

ACTIVITY | What's My Conflict Style



GOAL | To become aware of your conflict management style and how it potentially influences conflictual situations.



RELEVANT FOR

- Executive
- Middle Manager
- Supervisor
- Caseworker



DESCRIPTION | Assess your own conflict style. How might your style have affected conflict situations you've been involved in?



MORE INFO

[Orchestrating Conflict](#)



What's My Conflict Style?

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES QUIZ

Each person has their own way of dealing with conflict. The techniques each person uses are based on many variables, such as basic underlying temperament, personality, environment, cultural norms, and where the individual is in their career. However, by and large, there are five major styles of conflict management techniques: collaborating, competing, avoiding, harmonizing, and compromising.

None of these strategies is superior to the others. Their effectiveness depends on the context in which they are used.

Each statement below provides a strategy for dealing with a conflict. Rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 4 to indicate how likely you are to use this strategy.

1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often 4 = Always

Be sure your answers reflect how you would actually behave rather than how you think you should behave.

1. I explore issues with others to find solutions that meet everyone's needs.
2. I try to negotiate and adopt a give-and-take approach to problem situations.
3. I try to meet the expectations of others.
4. I would argue my case and insist on the merits of my point of view.
5. When there is a disagreement, I gather as much information as I can and keep the lines of communication open.
6. When I find myself in an argument, I usually say very little and try to leave as soon as possible.
7. I try to see conflicts from both sides. What do I need? What does the other person need? What are the issues involved?
8. I prefer to compromise when solving problems and just move on.
9. I find conflicts challenging and exhilarating; I enjoy the battle of wits that usually follows.
10. I feel uncomfortable and anxious when I am at odds with other people.
11. I try to accomplish the wishes of my friends and family.
12. I can figure out what needs to be done and I am usually right.
13. To break deadlocks, I meet people halfway.
14. I may not get what I want, but it's a small price to pay for keeping the peace.
15. I avoid hard feelings by keeping my disagreements with others to myself.



HOW TO SCORE THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT QUIZ

As stated, the 15 statements correspond to the five conflict resolution styles. To find your preferred style, total the points in the respective categories. The one with the highest score indicates your most commonly used strategy. The one with the lowest score indicates your least preferred strategy. However, if you are a leader who must deal with conflict on a regular basis, you may find your style to be a blend of styles.

Style	Corresponding Statements	Total
Collaborating	1, 5, 7	
Competing	4, 9, 12	
Avoiding	6, 10, 15	
Harmonizing	3, 11, 14	
Compromising	2, 8, 13	

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

Collaborating Style: Problem solving occurs in ways that provide an optimum result for all involved. Both sides get what they want, and negative feelings are minimized.

Pros: Creates mutual trust, maintains positive relationships, builds commitments

Cons: Consumes time, energy

Competing Style: Authoritarian approach

Pros: Goal oriented, quick

Cons: May breed hostility

Avoiding Style: The non-confrontational approach

Pros: Does not escalate conflict, postpones difficulty

Cons: Leaves unaddressed problems, unresolved problems

Harmonizing Style: Giving in to maintain relationships.

Pros: Minimizes injury when we are outmatched, relationships are maintained

Cons: Breeds resentment, could exploit the weak

Compromising Style: The middle ground approach

Pros: Useful in complex issues without simple solutions, all parties are equal in power

Cons: No one is ever really satisfied, implementation of less-than-optimal solutions

REFERENCE

Adapted from Adkins, R. (2006). Elemental truths. Conflict Management Quiz.