occasion when negotiating by videoconference.
Negotiators must always seek honesty and transparency during the process.
Negotiators should always maintain the objectivity of the negotiation.
The negotatior must always use appropriate language.
The negotiator should have autonomy to negotiate.
The negotiator should anchor with caution.
Negotiators must have emotional control and clarity.
Negotiators must comply with what has been agreed.
Negotiation teams should review the key points of the negotiation

Limitations and Future Research
This research was conducted as an in-depth case study looking at a vast amount of virtual negotiation from a single organization. Despite the number of virtual trades observed (over 2,000) with several companies from many different industries, the data is limited to negotiations that occur exclusively in Brazil. Culture and other factors may generate different results if this research is conducted in other nations.

According to the results obtained, we encourage further related research based on other organizations worldwide and with deductive approaches that transform our assumptions into hypotheses to be tested in future studies.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest regarding this article's research, authorship, and publication.

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