Welcome to Managing Conflict Skills

Anthony Rees
Causes of conflict
Causes of Conflict

• Different points of view
  – See a situation differently
  – Want different outcomes
  – Different idea of what to do
• Multiple/conflicting priorities
• Personalities
• Background, culture, gender
• Changes (too many, too fast)
• Strong feelings / frustration
The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument
A general description of the model

Discover your conflict profile, then seek positive outcomes through your best conflict-handling techniques:

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating
The goals for using the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument are to:

- Help you learn the five common modes for handling conflict
- Identify your preferred mode, along with its pros and cons
- Understand how and when to use all five modes and when to use the most effective mode for any conflicts
- Expand the participant’s repertoire of conflict management skills based on Thomas-Kilmann
An individual’s behaviour has two basic dimensions

**Assertiveness** - the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his/her own concerns

**Co-operativeness** - the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person’s concerns
Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model

- **Uncooperative**
  - Competing
  - Avoiding
  - Unassertive

- **Cooperative**
  - Collaborating
  - Accommodating
  - Assertive
Competing

- Competing is assertive and unco-operative
- An individual pursues their own concerns at the other person’s expense
- This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one’s own position—one’s ability to argue, one’s rank, economic sanctions
- Competing might mean “standing up for your rights,” defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win
Uncooperative → Cooperative

 asserted

“"My way or the highway”"

Useful for:
- Quick action
- Unpopular decisions
- Vital issues
- Protection
Accommodating

- Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of competing
- When accommodating, an individual neglects their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person
- There is an element of self-sacrifice
- Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person’s order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another’s point of view
Accommodating

Assertive

Useful for:

• Creating good will
• Keeping the peace
• Retreating
• Low importance

“It would be my pleasure”

Unassertive

Uncooperative  Cooperative
Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative
The Individual does not immediately pursue their own concerns or those of the other person
They do not address the conflict
Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation
Avoiding

Uncooperative → Cooperative

Assertive

Useful for:
• Issues of low importance
• Reducing tensions
• Buying time
• Low power

“I’ll think about it tomorrow”
Collaborating

- Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative—the opposite of avoiding
- Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of both persons
- It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative which meets both sets of concerns
- Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other’s insights, concluding to resolve some condition which would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem
Collaborating

"Two heads are better than one"

Useful for:
• Integrating solutions
• Learning
• Merging perspectives
• Gaining commitment
• Improving relationships

Assertive

Unassertive

Uncooperative  Cooperative
Compromising

- Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness
- The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties
- It falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating
- Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating
- Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating
- Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position
"Let’s make a deal"

Useful for:
• Moderate importance
• Time constraints
• Temporary solutions
• Equal power & strong commitment
How to manage anger
Managing anger

- Anger is an emotion that can be a result of a conflict situation
- Learning to express anger without harm to others is essential to happy living & productive work
- Suppression of anger is unhealthy and leads to illness
- Ask “Do I want to control my emotions, or shall they control me??”
• Only YOU can make yourself angry!!
• Others may *contribute* to conditions which provoke anger, but only YOU can produce anger
• Anger is a response to what happens in your environment...
  – An event
  – Something that someone does or says
  – Something that happens

ANGER IS A CHOICE (even at times it feels as if we have no control over it!)
Dealing with angry people

Since anger is an emotion, it is necessary to deal with the feelings as well as the situation.
HEAT – a technique to manage anger
| **H** | Hear the person out | Listen – actively |
# HEAT

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