Top 5 Tips for Negotiating Sponsorship

1. **Start Early**
   Sometimes applicants are hesitant to begin the process of negotiating sponsorship before they are admitted to the program. This is a matter of personal comfort, preference, and choice. And, there are things you can do to lay the groundwork.

2. **Make Your Case**
   As you are framing your strategy, understand what makes the MIT EMBA unique, and how it aligns with and supports you organizational objectives. Start to gather information from across your organization to support your candidacy and negotiation.

3. **Sell Benefits Not Features**
   Think about your request in terms of the benefits that your organization (or boss) will realize. These benefits could be realizing a key strategic initiative because of your new knowledge, increasing competitiveness or profitability, growing the firms management team, retaining key employees (YOU), and brining in new knowledge that will help the firm to be more innovative. Another key benefit to emphasize is that you will be applying what you learn in real-time to your company.

4. **Frame Your Financial Request**
   Framing your sponsorship in terms of how much your are requesting each year of the program can make the financial commitment more manageable. For example, the program touches on 3 calendar years (one semester in 2014, three in 2015, and one in 2016). Think about asking for X thousand dollars each year. This will map to how budgets are created and spread the financial commitment. Also, putting your skin in the game by asking for less than the full tuition shows mutual commitment.

5. **Be Persistent and Follow Through**
   Earning company sponsorship can feel like an endurance test. It can help to think of it as a diplomacy process that has multiple avenues to success and requires patience and persistence to navigate to a successful solution. While this may be a high priority for you, you have to be responsible for making it your stakeholders’ priority by following up and following through. Once you earn company sponsorship remember that your stakeholders are likely very interested in what you are learning and how you are putting it into practice, so follow through with regular updates and invite your champion to Bring Your Boss to Class Day.