

## Planning the Play

Stop – Think - Start with a quick plan

Suit contracts: To Draw or not to draw?

Your first decision has to be: To draw trumps immediately, or not?

If you have no shortage in some suit or another in the short trump hand (often the dummy), then DRAW TRUMPS IMMEDIATELY. This is true even if you are missing AKQ of trumps. Without a shortage you can't ruff. But if you don't draw your opponents' trumps that's exactly what they might do to you. By shortage, we mean void, singleton or doubleton.

It's no good ruffing in the long hand, since these trumps would have won eventually anyway. All you are doing is using your trumps without consuming the enemy's.

## Make a Plan

SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths - Count your winners: Count your top tricks without losing the lead.

Weaknesses - Count your losers: Count how many tricks you're going to lose, and thus how many extra ones you're going to have to find by various devices, which you might refer to as Opportunities:

Opportunities: Look at your hand to see where you might have a chance to make up the extra tricks. How can you make extra tricks: Ruffing, Extra tricks in the long suits, Throwing a loser on a loser, Finesse, and so on. For example:

Threats: Having formed a plan, look for places where it could go wrong. Could the trump split be unfavourable? Do you have all the entries you need? Could you be blocked? If a finesse should fail, will you end up losing the lead to the wrong player? Might you end up losing trump control? Can you avoid ruffing in the long hand? Is there a back-up plan if any of these catastrophes should befall you?

Information:

Use your opponents bidding to your advantage:

Use the opponents lead to your advantage.

Planning: How are you going to make extra tricks:

Revise on 'No Fear Bridge' Lesson 14:

Finessing, Ruffing, Extra tricks in the long suits , Promoting, Unblocking, Discarding losers