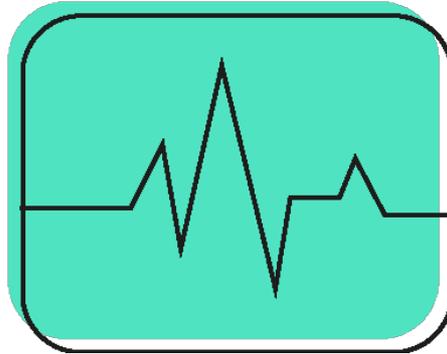# ANALYSE HOW YOU RESOLVE CONFLICT

Conflict is a normal part of any healthy relationship and arises from differences, both large and small. Everyone needs to feel understood, nurtured, and supported, but the ways in which these needs are met vary widely.

Differing needs for feeling comfortable and safe create some of the most severe challenges in our personal and professional relationships. Learning how to deal with conflict – rather than avoiding it – is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged, it can cause great harm to a relationship, but when handled in a respectful, positive way, conflict provides an opportunity to strengthen the bond between two people.

What To Do:
This activity will help you see your conflict management style from a new perspective. The insights you gain depend on your honest appraisal of the conflict management inventory.

1. Create your conflict management style profile by
  ✓ Reading through the conflict management inventory to assess the statements about different conflict situations
  ✓ Marking one statement for each situation that best describes the way you respond to that type of situation

2. Score your profile.
  ✓ Carefully transfer your statement selections to the profile score sheet.
  ✓ Quantify your responses.

3. Consider the balance in your conflict management styles and think about the appropriate approach for the situation you find yourself in
  ✓ Reflect on the implications of your style/ styles using the style guidelines provided
  ✓ Think about the most appropriate approach (or mixture of approaches) for the situation you're in. Consider your own instinctive approach, and learn how you need to change this if necessary

1. Create Your Conflict Management Style Profile

For each situation in the following inventory, TICK the statement that most closely reflects the way you prefer to deal with conflict.

Sometimes you will find that more than one statement is appropriate. In that case, choose the one that most closely represents what you would do.

	Situation	The Way You Typically Respond	✓
1	**When I am in an angry discussion, I prefer to...**	a. talk face-to-face.	
		b. find out what the other person wants.	
		c. wait until tempers cool.	
		d. explore various alternatives to resolve the issue.	
2	**When someone on the team is hostile toward me, I tend to...**	a. stay away from that person.	
		b. seek an open exchange to clear the air.	
		c. confront the individual about their attitude.	
		d. listen to the other person's concerns.	
3	**When I observe others in the midst of a conflict, I usually...**	a. attempt to help if I can.	
		b. leave as quickly as possible.	
		c. become involved and take a position.	
		d. observe what's going on and see what happens.	
4	**When someone puts personal needs ahead of what's best for the team, I am apt to...**	a. tell them what I think about their behavior.	
		b. try to understand why they feel a need to do this.	
		c. seek the other person's help in finding a solution.	
		d. let others on the team take responsibility for solving the problem.	
5	**When I am involved in an interpersonal dispute, I like to...**	a. stress the things we agree on and minimize our differences.	
		b. reduce tension by not discussing areas of disagreement.	
		c. encourage both of us to get our issues and concerns out immediately.	
		d. dismiss it when it impacts my ability to do my job effectively.	
6	**A teams' ability to resolve conflict depends most on...**	a. accepting different points of view.	
		b. openness and candor.	
		c. a willingness to work through differences.	
		d. a patient, nonjudgmental approach.	
7	**When I am upset with someone I tend to...**	a. wait until my anger subsides before I decide what to do.	
		b. let the person know how I feel right away.	
		c. make sure I don't react in a way that will damage our relationship.	
		d. focus on the issue we need to resolve rather than personalities.	

#	Question	Options	
8	The phrase that best describes my approach to dealing with conflict is...	a. attack it head on.	
		b. look for a win-win solution.	
		c. let it work itself out.	
		d. try to understand others' point-of-view.	
9	I believe a team can minimize conflict by...	a. letting the team leader resolve controversial issues.	
		b. being willing to yield to others' point of view.	
		c. expressing opinions and letting the best argument win.	
		d. seeking creative solutions and alternatives.	
10	When I communicate with someone with whom I have a conflict, I...	a. speak rapidly and forcibly, with power.	
		b. find an alternative to face-to-face discussion, for example, voice e-mail.	
		c. focus the discussion on what's important to both of us.	
		d. let the other person talk first before I speak.	
11	The word others would use to describe my approach to conflict is...	a. mediator.	
		b. yielding.	
		c. tough.	
		d. retreat.	
12	When someone does something that irritates me, my tendency is to...	a. tell them to stop.	
		b. do nothing and hope they stop.	
		c. speak gently and let the individual know my feelings.	
		d. try to persuade the person to stop.	
13	The qualities that I value most in dealing with conflict are...	a. understanding and empathy.	
		b. examination of the real issues and creative resolution.	
		c. strength and certainty.	
		d. calmness and tranquility.	
14	When others seek my help in resolving conflict, they can count on me to...	a. discourage strong emotions.	
		b. encourage listening and mutual respect.	
		c. propose solutions and tell them what to do.	
		d. help them understand what all parties need to reach a workable solution.	
15	When conflict polarises the team, I tend to...	a. avoid taking sides and remain neutral.	
		b. try to find out what we agree on before tackling the disagreements.	
		c. make my position clear so that everyone knows where I stand.	
		d. encourage my peers to listen to one another and avoid jumping to conclusions.	

16	When others challenge my competence or abilities, I usually respond by...	a.	accepting it as a difference of opinion.	
		b.	changing the subject and not reacting to the challenge.	
		c.	a strong rebuttal and, sometimes, counterattack.	
		d.	encouraging a discussion that explores why our viewpoints differ.	
17	When work-related stress causes conflict, it is best to...	a.	deal with it quickly and keep the team focused on our goals.	
		b.	let people deal with stress as best they can.	
		c.	help one another deal with the stress-causing issues.	
		d.	try to soothe others' feelings and make people feel better	
18	The best approach to take when people have different ideas about what needs to be done is to...	a.	take the approach most people agree with.	
		b.	look for an integrative solution rather than making a quick compromise.	
		c.	insist on the right course of action even if it's unpopular with some team members.	
		d.	not make a decision right away because it could make things worse.	
19	When teamwork breaks down because of conflict, the team leader should...	a.	do whatever is necessary to avoid needless tension.	
		b.	send a clear message that personal feelings must not hinder teamwork.	
		c.	encourage those involved to work together and rebuild their relationship.	
		d.	help those involved work through their differences.	
20	The best way to uncover underlying issues that are causing conflict is to...	a.	tell people it is the only way for everyone to try and get what they want.	
		b.	wait until people are ready to talk about what's really bothering them.	
		c.	encourage people to work hard to resolve the deeper issues.	
		d.	help people feel comfortable opening up with one another.	

2. Score Your Conflict Management Profile

Circle the number of the statement you **ticked** for each situation.

Total the number of items circled in each **column**.

The column with the highest total indicates your preferred conflict management style.

	Circle The Statement You Ticked For Each Situation			
Situation 1	1a	1c	1d	1b
Situation 2	2c	2a	2b	2d
Situation 3	3c	3b	3a	3d
Situation 4	4a	4d	4c	4b
Situation 5	5d	5b	Sc	5a
Situation 6	6b	6d	6c	6a
Situation 7	7b	7a	7d	7c
Situation 8	8a	8c	8b	8d
Situation 9	9c	9a	9d	9b
Situation 10	10a	10b	10c	10d
Situation 11	11c	11d	11a	11b
Situation 12	12a	12b	12d	12c
Situation 13	13c	13d	13b	13a
Situation 14	14c	14a	14d	14b
Situation 15	15c	15a	15b	15d
Situation 16	16c	16b	16d	16a
Situation 17	17a	17b	17c	17d
Situation 18	18c	18d	18b	18a
Situation 19	19b	19a	19d	19c
Situation 20	20a	20b	20c	20d
For each column total the answers you circled				
Management Style	**Forcing**	**Avoiding**	**Collaborating**	**Compromising**

3. Consider the balance in your conflict management styles and think about the appropriate approach for the situation you find yourself in

Does one style - Forcing, Avoiding, Collaborating or Compromising - dominate? How could you explain this?

- Is it the nature of the work?
- Is it the situation?
- Is it explained by your preferences?

Consider the implications of your style/s based on the guidelines provided.

Think about the most appropriate approach (or mixture of approaches) for the situation you're in. You can also think about your own instinctive approach, and learn how you need to change this if necessary.

Ideally you can adopt an approach that meets the situation, resolves the problem, respects people's legitimate interests, and mends damaged working relationships.

Note in the action plan what you are going to start, stop and continue doing.

Conflict Management Style: Forcing
Control the outcome; discourage disagreement; insist on my view prevailing.

Forcing *is* good when...	Forcing *is not* good when...
- you need to do something quickly. - your conscience tells you to do or not do something that displeases others. - you know you are right and it is important to you that the others recognize that.	- you use it often with people you care about or will need to spend time with in the future. - you want people to feel they can discuss and disagree with you openly.

Conflict Management Style: Avoiding
Delay or avoid response; withdraw; be inaccessible; divert attention.

Avoiding *is* good when...	Avoiding *is not* good when...
- you don't care that much about the issue. - you (or someone else) are very angry and need time to cool off before discussing the issue. - you are in a dangerous situation and don't need to be there.	- you rarely want to deal with the conflicts in your life. - you care about an issue but are afraid to speak up. - you keep being bothered by a disagreement with someone you care about.

Conflict Management Style: Collaborating

Assert your views while also inviting other views. Welcome differences; identify all main concerns; generate options; search for solutions that meet as many concerns as possible; search for mutual agreement.

Collaborating *is* good when...	Collaborating *is not* good when...
- you have the time and want to work something out that satisfies all sides. - you care about the other person(s) and also feel strongly about the issue. - you want to get thoughts and feelings out on the table and deal with them, so they don't cause problems later.	- you don't care that much about the issue. - you need to do something quickly. ("Fire! Everybody out!")

Conflict Management Style: Compromising

Urge moderation; bargain; split the difference; find a little something for everyone; meet them halfway.

Compromising *is* good when...	Compromising *is not* good when...
- you need a quick solution and can both give up something - you both want exactly the same thing and it can be divided up or shared. - you are willing to let chance decide it (flip a coin). - you have tried to satisfy each one completely and it isn't possible (or would take too long).	you might work a little longer and find a solution that pleases each one better.

Action Plan

	Actions	Timescales
Red Things I'm going to stop doing		
Amber Things I'm going to continue doing		
Green Things I'm going to start doing		