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Collaborative Communication Skills Development

Conflict management strategies

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of Master's Degree Program in
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“Conflict is an unavoidable component of human activity”.



Conflict situation is a situation in which 2 or more values, perspectives and opinions are contradictory in nature, have not yet aligned or agreed upon yet.

Conflict is experienced when one person perceived that one's needs or desires are, or likely to be, thwarted.



No.	Top-10 Reason for Conflict in Projects	No. of Occurrences in Literature
1.	Shared/Common Resources	14
2.	Differences in Project Goal/Objective	12
3.	Cultural Differences	10
4.	Values Differences	10
5.	Personality Issues	10
6.	Differences in Technical Opinions/Approaches	9
7.	Schedules	9
8.	Costs	8
9.	Administrative Procedures	8
10.	Different Perceptions	7



Other Reasons for Conflict in Projects

- Individual Needs
- Language Differences
- Role Ambiguity
- Project Priorities
- Ambiguous Requirements/Specifications
- Noise in Communication Channels
- Demographic Differences
- Leadership Styles
- Communication Process
- Education and Experience Differences
- Organizational Structure
- Organizational Structure
- Political Unrest
- Economic/Financial Situation
- Task Interdependence
- Social Issues
- Lack of Trust
- Individual Interests
- Individual Expectations
- Differences in Evaluation Criteria & Reward Systems
- Ego States



Aftermath: Outcome of conflict,
Resolution or dissolution

Manifest: Conflict is open and can be observed

Felt Stage: Stress and anxiety

Perceived Stage: Participants aware a conflict exists

Latent Stage: Participants not yet aware of conflict

5 STAGES OF



CONFLICT

<https://www.mbaofficial.com/mba-courses/human-resource-management/management-of-conflict/what-are-the-different-stages-in-a-conflict/>



Conflict Management

Conflict management is based on the principle that all conflicts cannot necessarily be resolved but learning how to manage conflicts can decrease the odds of non-productive escalation.

Our problem is never our problem, but reaction to problem is our problem.

The Purpose of Conflict Management:

- (1.) Minimizing disruption stemming from the existence of a conflict
- (2.) Providing a solution that is satisfactory and acceptable



Types of Conflict

Functional Conflict

It serves the organization's interests and improves performance.

Dysfunctional Conflict

It threatens the organization's interests and hinders performance.

In order to optimize the performance, managers should strive to find their conflict sweet spot by **enhancing functional conflict and decreasing dysfunctional conflict.**



Functional Conflict

- This involves management assigning someone to criticize a proposed course of action.
- Devil's advocacy alters the usual decision-making process and enhances analytic and communication skills.

1. Devil's Advocacy

2. Dialectic

- This involves managers fostering a debate of opposing viewpoints to better understand an issue prior to decision making.
- The dialectical method results in higher quality decisions, enhances creativity, and facilitates innovation.



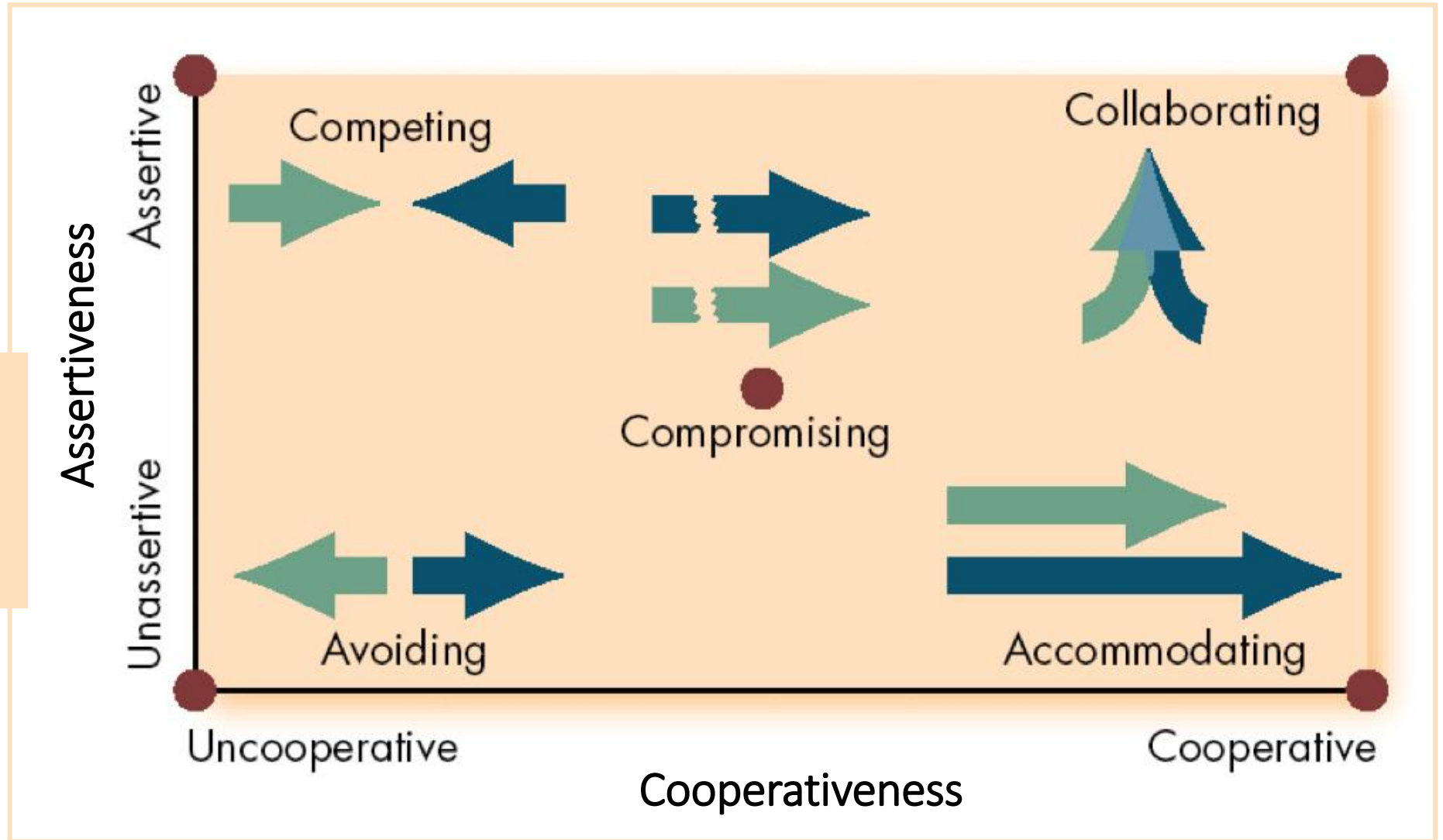
Dysfunctional conflict can impede the organization performance and if severe enough can be detrimental to the prosperity and efficiency of the organization.

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide, featuring a central green circle with a black horizontal bar through it, surrounded by concentric, multi-colored rings in shades of yellow, orange, red, and purple.

Dysfunctional Conflict

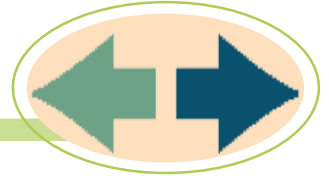
Thus, managers must be skilled at identifying dysfunctional conflict and effectively resolving it, before it hinders the organization performance.

5 Options of Conflict Resolution





1. Avoidance (Unassertive and Uncooperative)



This tactic involves “hiding your head in the sand” (avoiding the issue) or actively withdrawing from the conflict.

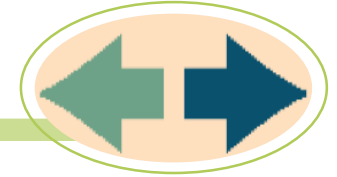
This approach may be **best when you need to buy time** before you address the issue or when the cost of resolving the conflict outweighs the benefits.

It is important to note than when employing this tactic, **it is only a temporary fix**. In order to truly resolve the issue another approach should be taken.





1. Avoidance (Unassertive and Uncooperative)



- When an issue is unimportant or when other, more important issues are pressing
- When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns – for example, when you have low power, or you are frustrated by something that would be very difficult to change
- When the potential costs of confronting a conflict outweigh the benefits of its resolution
- When you need to let people cool down – to reduce tensions to a productive level and to regain perspective and composure
- When gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision
- When others can resolve the issue more effectively
- When the issue seems tangential or symptomatic of another, more basic issue





2. Collaboration (Assertive and Cooperative)



This is when 2 or more parties work together to come to a mutually beneficial solution.

This is an appropriate approach for **tackling complex issues caused by misunderstandings** and is **inappropriate for resolving conflict** that is caused by opposing values.

It can be a more **time-consuming approach**, but when effective will have longer-lasting benefits as **it addresses the core issue, rather than the symptoms**.





2. Collaboration (Assertive and Cooperative)



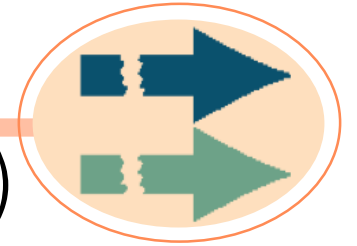
- When you need to find an integrative solution and the concerns of both parties are too important to be compromised
- When your objective is to learn, and you wish to test your assumptions and understand others' views
- When you want to merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem
- When you want to gain commitment by incorporating others' concerns into a consensual decision
- When you need to work through hard feelings that have been interfering with a relationship





3. Compromise

(mid-range on Assertiveness and Cooperativeness)



This approach **to resolving conflict** involves finding the middle ground; a give and take so to speak.

This approach is typically **used when people have opposite goals or have equal power.**

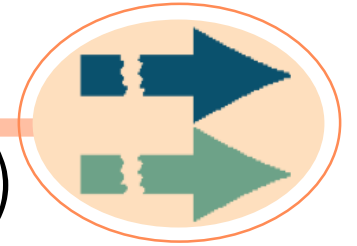
Importantly, **when overused this will result in indecisiveness,** failure to meet deadlines and can stifle creative problem solving.





3. Compromise

(mid-range on Assertiveness and Cooperativeness)

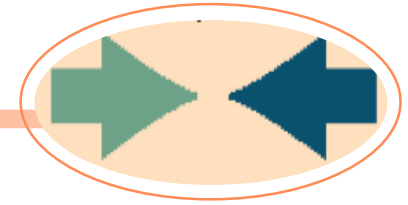


- When goals are moderately important but now worth the effort of the potential disruption involved in using more assertive modes
- When 2 opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals – as in labor-management bargaining
- When you want to achieve a temporary settlement of a complex issue
- When you need to arrive at an expedient solution under time pressure
- As a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails





4. Competing/Dominating (Assertive and Uncooperative)



This tactic requires a “I win, you lose” mindset.

It involves **forcing the other person to comply with your needs, wishes or desires.**

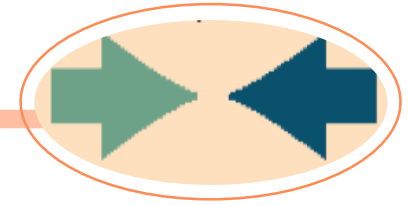
This strategy to managing conflict may be **appropriate when** an unpopular **solution must be implemented**, a deadline is approaching, or the issue is minor.

It is important to note that **when used too frequently**, this domineering style to resolving conflict **can lead to resentment.**





4. Competing/Dominating (Assertive and Uncooperative)

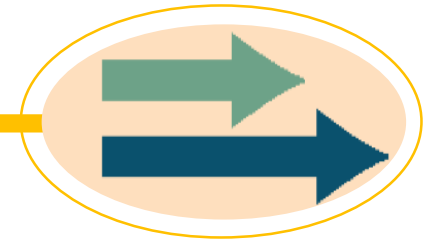


- When quick, decisive action is vital – for example, in an emergency
- On important issues when unpopular courses of action need implementing – for example, cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline
- On issues vital to company welfare when you know you're right
- When you need to protect yourself from people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior





5. Accommodation (Unassertive and Cooperative)



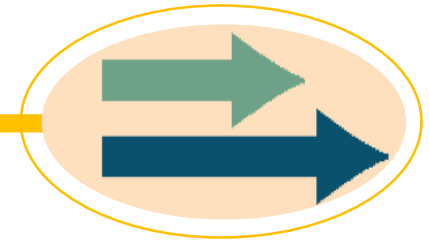
This is when **one person neglects their own needs** and wishes and **gives in to the other person.**

This approach **encourages cooperation** and may be an **appropriate** approach to resolving trivial matters.





5. Accommodation (Unassertive and Cooperative)



- When you realize you are wrong – to allow a better solution to be considered, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable
- When the issue is much more important to the other person than it is to you – to satisfy the needs of others and as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship
- When you want to build up social credits for later issues that are important to you
- When you are outmatched and losing, and more competition would only damage your cause
- When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important
- When you want to help your employees develop by allowing them to learn from their mistakes



If You're There to Help, You're There to WIN



Your attitude toward resolving a conflict, whether it's a conflict between you and someone else or a conflict between the 2 other people, makes all the difference.

Going in looking to help people puts **both parties at ease to the greatest extent possible**. It also sets up a journey toward an outcome that everyone can live with: In any conflict, all we want is

- ...to feel heard
- ...be helped
- ...have the issue resolved.

Let Cooler Heads Prevail



It's impossible to resolve conflicts with someone in a stage of rage or in any highly volatile emotional stage, and so it's simply inadvisable to try.

In such situations, no matter how much you want to resolve a conflict immediately, it's always best to wait until cooler heads prevail.

7 Steps to Resolve a Conflict

1. Make an appointment to discuss about the conflict.
2. Talk in a quiet, safe place, and the offending party agrees to put on a bulletproof vest.
3. The person who's upset describes the problem in its entirety and how it's making her feel.
4. The other person mirrors and validates everything this partner is saying, not trying to solve or defend or do anything but listen, mirror, and validate.
5. The offending party offers a genuine, authentic "I'm sorry."
6. When the both parties agree that the offended party feel heard and understood, that person shares 3 possible positive solutions to the problem. The offending party agrees to at least one of the solutions.
7. Celebrate the successful resolution



How to prevent future conflict:

- Establish formal procedures
- Explain plans
- Listen
- Reward fairly
- Work safely
- Value employees
- Encourage initiative
- Balance personal and business needs
- Develop new skills
- Build trust between employee representatives and management
- Proper communication
- Provide training on conflict management from time to time
- Group interaction and activities should be followed up to track the level of conflict





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