

Assessing Stakeholder Motives: Three Additional Reasons for Making Demands

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- 4. Ideology** **“There is a principle at stake.”**
The “outrage” of ideologically motivated stakeholders is rooted not in the situation itself but in the principles the situation seems to threaten. Because its roots go so much deeper than the situation, ideology is extremely resistant to compromise. Activists, for example, often forgo winning ninety percent of their demands rather than compromise ideological purity on the remaining ten percent.

 - 5. Revenge** **“You hurt me once; now I want to hurt you back.”**
If you went over a regulator’s head a few years ago, expect the regulator to be lying in wait. The same goes for an activist you defeated or embarrassed, a neighbor you ignored, or an employee you laid off. Revenge is a long-lasting motive, so be sure not to forget long-ago conflicts – with you, your predecessors, your parent company, your partner, even your ethnic group.

 - 6. Hazard** **“I want to be safe.”**
As Freud pointed out, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar. When people are making demands about a small hazard, suspect greed, outrage, self-esteem, ideology, or revenge. When they’re making demands about a serious hazard, look first to the hazard.
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For more about my take on this issue, see:

- When People Are “Over-Reacting” to Risk – www.psandman.com/col/over-re.htm

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