

The Flexibility of a Child

Playing a game with a child is almost always a losing proposition, as the kid will change the rules of the game to regain the advantage every time you pose a threat of defeat. Beyond the legal and the ethical, there are no rules in business – no rules to the game. If you play by your competitor's rules you give him the advantage. Redefine the rules and you take the advantage with you. Redefine them yet again and you throw competitors completely off guard. Just as a child does, when the rules keep changes as the game is played, at some point the opposition loses track of what the game is. Changing the rules is a function of new ideas. New ideas come from new, and often unexpected, places. Like a child, often the innocence of a new perspective leads to simple statements that point out the obvious that you weren't seeing because you were thinking "on top" of it. Gain simple perspective by drawing all your employees into the process and asking the opinions of the people around you who seemingly would have nothing to offer. They just might have the idea that allows you to change the rules just a bit.