



ConvergenceCoaching, LLC

Managing Conflict Successfully

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Our Objective

To give you power in managing difficult conversations and generating collaborative solutions by studying conflict styles and a conflict management methodology

Our Agenda

- Explore how to overcome your current, less effective conflict management style and engage in a more collaborative way of dealing with disappointments and upsets
- Identify methods to uncover the underlying causes of conflicts
- Learn a strategy and specific language for handling conflicts more strategically and with more success

Conflict – a struggle; clashing of views or statements; to meet in opposition; to be antagonistic

New Expanded Webster's Dictionary

How do you feel when you have a conflict with someone at work?

Typical View of Conflict

- When there is a conflict, we mostly focus on the negative aspects

–The problem

–The consequences or impact of the conflict

–Our feelings about it

Conflict Is Good!

- Because it:

–Highlights problems

–Promotes change

–Encourages compromise and shared solutions

–Enhances morale and group identity when dealt with openly

–Stimulates interest, creativity, and innovation

How Do You Handle

Conflict?

- Avoiding it! (“The Avoider”)
- Accommodating the conflicting party (“The Giver”)
- Competing with the conflicting party in an attempt to WIN (“The Confronter”)
- Compromising where each party gives up something (“The Peacemaker”)

Usually, the 1st party reacts using one of these modes and the opposing party adapts to it!



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Self-Identify

- What's your dominant style?
 - Avoider
 - Accommodator
 - Competitor
 - Compromiser

There Is Another Way!

- Collaborating ("The Win-Win-er")
 - Working together
 - Developing solutions
- Situational – change something!
- Appeal to major common goals ("the greater good")
 - Allowing each party to achieve their desired outcome (or close to it)

So, What Is Your Desired Outcome?

- Self-honesty is required
- You have to become present to your **self-interest** and willing to share it
 - Vulnerability and humanity required
 - There are few real "Mother Theresa's"
- Your goal is to create an environment where your conflict partner can do the same
 - You cannot collaborate until all agendas are on the table

Self-Interest

- When we get honest, self-interest usually shows up as:
 - Looking good or avoiding looking bad
 - Getting more time or taking less of our time
 - Getting more money or taking less of our money
 - Experiencing pleasure or some form of feeling good

For Conflicts To Be Maximally Resolved...

...we have to identify our self interest, take 100% responsibility for our role in the conflict, and we have to give up making the other party wrong!

Let's generate some examples of conflict in our work lives to use as the basis for applying our training

Taking Responsibility and Giving Up Making Others Wrong

The Little Voice In Our Heads

- When you're disappointed or upset, there is negative "self talk" in your head



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- That little voice often tells us things that are inflammatory or negative
- When you're upset, your mind is on auto-pilot
- When you are on auto-pilot, that negative self-talk (the stories we tell ourselves) becomes our "truth"

Awareness Is Key

Forms of Negative

Self-Talk

"I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened."

Mark Twain

Interpretations

- Now that you understand how your thoughts are formed, you can see that:
 - You have many filters from which you listen and receive information
 - You apply the information you receive based on your past experiences or those of others
 - There are many ways to interpret any given situation in the continuum of ugly to hopeful

Interpretations

Can Be Tricky!

- It is worth developing a number of potential ways to view it before identifying your approach to it
- We suggest you play an interpretations game
 - You will see that there are many potential reasons or causes for each issue and different ways to view it
 - Use the interpretations game to vent your negative feelings and see that there are other possible ways to view each situation that are worth exploring

Interpretations Game

- Let's apply this idea to the examples we just created
- We'll consider all of the possible ways to interpret the situation and consider both "ugly" (negative) and "hopeful" (positive) interpretations

Instead of "Knowing" –

Ask!

- Because your view of a situation is always "made up" from your ugly and hopeful interpretations – don't approach your conversations from "knowing"
- Instead – ask!
- Use our "Expectation, Observation, Inquiry Question, Stop" method, and it will work miracles in your communications!

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Define the conflict
 - Identify that a conflict exists



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–Develop your strategy following CC, LLC 8 steps

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Commit to discuss the conflict
- Set the time and place for the discussion
- Avoid distractions and public places
- Give yourself enough time

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Prepare an outline of your view of the situation
- Consider the root cause and examine your interpretations
- How you could be more or 100% responsible for the conflict
- Consider the ramifications
- Examine possible solutions to the conflict

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Share your view of the conflict without blame
- Explain what your expectation or desire was
- Identify how the behavior or outcome differed
- Ask for the other party's perspective on the situation
- Expected, observed, inquiry*

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Stop and listen!
- Don't assume you know their view or rationale
- Listen carefully for clues to solutions or new facts that change your view

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Share your view of the impacts of the situation as it sits today and state your commitment
- Provide concrete examples of the impacts and how those impacts make you feel
- State your commitment -- whether to the relationship or to a shared or known ideal

A Conflict Management Strategy

- Ask for help in developing a solution to the conflict and restate your commitment
- Stop and listen again!
- Agree on what you're both going to do to resolve the conflict
- Reiterate your commitment
- Consider putting your understanding in writing – critical in professional matters

When You Run Into Roadblocks

- When your conflict partner doesn't appear engaged in the conversation or responds with, "I



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don't know" consider:

- Restating your commitment and any impacts
- Sharing their perspective is the only way to generate a collaborative solution
- Offering time to contemplate their view of the situation and generate possible solutions and then regroup
- Realize that you may have to have multiple conversations, especially if it's a long-standing conflict, and that's okay

Conflict Magician Tricks

- Magical phrases
- I see*
- I understand*
- I can appreciate that*
- I suggest we discuss this later when we're able to develop a constructive solution*
- My feelings were hurt*
- Are we collaborating or confronting?*
- When under pressure pull this out of your hat
- Say their name repeatedly to get their attention if they're caught up in a tirade or not listening

Conflict Gottchas

- Bringing emotion into the conversation
- Wait until you can handle the matter strategically
- Using blame words
- You should have, never, always
- How could you, what were you thinking, etc.
- Taking a strong stand
- I would have, never, always
- I totally disagree, hate when that happens, etc.
- Taking a weak stand
- It sort of bothered me, I'm kind of concerned that, I wish that

Conflict Gottcha

- Triangulation – a situation where reporting and communication between two individuals are compromised when an individual bypasses a person they are in conflict with to share prejudicial information with others. *Adapted from Wikipedia*
- This is unhealthy for the conflict relationship and does not support a positive resolution
- Some feel it is inappropriate or unethical and really make you wrong for doing it and it can jeopardize your relationship
- Instead, take your issues directly to your conflict partner as they are truly the only person with whom you can collaborate a lasting solution

Next Steps