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Executive Problem Finding: Some Material and Initial Observations

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The concept of "satisficing" is of central importance to many investigations of the social psychology of economic decision making. Through the examination of materials drawn from an actual business negotiation, this paper seeks to explore the interactional features of satisficing as a rational course of economic action. Two devices for accomplishing outcomes which satisfice are noticed and analyzed. Some implications of this mode of analysis for studies of decision making are proposed.

INTRODUCTION

. . . the manager's job is not only to solve well-defined problems. He must also identify the problems to be solved. He must somehow assess the cost of analysis and its potential return. He must allocate resources to questions before he knows the answers. To many managers and students of management, the availability of formal problem solving procedures serves only to highlight those parts of the manager's job with which these procedures do *not* deal: problem identification, the assignment of problem priority, and the allocation of scarce resources to problems. These tasks which must be performed without the benefit of a well-defined body of theory, may be among the most critical of the manager's decision making responsibilities. (Pounds, 1969, p. 1)

There can be very little doubt that in the period since these remarks were made, the imbalance of emphasis to which Pounds is pointing has hardly been corrected. Rather, in exploring and investigating the social psychology of economic and managerial decision making, more and more sophisticated applications of the formal procedures of linear programming, decision analysis, computer simulation and the rest, have been developed and

promulgated. Little attention has been given to the general issues of problem identification and delimitation, especially within the narrower field of economic decision making. Actually, stated as boldly as this, such a suggestion might appear to need qualification. Numerous experimental or quasi-experimental studies of problem solving and decision making under varying conditions of uncertainty exist (Wright, 1986; Einhorn and Hogarth, 1981). It is also true that most of these studies have used either actual or neophyte managers and businessmen as their subjects (e.g., Gingrich and Soli, 1984; Waller and Mitchell, 1984; Frederickson, 1985), although Macrimmon and Wehrung (1985) for the United States, and Hill and Blyton (1986) for the United Kingdom are exceptions in that they are studies of experienced businessmen operating in a business environment. By their very nature, these experimental protocols incorporate elements of problem definition and delimitation, but they are essentially reproductions of possible commercial scenarios. The tasks which the subjects are set, and the problems with which they are faced, are deliberately and systematically constructed so that as many as possible of the relevant variables can be controlled. In order to achieve such control, investigators have turned away from the natural settings of managerial and business problem solving, namely commercial ventures themselves, simply because most of the studies have sought to measure the degree of correlation of "actual" business problem solving procedures and their outcomes with those of the "formalized mathematical models." The resources upon which both sets of procedures have been put to work, the problems to be dealt with, have been pruned, pared down and purified.

The process of idealization in pursuit of formality and control has taken place even

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where investigators have deliberately suspended the canons of full (i.e., *substantive*) rationality. Take the notion of "satisficing" for instance, as outlined in Simon (1979) and first studied in Simon (1976). Under Simon's description, satisficing is a rational strategy whereby the administrative or commercial decision maker scales down the goals to be sought and replaces a policy of seeking to achieve *maximal goals* with one which tries to obtain objectives which *will do*. In this way, problem solvers and decision makers are able to trade off the various and often conflicting demands made upon them. When such satisficing behavior is investigated, either experimentally or by direct observation of actual administrative and business life, the courses of action which are held to satisfice are defined as vectors in n-dimensional spaces. The dimensions delimiting the problem space are described by interrelated sets of functions. The rational decision maker's course of action is an *optimizing* resolution of these functions (Keen, 1977; Sugden, 1986; Zif and Chatterjee, 1983). In this way, the formal models seek to encapsulate what in lay terms might be called the situational constraints which decision makers find themselves in. That is to say, they provide a formal representation of how and why decision makers *choose to do what they can in the circumstances* rather than attain the generalized goals which it might be thought their organization requires of them. Satisficing is, then, the behavioral counterpart of routinized goal displacement.

In our view, the premium that has been placed upon building and investigating formal models of the social psychology of problem solving in the context of economic decision making has led to the undervaluing of an alternative and equally important line of inquiry, namely the *recognizability* of any *procedurally rational* strategy in daily organizational life. Just what does satisficing look like in the natural setting of the commercial venture? What would materials which displayed this strategy consist in? Such inquiries would not seek to test satisficing as an explanation of managerial behavior, but to see, as an explanation, what its grounds were. If satisficing is recognizable in what managers do and say, what does that recognizability consist in and how is it achieved? In other words, what is the empirical basis of the formal description? Questions such as these point to the importance of observing the social psychology of problem solving in natural settings.

The approach to rational decision making just outlined is not novel. Numerous studies exemplify it, for example, Garfinkel's early work on coroners' decision making, sociological and scientific reasoning (Garfinkel 1967a; 1967b), Sacks' work on legal reasoning (Sacks, unpub-

lished), Zimmerman's analysis of work in a welfare agency (Zimmerman, 1969), and Bittner's groundbreaking analysis of the concept of organization (Bittner, 1965). More recently, studies have focused on particular locales or sites of "practical reasoning," the science laboratory (Lynch, 1985), the mathematics text (Livingston, 1986), plea bargaining in courtrooms (Maynard, 1984), and sociological reports (Anderson and Sharrock, 1984). These studies all attest to the social and hence collaborative nature of at least some instances of rational decision making. They also indicate that a similar treatment of the notion of satisficing might be both distinctive and fertile. Its distinctiveness might derive from the illumination which was given, thereby, to standard investigative issues such as those we mentioned above, i.e., the determination of optimal strategies, the allocation of utility weightings to outcomes, and so forth. Its potential fertility may be gauged by appreciating how the essentially socially organized character of the discovery, recognition, determination and solution of problems can thus be brought to the fore, and how a set of circumstances is interactionally discovered to constitute a problem which requires solution. In our view, the case which we will examine exemplifies just such a discovery. In it, it is possible to discern interactional procedures by which possible problems are located and defined, and solutions examined.

The transcript of the case which we will examine is presented in Appendix A. We prefer to use audiotape recording and transcripts because, at the moment, they are the least intrusive and analytically most flexible means of collecting "naturally occurring" data. However, our interest is not primarily in the recorded conversation *as ordinary conversation*. That is, while not disregarding the conversational features on view, we are here directing our attention to business relevances permeating the negotiation. In this sense, our concern is very much with how far this data can be used to examine the nexus of face-to-face interactional and social structure.

THE DATA

The data which we will be examining is taken from a transcript of a negotiation. The whole of the relevant part is contained in Appendix A. Experience has shown that this transcript is particularly dense and difficult to follow because much of the action it displays is embedded in sets of shared knowledge and understandings to which the participants allude. Without some information concerning the place of this meeting

in the overall structure of the negotiation, the steps in the negotiation can be extremely difficult to keep track of. For this reason, we will give a generalized gloss of what we think is happening at various points in the transcript, and some background detail which will, we hope, enable others to find their way through it. Such detail is not *necessary* for the analysis we offer, but will help bridge the gap between the global features of the meeting and the detail with which we will primarily be occupied.

The topic of the negotiation is the contract to supply soft drinks to two companies, Leisure Time Catering (LTC) and Leisure Foods. The two companies seeking to obtain the contract, Cola and F&F, operate as a joint concern for this particular contract since F&F is a wholly owned but independently run subsidiary of Cola. The reasons for this joint negotiation are twofold. First, Cola does not supply direct to their customers but through intermediary bottlers. F&F is the supplier to LTC and Leisure Foods. It makes sense for F&F to be present when Cola negotiates, since it is F&F's representatives who will be dealing with LTC and Leisure Foods. Second, Leisure Foods and LTC are very closely associated. The Chairman and owner of Leisure Foods (Trevor) used to work for Giles at LTC. When he set upon on his own, LTC sponsored him in a number of ways. This negotiating arrangement is a remnant of

that sponsorship. The participants are Giles, who is negotiating on behalf of Leisure Time Catering and Leisure Foods; Mark, who is the National Sales Manager of Cola; and Henry, who is Northern Area Sales Manager of F&F. The contract is up for renewal every two years. Cola and F&F are the current suppliers. They have every expectation that their bid will be successful.

Contract offers contain two elements; an offer of sums of money for promotional activities and the concession to supply, and offers of discounts on standard trade prices. In the part of the meeting preceding the episode we are interested in, Henry has discussed F&F's offers with Giles. Several areas have been identified to which they will return to further sessions. By and large, though, there is a sense of broad agreement. Giles then asks Mark to go through much the same procedure. After a number of preliminary clarifications, they turn to the concessionary and promotions payments. Mark indicates that, unlike previous years, there will be no specific sum of money paid for promotions. LTC and Leisure Foods will have to ask for sponsorship of particular events, etc. He also explains that a total payment of £38,000 will be made for the concession to sell Cola, to be paid in two equal parts. This is then queried by Giles, who asks how it is to be divided between the companies.

LTC COLA: A (simplified)

Giles: And that is a payment to and that would be a payment to whom
(3.0)

Mark: I don't understand

Giles: Right if I go to F&F Soft Drinks er promotional allowance ahh offer point two er as it stands as an offer promotional allowance for the year will be £2000 for Leisure Timer Catering and £2000 for Leisure Foods
(2.0)

Mark: Ri I didn't split it because I wasn't ahh personally aware as to how it had been split in the past

It is Mark's failure to specify the split of money between the companies which sets up the episode we will examine.

In broad terms, the section of the negotiation set out in the transcript falls into four parts:

Lines 1-39 Mark explains the importance of the contract to Cola and why there is no separation of the money. The volumes referred to are the volumes of sales to each of the companies. Leisure Food is now taking 55% of the total volume and LTC 45%. This is, in part, explained by the fact that the sales record is of quantities (e.g., cases or tanks) of items sold and not of liquid volumes of made up drinks. Leisure Food is overwhelmingly a bottle and vending can operation. LTC is more dependent on bar top dispensing (the post mix mixers). They tend to buy tanks of cola and other soft drink syrups to be mixed with water in the dispenser, rather than bottles or cans to be sold separately.

Lines 40-65 Giles picks up the difficulty which the failure to split the money places him in and explores the various possibilities, indicating that his Board of Directors is pressing him to follow a course of action which would promote LTC's interests against Leisure Food's.

Lines 66-112 Henry introduces the possibility of a separate negotiation with LTC. In response to

this, Giles produces a copy of a letter which Trevor has sent to Mark authorizing Giles to negotiate for Leisure Food. In this letter, it is made clear that joint negotiation enhances the possibility of obtaining better terms. Giles asks if this is actually the case. Would the same or better terms be available to the companies on their own?

Lines 113–130 Henry indicates that they would not, and so the negotiation returns to examining the problem of how to split the money so that everyone is satisfied.

The segment of the negotiation which we will look at, then, is occupied with discussion of global matters. They arrive at the discussion of the prices of individual items much later on.

THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISCOVERY PROCEDURE

Before turning to the detail of the episode, let us summarize a number of the more obvious features of the negotiation and the problem which emerges in it as these can be discerned from a straightforward reading of the transcript. The analysis which we offer will seek to explicate or ground some of these initial observations.

(1) There is an initial and quite fundamental lack of clarity, almost indefiniteness, to the features of the problem being drawn out. Hence, what a solution might look like is similarly opaque. From this, it is clear that there can be no resorting to standardized and readily recognizable algorithms to define what the problem's constituent features might be. Certainly, none of the parties involved appear to have fixed and determined goals to be achieved—either in terms of maximizing profit or of doing the others down. Nonetheless, everyone knows what, in general terms, they must have (and hence everyone knows what the indissoluble parameters of the occasion are). But, while everyone knows these things, no one knows what precisely achieving them in this context and on this occasion will consist of. That is to say, what it will take to satisfy everyone *in this case* is unknown. Here we have an instance of what Pounds was hinting at in the quotation we gave at the beginning, namely to find a solution while still trying to discover what the problem is.

(2) The process of problem exploration is not self-sealed and wholly autonomous. It is tied into the structure of interaction and proceeds through the use of interruptions, overlaps and insertion sequences, the proffering of corrections and clarifications, cycling and recycling of questions, answers, requests and responses. Many studies have testified how, in a range of settings, what might be termed “task performance” is an integral part of and achieved through the structure of interaction (e.g., Schegloff, 1979, on the openings of telephone conversations; Jefferson and Lee, 1981, on

telling troubles; Heath, 1985, on the organization of medical consultations; and many of the papers in Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). In this instance, the social organization of the interaction is the social organization of problem identification. At the same time, the broader context of the occasion is permanently on view. This is a negotiation and so the problem which emerges is to be located in its wider organizational context.

(3) Problem identification is a real time/real world process. It is indelibly linked to the local concerns of the parties, and the unique features which *this* problem identification sequence has are unique because of the configuration of those concerns. The specific character of any individual problem's identification gives the theme to its identification. What is being worked out here is *this* problem to do with *this* deal which *these* parties are negotiating. It is not a generalized version of an n-person zero sum game which has been theoretically specified and purified of its local features. Any identification they come to, and hence any course of action they agree upon, will have real consequences for them. This fact of business life is endemic *and is recognized as such*. Working out what the consequences might be is an integral feature of identifying the problem.

(4) A first central feature of problem identification which is clearly of importance to all the participants is the sequential location or place of the problem in the sequence of events. Thus, in the case at hand, the problem emerges *at the first stage* of what is likely to be a number of rounds of negotiation. Everyone knows that while general outlines may be agreed upon, nothing will or can be finalized here and now. Concern with the concessionary and promotional payments is dropped as soon as the issues involved have been clarified. They are only touched on in passing elsewhere in the negotiation. At the same time, the fact that this negotiation is one of many occupational tasks which the participants are currently engaged in is known to all as part of the distribution of their mutual expectations. They can expect a reasonable allocation of time, effort and attention to their common concerns. But, given the competing demands for time and attention, they can expect no more. They are, as they would put it, “busy people,” and hence have to budget their time. There is no point in taking things any

further than seems reasonable now, since they will have to be reviewed again at a later stage.

A second theme which can be seen in this episode but which also has generalized applicability is the recognition of a commonality of interests. The deal which is in place at the moment is a good one for both sides. There is the possibility that it can be improved to their mutual benefit. The search for such mutual benefit characterizes the entire negotiation. Such mutuality is displayed in the distribution of roles to the parties. Giles is negotiating on behalf of two companies which are, in fact, in competition with one another. Mark and Henry are a single negotiating team on behalf of a commercial partnership. The community of interest which *all* these people have is a resource in the problem identification process. It is explored, exploited, managed and questioned *throughout the episode*.

Third, there is the prevailing character of the encounter. The very serious business of negotiating a major contract is conducted with urbane affability. There is an understanding of the reciprocity of personal commercial relevances, the significance of which goes without saying, need not be mentioned, but is known and attended to by all.

(5) All this being said, the collaboration is still competitive. Each side in the negotiation will take advantage of whatever is offered them to turn the outcome of the negotiation to their advantage. Their eyes are always on possible consequences. Thus the clarifying, explanatory, and investigative sequences display the parties' attempts to shift such possible gains first one way and then the other. In this sense, the problem's features cannot be the consequence of imposed formats. There can be no *ex cathedra* characterization of what negotiation consists of for this case, and hence what it is they can and will achieve. What they can do, how the problem is to be identified and characterized, is for them to work out as they proceed.

It is the competitive/collaborative character of this problem identification which underpins what appears to be its "trickiness." Time is

taken to make things clear. Alternatives are delineated tentatively. There is, through and through, a distinct sense of people watching their step, thinking about what they are saying and weighing what others are saying to them.

(6) Functions are distributed to the parties according to an asymmetry of participants' relevances. Thus, none of the parties know in advance what a satisfactory solution might be (they are negotiating in the dark, so to speak), and so it can never be solely a question of bid and counterbid, demand and counterdemand. Rather, the whole essence of the problem is to identify just where there is room for movement and where there is not, and just where there *has* to be movement and where not. In that sense, they exchange information rather than offers and responses.

All of the natural features which we have just enumerated are readily recognizable in the material contained in Appendix A. The social character of each is worthy of investigation for what it tells us about problem solving in negotiations. Space does not permit this, however. Instead, we will focus on one segment containing two devices which seem, first, more likely to yield immediate positive results, and second, to be more prominent in the orientations of the parties themselves. We recognize that these are not the only criteria one might use to select materials for examination. However, they are the ones we will use. The two devices which we will examine are: (1) the coordinated characterization of a problem space; and (2) redrawing of the ground rules as negotiations proceed.

THE COORDINATED CHARACTERIZATION OF A PROBLEM SPACE

In the following segment, Giles, Mark and Henry are discussing the problem posed by the failure to specify the allocation of concessionary payments to each of the companies over the two years of the contract.

- 24 Henry: .thh We- (1.9) Yeah. We- (1.2) The:: the trading split split. (1.0) on the:
 25 (1.2) on the: (.) post mix side which is the crucial si::de (1.2) was very much
 26 weighted towards: um (0.7) towards yourself last time. (1.1) uh:m (3.2) And
 27 I do see the problem that you pointed up. (2.0) Whereas- (0.2) I recog-
 28 (1.0) thih- F&F promotion money, (1.0), (1.0) because you:r use uh- of
 29 (0.2) uh: (1.2) post mix mixers. (0.8) we recognize that the split would be
 30 (0.9) roughly fifty fifty.
 (0.3)
 31 Giles: Mm hm
 (5.1)
 32 Mark: Are you saying (0.2) you would prefer for these monies to be split in as
 33 different wa:y

- 34 Henry: Well the split is
 35 Giles: .k hh well thereih there isn't a split there at the moment.
 (0.2)
- 36 Giles: uh-theh-uh-yih- [uh-you-ye:]
 37 Mark: [Exactly]
 38 Giles: Yih-you have put forward a figure. .hh [hh
 39 Mark: [Mm:.
 40 Giles: Eh:m (1.9) a (1.6) thih—there ar::re e (5.0) two ways, (0.6) perhaps three
 ways. in which promotional money could be split.
 (1.5)
- 42 Terry: [hnh
 43 Giles: [Uh,hhh eh: and in (0.2) dis: in saying this: you will understand I'm not
 44 accepting the figures that you're putting forward. But let's talk the thing
 45 through in principle.
 46 Mark: MGHH
 47 Giles: Uh:m u—one is .hh uh that uh Leisure Time Catering can say (0.2) tough
 48 Leisure Foods we'll take the lot. Easy, ban:g, Leisure Time Catering take
 49 it (0.3) you do what you like.
 (1.7)
- 50 Giles: .tk,hh Two is (0.7) we split it on, a, pro rata basis (0.4) on turnover,
 51 (1.3) And three is (0.4) we split it, (0.2) in: Leisure Time Catering's
 52 favor (0.2) because, if for nothing else we are doing the negotiations.
 (1.8)
- 53 Giles: .t,hh 'N that seems to me to be the three, possible ways of doing the split.
 54 (0.2) .hhh I might say to you that my: colleagues on the Boa:rd. (0.4) in:::
 55 uh:: knowing about our::joint (0.5) discussions. on behalf of Leisure Foods
 56 and ourselves .hh feel very strongly .hh that we should move to the former.
 to the first.
 (1.6)
- 57 Giles: Very strongly.
 (0.6)
- 58 Giles: Aa:::::::::
 (2.4)
- 59 Giles: And so- bearing th:at in mi:nd n bearing what I have to .hh try and do;
 60 (0.4) in betwe:n:: Leisure Foods and my own collea:gues, (0.3) certainly
 61 what we're n: ot going to be able to do is to accept a situation where .hh
 62 promotional monies up front, to Leisure Time Catering this year (0.5) are
 63 less that they were two years ago.
 (2.0)
- 64 Giles: .hh So somehow we have to overcome that (0.5) as a problem
 (0.8)
- 65 Giles: aa—aa—as a very real problem.
 (9.8)

Given that there is a lump sum offer on the table (although the offer itself need not be accepted), and given that there has to be an agreed procedure for dividing up the lump sum, one might imagine that the problem which emerges is how to find a rational and mutually satisfying way of making the division. As we

mentioned earlier, in the discussion prior to the segment we are examining, Giles requested information on the current trading split. He was told that of the total joint purchases of Cola and F&F products, Leisure Foods takes 55% and LTC takes 45%. He then indicated what that might imply.

LTC COLA: A (simplified)

- Giles: Eerm I think you will probably appreciate er my personal concern in hearing that the split of purchases is on a forty-five-fifty five basis which is not what it was two years ago () right
 (2.0)
- Giles: The volume has increased dramatically overall over that year over those two years to you but the volume has increased more in the Leisure Food camp than it has in the Leisure Time camp (1.0) but we as a company have

created greater purchases from you than we were currently doing prior to that through the ((previous)) arrangements
(1.0)

Giles: O.K. ah aah and it therefore follows that on the figures that you are currently proposing we as a company—right to be parochial about it—are going to be worse off quite dramatically worse off than we were at this time las er two years ago and not better off

Mark: Mm

One rational, and perhaps even reasonable, strategy or mechanism for allocating the funds which are being discussed might be the use of the *pro rata* purchasing split, even if this has its difficulties. It is true they are looking for such a mechanism. But there is more going on besides, something which bears directly upon the distribution of business relevances of one of the parties. Giles takes great pains to point out the invidious position *he* would be put in if they begin to negotiate on that basis. He would be forced to segregate his negotiating personae, so to speak. If they now begin to search for a mechanism by which both LTC and Leisure Foods are to be fairly recompensed for the soft drink concession, then Giles will find himself having to trade off his interests one against another. *The only way in which this might be prevented* is for Cola and F&F to propose a split which Giles will then negotiate over. But, and

here is the second aspect of the invidious position he is in, Giles is also under pressure from his Board of Directors to subjugate his allegiance to Leisure Foods to his loyalties to LTC, his own company. So, whatever agreement he negotiates, it cannot be such that LTC is worse off than Leisure Foods, nor can it appear to be worse off than it is now. If Leisure Foods gains and LTC stands still even, Giles could be perceived as having promoted Leisure Foods' interests against LTC's. It is this possibility that delimits the problem space as Giles characterizes it. How can the conflicting pressures consequent upon Cola's failure to propose a split offer be managed? At the same time he draws out his problem, Giles indicates what a possible line of solution might be.

Look first at the delineation of the problem as Giles sees it.

40 Giles: Eh:m (1.9) a (1.6) thih—there ar::re e (5.0) two ways, (0.6) perhaps three
41 ways. in which promotional money could be split.
(1.5)

42 Terry: [hnh

43 Giles: [Uh,hhh eh: and in (0.2) dis: in saying this: you will understand I'm not
44 accepting the figures that you're putting forward. But let's talk the thing
45 through in principle.

46 Mark: MGHH

47 Giles: Uh:m u—one is .hh uh that uh Leisure Time Catering can say (0.2) tough
48 Leisure Foods we'll take the lot. Easy, ban:g, Leisure Time Catering take
49 it (0.3) you do what you like.
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51 (1.3) And three is (0.4) we split it, (0.2) in: Leisure Time Catering's
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54 (0.2) .hhh I might say to you that my: colleagues on the Boa:rd. (0.4) in::
55 uh:: knowing about our::joint (0.5) discussions. on behalf of Leisure Foods
56 and ourselves .hh feel very strongly .hh that we should move to the former.
to the first.
(1.6)

57 Giles: Very strongly.

In a sense, what Giles is doing here is laying down the baselines. These are the parameters by which he wishes the negotiation to be constrained. He does not say it in so many words, of course. Rather, he sets out a set of ordered preferences where the first two are contrasting

members of the set. As a phenomenon, lists have been extensively studied by Jefferson (forthcoming), particularly with regard to the ways in which the various elements making up the list are concatenated. The constitutive feature of this set is the relative gain which each

of the companies Giles represents might obtain from the alternatives. Thus there is a win/lose character to them. In the first, LTC wins and Leisure Foods loses. In the second, what might appear at first sight to be the fair choice in that it reflects pro rata the trading split, is not the case. As we said, using it would mean that Leisure Foods would lose out. The third alternative is one in which *both* can be said to have won. Choosing between these alternatives is how he demarcates the problem to which they must address themselves. A further dimension is then added which not so much complicates the problem as gives it its peculiar topography or configuration. This is his position of trust. If they proceed to do what appears to be the obvious thing, namely determine a split now, Giles will have little alternative but to break faith with one of the parties. In reality this could only be Leisure Foods. He might not want to go all the way with his Board, but he has to be able to show them something.

We can see here how Giles' definition of the problem is closely tied to the context in which it is located. It is part of a negotiating ploy. After all, what would satisfy the Board? The answer is obviously more money. The third alternative may not make them as well off as they might be if LTC had taken the whole pot, but they would be better off than they would have been *if* the split were decided on a trading basis. He would have resolved the conflict of interests (satisfied). Thus in the midst of indicating the nature of the pressures on his negotiating position, Giles indicates the *shape* (but crucially not the content) of a possible solution. If the totals are increased, it will not matter so much that the proportions have been realigned.

Let us look at the whole of the sequence in a little more detail. At line 40, Giles projects a multipart utterance. As these parts are produced, they are separated by either a *continuer* (e.g., lines 42 and 46) or by an *unused turn transition point* (e.g., between lines 41–42 and 49–50).¹ Naturally, since they are particular kinds of occasions, meetings and negotiations display certain kinds of features of talk. One of these is the multipart utterance. In projecting forward the production of a multipart utterance, speakers seek license or indicate intention to speak across

possible turn transition points. The failure of transition between lines 41–43 (Terry is observing the meeting, but taking no part in it) and the continuer placed at line 46 return the slot to Giles and at the same time demonstrate recognition that a multipart utterance is currently being produced. Each of the parts is tied in numerous ways to those which succeed or precede it. The whole fixes the nature of the problem to be addressed. The first part enumerates the set of alternatives and sets out its organization. There are two, with a possible third. Giles puts what appears to be a qualificatory aside into the elaboration of the alternatives (lines 43–45). Discussing the principles for payment does not entail the acceptance of the *level* of payment on offer. However, given the negotiating context of this occasion, we can see in the qualification the stipulation of a basic negotiating position. In this qualification, Giles prefigures what his possible response to the global sum of the offer will be. This is, then, what Maynard (1984) would term an *indirect response* to the offered sum, one which indicates a likely rejection of it. Furthermore, the figure is unlikely to be made more acceptable by having it revised downwards. His indirect response also marks a possible next relevant topic. When they have resolved how they will split the money, they will have to return to the question of how much there will be to split. Whatever the alternatives Giles has in mind, they will have to be treated in the light of the provisionality of the offer on the table. Whatever their reaction to the alternatives he puts forward now, moving on to talk about the size of the offer is likely to come *next*.

These two parts are separated by a possible turn transition point (line 46) where Henry or Mark might have intervened. The continuer located at that point is, as we noted, a neutral passing of the floor back to Giles to enable him to explicate his viewpoint more clearly. No commitment is entailed. In that sense, interactionally speaking, doing nothing accomplishes a considerable amount. Mark's "MGHH" is located precisely between Giles' proposal to talk the thing through in principle and his explication of the alternatives as he sees them. It is there *without overlap and without gap*, precisely positioned to enable Mark to accept the proposal to talk things through while making no commitment to whatever might result from that course of action. It allows him to wait and see. No more is needed, and no more is given. Inside a structure which consists of an achieved multiturn utterance, we find two instances of a closely coordinated two-part unit, a proposal and its acceptance; the first a proposal to allow Giles to talk across several turn transition points: the

¹ For a precise definition of these terms, cf. Sacks et al. (1974) and Schegloff (1982). In general, *turn transition points* are points in talk where it is possible that turn transition might occur. After Giles' suggestion that one of a number of lines of activity might be taken, there is a 1.4 second pause. This marks a point at which Mark or Henry might have selected themselves as speakers and responded. *Continuers* are conversational devices which, when placed at turn transition points, return the floor to first speaker.

second a proposal to initiate a general sequence of activities.

The rest of the parts comprise the explication. This is set out as, first, an ordered list, each item of which is marked off by a possible turn transition point, and second, the delineation of a possible basis for selection from the list. As

Giles defines the dimensions of the problem from his point of view, the "space" given by those dimensions gradually emerges. Once Giles has finished, how do they respond? How do they deal with his attempt to incorporate them into his problem space?

- 50 Giles: .tlk.hh Two is (0.7) we split it on, a, pro rata basis (0.4) on turnover,
 51 (1.3) And three is (0.4) we split it, (0.2) in: Leisure Time Catering's
 52 favor (0.2) because, if for nothing else we are doing the negotiations.
 (1.8)
- 53 Giles: .t.hh 'N that seems to me to be the three, possible ways of doing the split.
 54 (0.2) .hhh I might say to you that my: colleagues on the Boa:rd. (0.4) in:::
 55 uh:: knowing about our::joint (0.5) discussions. on behalf of Leisure Foods
 56 and ourselves .hh feel very strongly .hh that we should move to the former.
 to the first.
 (1.6)
- 57 Giles: Very strongly.
 (0.6)
- 58 Giles: Aa:::.....
 (2.4)
- 59 Giles: And so- bearin:g th:at in m:nd 'n bearing what I have to .hh try and do.,
 60 (0.4) in betwe:n:: Leisure Foods and my collea:gues, (0.3) certainly
 61 what we're n:ot going to be able to do is to accept a situation where .hh
 62 promotional monies up front, to Leisure Time Catering this year (0.5) are
 63 less that they we:re two years ago:.
 (2.0)
- 64 Giles: .hh So somehow we have to overcome that (0.5) as a problem
 (0.9)
- 65 Giles: aa-aa-as a very real problem.
 (9.8)

Notice that Giles' summation follows a possible turn transition point. After this, turn transition is recycled unsuccessfully *at least five times*. Each time, Giles attempts to incorporate Henry and Mark into what we are calling his problem space. And each time, even though he has used a slightly different strategy, he fails. At line 53, Giles repairs the failure of turn transition by recompleting the list. However, the utterance has a double duty (Turner, 1970) in that he links it to one possible assessment of the alternatives. As Pomerantz (1984a) points out, such assessments are of one of a number of classes of conversational objects which have a preselective character. It preselects the relevant next activity to be a second assessment. Furthermore, as she notes at length, there is a distinct preference for such second assessments to be positive or endorsing in form.² Thus in recycling the turn transition point after line 56, Giles is proposing that the next slot should be an agreement with what is his preferred course of

action. This projective character is further upgraded at line 57, when the transition point is again recycled. When this line fails to elicit the assessment response from Henry and Mark, Giles tries again. At 59, he reformulates the previous assessment of the alternatives in terms of the deficiencies of the present offer. Yet again, Mark and Henry hold off proffering the second part of the projected two part structure, the second assessment to Giles' first.

What exactly are Henry and Mark resisting here? Given the preference for agreement, they are holding off having to choose between an interactionally dispreferred second part, a disavowing or disaffiliating second assessment, and the interactionally preferred second part which might have consequences which have not yet become fully apparent. Not knowing which way to jump, they do nothing. Giles, in using a particular conversational device, the projected multiturn utterance to propose an ordering of assessments, has attempted to incorporate them into his problem space. Acceptance or rejection of that incorporation is the next relevant activity. But, to appropriate another phrase of

² For an early and clear statement of what is implied by the notion of preference as it is used here, see Schegloff et al. (1977).

Roy Turner's, what, interactionally, would they be getting into if they were to do either of those?

REDRAWING OF THE GROUND RULES AS
NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED

Of course, given the local conditions prevailing in this encounter, the fact that Mark and Henry are experienced negotiators, and the fact that they do not know, as yet, what Giles wants

out of the negotiation, acceptance of his characterization of the problem and hence incorporation into his problem space is the one thing they are expected to resist. They would be most unlikely to go that far this early in the game. As we have just said, the close order structure of the interaction allows them to hold off confirmation by recycling turn transition. Eventually Henry self-selects for a turn at talk.

- 65 Giles: aa-aa-as a very real problem.
(9.8)
- 66 Henry: Or else we (7.0) or else: we: (2.1) split the negotiation and have one: with:
67 L.T.C. (0.7) and one:-(0.2) independently with Leisure Foods.
(1.9)
- 68 Giles: Aa::::eh::::-e
(1.7)
- 69 Henry: Would that .hh The point is if-if- the- (0.2) if: you:r-(1.0) If there is a
70 f:eeling, (0.7) at-Board level that- (0.6) the infant terrible (0.6) needs
71 to be kept-(2.3) fu:rther (0.4) awa:y, (1.7) uh:m (4.4) even in spite of thih:-
72 the (0.7) the obvious: uh rationale that you would put up by saying that the
73 hh together we are: stronger than (0.2) apart
- 74 Giles: Yes
(0.8)
- 75 Henry: If that-(0.6) You know We've got to be led by you on this one.

The first thing that strikes one about Henry's proposal is its extremely tentative nature. It is punctuated by hesitancy, stops, restarts, reformulations, and so on. The immediate reason for this is obvious. Giles' attempt to incorporate them into his problem space is wholly unexpected. Actually, it is the dimensions which Giles gives the problem which are unexpected. What *exactly* is he saying? In response, Henry sketches out the possibility of a whole new basis to the negotiation and at the same time uses that possibility as a way of sounding out the implications of what Giles is actually suggesting. Is Giles elliptically suggesting a redrawing of the rules? Is he saying that LTC no longer wishes to have a close association with Leisure Foods? Has the growth of a junior member of the association become an embarrassment?

This response is tied into what Giles has just offered and at the same time builds from it. In so doing, it also enables Henry to achieve some distance for himself and Mark from the problem to be addressed. It is tied to Giles' description of the problem by extending the list of alternative courses of action which might be considered. At the same time, it picks up the allusion of a

possible breach in the unity of Leisure Foods and LTC. It follows a 9.8 second silence which is the direct consequence of Giles' refusal to self-select yet again. In so doing, turn transition is forced. We have just seen that the next relevant activity is a second assessment, but just what this might lead to is unclear. Henry subverts the completion of that structure by adding a fourth alternative. This is a response to Giles' assessment, but not the response projected. The boot is now on the other foot. Giles has to choose whether to accept the proposal or not. In his aborted utterance at line 68, he does neither. Since it has not been rejected outright, Henry explicates and reformulates the proposed alternative by proposing a version for Giles to agree with. Obtaining Giles' agreement to his version will clarify the position. In pursuing the response in this way (Pomerantz, 1984b), this proffered clarification request puts into play a three-part activity structure, namely clarification request / clarification / acknowledgement which would return the slot to Henry to allow him to give the problem back to Giles. This is precisely what happens.

- 69 Henry: Would that .hh The point is if-if- the- (0.2) if: you:r-(1.0) If there is a
70 f:eeling, (0.7) at-Board level that- (0.6) the infant terrible (0.6) needs
71 to be kept-(2.3) fu:rther (0.4) awa:y, (1.7) uh:m (4.4) even in spite of thih:-
72 the (0.7) the obvious: uh rationale that you would put up by saying that the
73 hh together we are: stronger than (0.2) apart
- 74 Giles: Yes
(0.8)
- 75 Henry: If that-(0.6) You know We've got to be led by you on this one.

The nature of the proffered clarification is, of course, crucial. It sketches the possibility of revaluating the relationships in which Giles stands. Rather than negotiating for both LTC and Leisure Foods, he would negotiate for one. Of course, given that jointly their purchasing power is larger than each individual company's, the discounts they enjoy together are larger than they would be if they negotiated alone. Hence Cola and F&F might be better off, or so it appears, if they had separate negotiations. Thus in offering the fourth solution, Henry seeks to turn Giles' predicament to his own advantage. In dealing with Giles' description of his problem in precisely this way, Henry opens up the possibility of turning it to his advantage. They might be happy to agree with Giles to have separate negotiations *if that is what he wants to do*. For the moment it remains unclear who would gain thereby.

As ever, we must keep our eyes on the local context of this response. Henry is trying to keep

his balance when confronted by a bargaining ploy which *seems* to be leading in a particular direction, one where the consequences are, for the moment, none too clear. Part of keeping his balance is to try to clarify what is being said. Is the position in which Giles has described himself indicative of a lack of common interest between the companies? Has Leisure Foods become a cuckoo in the nest? Far from accepting incorporation into Giles' problem space, Henry has enlarged it while at the same time staying outside. Cola and F&F will propose a solution only *if* they know what it involves and *when* they know it will be accepted by Giles. He has to tell them what he wants. Giles, of course, doesn't know what he wants, because he doesn't know what they are prepared to offer. In this way, the distribution of functions is tied into the local organization of activities.

As can be seen in the transcript, this impasse is resolved when Giles initiates an extended sequence (line 79).

- 79 Giles: I think that the I think the answer to that is (1.0) .t uh:::, (2.3) Trevor has
80 written : already: uh_n to Mark. (0.8) A:nd admitted uh that, the:(3.1) .t .hhh
81 eh::: (2.6)
- 82 Mark: What letter's this
(2.1)
- 83 Giles: eh:::
(1.7)
- 84 Mark: Dated
(.)
- 85 Giles: Twenty sixth
(0.5)
- 86 Mark: Mh
- 87 Giles: Two three days ago
- 88 Mark: [I have'nt s] e e n i t a s y e t]
- 89 Giles: [O k a y] you probably haven't received it. I'll read it to you. hh
90 Thank you f' your delay: (0.4) Thank you for your delay .hh Thank you f' your
91 letter .hh of the eleventh of September my: (0.4) .t.hhh (0.5) uh apologies
92 for dih- uh f' the delay in replying. (0.6) .t.hhh(0.5) aa ruhruh uh ruh ruh
(0.9)
- 93 Giles: I'm course aware that our: initial two year contract is soon to expire and
94 therefore we need to find a supply arrangement which is acceptable for a
95 further period. In the belief that the volume sales of ourselves and
96 Leisure Time Catering Limited combined will (0.2) combined, .hh will
97 result in us jointly gaining better terms than if we negotiated separately.,
98 .hh I'm happy for Giles Davies of Leisure Time Catering to conduct
99 negotiations for a new supply arrangement which could apply to both
companies
(0.7)
- 100 Giles: very important. (1.2) In the belief that the volume sales of oursel: of
101 ourselves and of Leisure Time Catering combined will result in us jointly
102 gaining better te:rms, than if we had negotiated separately. (0.2) .hh.t.hhhh
103 Now what you were -(0.6) uh perhaps moving on to sa:y was that (0.9) no that
isn't the case
(0.6)
- 104 Henry: No I wasn't

- 105 Giles: .t Oh.
(0.3)
- 106 Giles: .tOkay
() ()
- 107 Giles: [well if: with tha:t you're saying no it definite definitely that
108 there isn't, then we shouldn't go along the line which says we you negotiate separately.

This sequence has the effect of bringing to public notice what everyone knew anyway, namely the function Giles performs for Trevor and Leisure Foods, and the grounds on which that function can be successfully performed. Giles uses this as an opportunity to explore the possibilities inherent in Henry's proposal. He begins by "touching bases" so to speak, indicating the strength of the relationship between LTC and Leisure Foods (and for those present, hinting at just how high the cost would be to break that relationship). The strength of the relationship is its instrumentality. They are both better off negotiating together. This is reaffirmed in the crucial segment where Giles reads from a copy of the letter which Trevor has sent to Mark (lines 88-98).

The introduction of the instrumental rationality behind joint negotiation serves, yet again, to turn the problem over to Henry and Mark. Separate negotiation would be possible only if both companies were better off thereby. And, as Henry quickly makes clear, that would not be so. Thus the attempt to avoid incorporation has failed. The problem is still there. Giles offers one possible interpretation of Henry's proposal which indicates that these grounds need not necessarily apply. If this were to be the case, then the whole basis of the negotiation would have to be renewed. Henry's attempt to turn Giles' predicament to his advantage is neatly turned the other way, while at the same time strengthening Giles' position vis a vis the importance of the dilemma he faces.

- 100 Giles: very important. (1.2) In the belief that the volume sales of ourself: of
101 ourselves and of Leisure Time Catering combi:ned will result in us
102 jointly gaining better te:rms, than if we had negotiated separately. (0.2)
103 .hh.t.hhhh Now what you were -(0.6) uh perhaps moving on to sa:y was that
(0.9) no that isn't the case
(0.6)
- 104 Henry: No I wasn't
- 105 Giles: .t Oh.
(0.3)
- 106 Giles: .tOkay
() ()
- 107 Giles: [well if: with tha:t you're saying no it definite definitely that
108 there isn't, then we shouldn't go along the line which says we you negotiate separately.

The ploy which Henry has used to seek to avoid incorporation into Giles' problem space has become a resource which Giles has used to counter Henry and reengage him and Mark in the difficulty which the failure to specify the concessionary split poses for him. The introduction of Trevor's letter crystallizes the proposal Henry was hinting at and so enables Giles to refuse to take the lead. Giles is able to pass back the problem to Henry and Mark by use of

another three-part clarification structure (clarification request/clarification/response) which by returning the third slot to Giles puts him in the position of being able to pass back the problem if Henry's solution, i.e., his clarification, does not satisfy his needs. And, of course, this is exactly what he does. Eventually, on behalf of himself and Mark, Henry accepts incorporation. The problem becomes one which they all share.

- 114 Henry: Uh:m (3.0) but- (1.8) kn:owing that um (8.2) i-if- if there is a feeling that
115 (0.3) ouh- wi:- (0.4) tha:t (0.3) uh::m (3.9) If there is a feeling that you:
116 (2.1) the-(.) the Boa:rd wish: (0.2) say for the promotional and
117 concessionary money to come he:ere. (0.8) hhow the hell (0.6) do we get
118 that out (0.7) do we get that past Trevo:r

Once he has accepted incorporation into Giles' problem space, its dimensionality becomes available to them. This is provided by Giles.

- 124 Giles: But what you have to do is to make sure that the promotional money that is

125 coming he:re (3.3) i:s at least (1.0) better than (0.7) last year's two years
 126 ago: (2.0) because it can't be the same a:s (1.4) it (0.2) than last years
 127 (0.3) eh:m and not less as it would work out at the moment.

At the same time Giles reintroduces what, of course, has been a relevant issue all along, namely the global size of the promotional and concessionary monies on offer. There is simply no way that Trevor will accept a reduced sum of money and neither can Giles. All that can be done is to increase the global total so that both can be satisfied. In this way, Giles picks up the acceptability of the figures which, until now, they have been talking through "in principle." Discussion that looks as if it might provide a solution to this problem makes it a next relevant topic. Thus Giles accomplishes what could be termed the interactional achievement of working through the agenda he had earlier set.

CONCLUSION: A PROBLEM IS A PROBLEM
 IS A PROBLEM

Thus the negotiation proceeds. We have picked this episode for two reasons. First, and most importantly, it is an instance where the close order organization of the negotiation talk is also tightly bound into the order of the negotiation activities. That is not always so. It is felicitous, in this case, because it allows the use of these materials in pursuit of sociological observations on business life. We hope we have been able to convey a little of what adopting a businesslike attitude to the solution of routine problems means as an observable, interactional feature of daily business life, and hence as a constituent feature of the social psychology of real world economic decision making. Giles, Henry and Mark discover they have a problem to deal with, a difficulty to overcome, something to be resolved. Through the examination of one instance, we have tried to show how the precise definition of a problem's dimensions and the determination of possible solutions are interactional phenomena. The suitability, rationality or reasonableness of any particular choice is the achievement of the participants to the decision making. This "accountability" (Garfinkel, 1967a) of a problem and its solution is determined by the participants in the course of discovering, delineating and solving problems. That a solution satisfies is the outcome of the procedures which participants employ interactionally to manage discovered problems. These interactional procedures are the

grounds on which satisficing, as one of a range of rational problem solving strategies, stands. In that decision making algorithms such as those associated with satisficing are rooted in and trade off decision makers' competences in the use of these procedures, they are rendered invisible in the conventional social psychological studies.

Second, when we first listened to this tape, and it is an impression which has stayed with us ever since, this negotiation seemed the epitomé of one of the central and yet often unremarked features of business life. We think of this characteristic as the reciprocity of reasonableness. By the reciprocity of reasonableness we mean the shared presumption of detachment and impersonality which Giles, Henry and Mark bring to their joint endeavours. Everything is carried out in a considered, measured, reasonable way. No personal animus is involved or intended in their maneuverings. It is simply what they do; part of their working day. Their business lives consist, by and large, in meetings like this. While everyone involved recognizes the importance of the occasion, Cola and F&F are, after all, major suppliers and LTC is a large customer; taking important matters in their stride is what, for them, daily business life is all about. Animosities, disagreements and disputes are always contained, in hand, controlled. If a deal cannot be made this time, so be it. Perhaps next time it will. But, they take this possibility as it comes, see what it means, work it out and move on. But so do all of us in all our daily lives. Here is a third reason for looking at this fragment. It is so ordinary. It is recognizably ordinary. Business life does not take place in a sealed compartment, set off from the rest of social life. It is continuous with and interwoven with it. As a consequence, it is sheer folly to seek, as is often the case, to filter out the purely rational from the contaminatingly social aspects of economic problem solving and decision making, hoping thereby to capture the essence of business life. The businesslike, reasonable character of this encounter is a collaborative production. It is produced in and through the activities which are engaged in. In that sense, business life and business relations are pervasively social.

APPENDIX A

The excerpts of transcript cited in the body of the paper have been somewhat simplified for ease of reading. Below, we give the complete transcript. A summary of transcription symbols is given in Appendix B.

1 Mark: when I was uh: when I was looking at this to put it together I (3.1) when I looked
 2 at uh (.) seeing as you made reference to sales figures. when I believe the fir:st

- 3 °uh:° (2.7) MGHH Any deal which is put together as you: as you obviously know.
 4 is based on °uh::°(.) on the profitability and , of-of of doing that business.
 5 °Obviously,° And also (.) the exposure value which I mentioned to you before
 6 which with your company's (.) very important.
 7 Giles: °Yes. [That's right].°
 8 Henry: [Yes:]You're in (0.6) good places for the Cola brand
 (2.5)
 9 Mark: When we look at the volumes (.) that in fact (.) we have (0.3) as per: (0.6)
 10 Appendix O:ne. (0.6) And (1.7) when I've looked at volumes (.) that were (.)
 11 projected. that were the basis of (.) the previous offer. (1.5) They were s-theh-
 12 they:"re (.) they"re (.) somewhat as you would say oh (0.7) way- way out of
 13 line They're out of kilter.
 14 Giles: (Oka:y)
 (0.8)
 15 Mark: However what I've do:ne he:re. is said we:ll (1.0) whether or not they're out of
 16 kilter or not is- that's two years ago. What we have to do is recognize (0.2) that
 17 first of all we want to be (.) we want to remain involved with the company. .hh And
 18 secondly:- (0.2) we:- (.) can only move: (0.6) slightly. (.) Albeit that the sales
 19 figures are in- in a different ballpark.
 (0.2)
 20 Giles: Yes
 (1.8)
 21 Mark: So whilst, I understand, what you're saying (0.6) that is- (0.4) that wasn't the
 22 information that I (.) had to ha:n:d based on (1.1) the previous negotiation uh and
 23 and the figures offered (0.2) and accepted by you.
 24 Henry: .thh We- (1.9) Yeah. We-(1.2) The:: the trading split split. (1.0) on the: (1.2)
 25 °on the:° (.) post mix side which is the crucial si:de (1.2) was very much weighted
 26 towards: um (0.7) towards yourself last time. (1.1) °uh:m° (3.2) And I do see the
 27 problem that you pointed up. (2.0) Whereas- (0.2) I recog- (1.0) thih- F&F
 28 promotion money, (1.0) (1.0) because you:r use uh- of (0.2) uh: (1.2)
 29 post mix mixers. (0.8) we recognize that the split would be (0.9) roughly fifty
 30 fifty.
 (0.3)
 31 Giles: Mm hm
 (5.1)
 32 Mark: Are you saying (0.2) you would prefer for these monies to be split °in as different
 33 wa:y°
 34 Henry: Well the sp [lit is
 35 Giles: [k.hhh well thereih there isn't a split ↓ there at the moment ↓ .
 (0.2)
 36 Giles: uh-theh-uh-yih- [uh-you-ye:]
 37 Mark: [Exactly]
 38 Giles: Yih-you have put forward a figure. .hh [hh
 39 Mark: [Mm:.
 40 Giles: Eh:m (1.9) a (1.6) thih —there ar::re e (5.0) °↑ two ↓ ways,° (0.6) perhaps
 41 three ways. in which promotional money could (.) be (.) split.
 (1.5)
 42 Terry: [hnh
 43 Giles: [Uh,hhh (.) eh: and in (0.2) dis: in saying this: you will understand I'm not (.)
 44 accepting the figures that you're putting forward. But let's talk the thing through
 45 in principle.
 46 Mark: MGHH
 47 Giles: Uh:m u-one is .hh uh that (.) uh Leisure Time Catering can say (0.2) tough Leisure
 48 Foods (.) we'll take the lot. (.) Easy, (.) ban:g, Leisure Time Catering take it
 49 (0.3) you do what you like.
 (1.7)
 50 Giles: .tik.hh (.) Two is (0.7) we split it on, a, pro rata basis (0.4) on (.) turnover,
 51 (1.3) And (.) three is (0.4) we split it, (0.2) in: (.) Leisure Time ↑ Catering's
 52 ↓ favor (0.2) because, if for nothing else (.) we are doing the negotiations.
 (1.8)
 53 Giles: .t.hh 'N that seems to be to be the (.) three, possible ways of doing the split. (0.2)
 54 .hhh I might say to you that my: colleagues on the Board. (0.4) in:: °uh:°
 55 knowing about our::joint (0.5) discussions. on behalf of Leisure Foods and
 56 ourselves .hh feel very strongly .hh that we should move to the former. to the first.
 (1.6)
 57 Giles: Very strongly.
 (0.6)

- 58 Giles: Aa:.....
(2.4)
- 59 Giles: And so- bearing that in mind °n bearing what° I have to .hh try and do., (0.4)
60 in between:: Leisure Foods and my ↑ own ↓ colleagues, (0.3) certainly what we're
61 n: ↑ ot ↓ going to be able to do is to accept a situation where .hh promotional monies
62 up front, to Leisure Time Catering ↑ this ↓ year (0.5) are less that they we:re
63 (.) two years ago:.
(2.0)
- 64 Giles: .hh So somehow we have to overcome that (0.5) as a problem
(0.9)
- 65 Giles: °aa-aa-as a very real problem.°
(9.8)
- 66 Henry: Or else we (7.0) or else: we: (2.1) split the negotiation and have one: with: L.T.C.
67 (0.7) and one:- (0.2) independently with Leisure Foods.
(1.9)
- 68 Giles: Aa:.....eh:.....-e
(1.7)
- 69 Henry: Would that .hh The point is if-if- the- (.) (0.2) if: you:r-(1.0) If there is a
70 feeling, (0.7) at-Board level that- (0.6) the infant terrible (0.6) needs to be
71 kept- (2.3) further (0.4) away, (1.7) uh:m (4.4) even in spite of thih:- the:
72 (0.7) the obvious: uh rationale that you would put up by saying that the .hh
73 together we are: stronger than(0.2) apart
- 74 Giles: Yes
(0.8)
- 75 Henry: If that= (0.6) You know (.) We've got to be led by you on this one,
(1.1)
- 76 Henry: uh::
(2.6)
- 77 Mark: MGH-HGHN
- 78 Giles: .t.k.hhh =
- 79 Giles: I think that the I think the answer to that is (1.0) .t! uh::, (2.3) Trevor has
80 written : already: un ↑ to ↓ Mark. (0.8) A:nd admitted uh that, the:(3.1) .t!
81 .hhh °eh:.....°
(2.6)
- 82 Mark: What letter's this
(2.1)
- 83 Giles: °ehh:.....°
(1.7)
- 84 Mark: Dated
(.)
- 85 Giles: Twenty sixth
(0.5)
- 86 Mark: ↓ Mh
- 87 Giles: °Two three days ago°
- 88 Mark: [I have'nt s] en i t a s y e t]
- 89 Giles: [O k a y] you probably haven't received it. I'll read it to you. hh Thank you
90 f' your delay (0.4) °Thank you for your delay° .hh Thank you f' your letter .hh of
91 the eleventh of September my: (0.4) .t.hhh (0.5) uh apologies for dih-uh f'the
92 delay in re ↓ plying. (0.6) .t.hhh(0.5) °a ruhruh (.)uh ruhr ruhr.°
(0.9)
- 93 Giles: I'm 'course aware that our: initial two year contract is soon to expire and
94 therefore we need to find a supply arrangement which is accceptable for a further
95 period. In the belief that the volume sales of ourselves and Leisure Time Catering
96 Limited combined will (0.2) combined, .hh will result in us jointly gaining better
97 terms than if we negotiated separately.,hh I'm happy for Giles Davies of Leisure
98 Time Catering to con:duct negotiations for a ↑ new supply arrangement which could
99 apply to both companies
(0.7)
- 100 Giles: very important. (1.2) °In the °belief that the volume sales of oursel: of ourselves
101 and of Leisure Time Catering (.)combi:ned will result in us jointly gaining better
102 terms, than if we had negotiated separately. (0.2) .hh.t.hhhh Now what you were-
103 (0.6) °uh° perhaps moving on to sa:y was that (0.9) °no that isn't the case°
(0.6)
- 104 Henry: No I wasn't
- 105 Giles: .t Oh.
(0.3)

- 106 Giles: .tOkay
 () ()
- 107 Giles: () well if: with tha:t you're saying no it definite definitely that there
 108 isn't, then we shouldn't go along the line which[says[we you negotiate separately.
- 109 Henry: [No [But um
- 110 Giles: Because I must say that if you move in that line there is a much greater risk of
 111 losing one or other.
 (1.8)
- 112 Henry: Oh I recognize tha[t
 113 Giles: [Yeah
 (1.1)
- 114 Henry: Uh:m (3.0) but- (1.8) kn:owing that um (8.2) i-if- if there is a feeling that-
 115 (0.3) °uh- wi:h- ° (0.4) tha:t: (0.3) uh::m: (3.9) If there is a ↑ feeling that you:
 116 (2.1) thē-(.) the Boa:rd wish: (0.2) say for the promotional and concessio:nary
 117 money to come he:ere. (0.8) hhow the hell (0.6) do we get that out (0.7) do we get
 118 that past Trevo:r
- 119 Henry: Um[m
 120 Mark: [((cough))
 121 Henry: Because he had monies last ti:[me
 122 Giles: [.t.hh You can't.
 (0.5)
- 123 Henry: Precisely. =
 124 Giles: = But what you have to do is to make sure that the promotional money that is coming
 125 ↑ he ↓ :re (3.3) i:s at least (1.0) better than:n (0.7) last year's (.) two years ago:
 126 (2.0) because it can't be the same a:s (1.4) °it° (0.2) than last years (0.3) eh:m
 127 and not less as it would work out at the [↑ mo ↓ ment.
 ()
- 128 Giles: [°°([)°°
 129 five for (0.3)ty fi:ve split °or thē other way round°

APPENDIX B

Transcript Notation

- [] overlaps with immediately prior utterance.
 [] overlaps with immediately succeeding utterance.
 = no interval between adjacent utterances.
 (.) short untimed pause.
 (1.5) pause of 1.5 seconds.
 ↑ rising intonation.
 ↓ falling intonation.
 ! animated tone.
 emphasis.
 CAPITALS speech that is much louder than accompanying talk.
 (hhh) audible aspirations.
 (()) explanatory remarks about activities on tape.
 () transcriptionist doubt.

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