



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

COLLABORATING

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

Perspective on Conflict:

Conflict is natural, neutral. So affirm differences, prize each person's uniqueness. Recognize tensions in relationships and contrasts in viewpoint. Work through conflicts of closeness.

Collaborating IS 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.

Collaborating IS NOT Good When:

- You don't care that much about the issue.
- You need to do something quickly. ("Fire! Everybody out!")

FOCUSING

Control the outcome; discourage disagreement; insist on my view prevailing.

Perspective on Conflict:

Conflict is obvious; some people are right and some people are wrong. The central issue is who is right. Pressure and coercion are necessary.

Forcing IS 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.

Forcing IS NOT Good When:

- 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.

COMPROMISING

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

Perspective on Conflict:

Conflict is mutual difference best resolved by cooperation and compromise. If each comes halfway, progress can be made by the democratic process.

Compromising IS 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).

Compromising IS NOT Good When:

- You might work a little longer and find a solution that pleases each one better.

ACCOMMODATING

Accept the other's view; let the other's view prevail; give in; support; acknowledge error; decide it's no big deal or it doesn't matter.

Perspective on Conflict:

Conflict is usually disastrous, so yield. Sacrifice your own interests, ignore the issues, put relationships first, keep peace at any price.

Accommodating IS Good When:

- You are, or were, wrong about something.
- You care more about the other person than you do about the issue.

Accommodating IS NOT Good When:

- It happens a lot and you wish you could speak up more often.

AVOIDING

Delay or avoid response; withdraw; be inaccessible; divert attention.

Perspective on Conflict:

Conflict is hopeless; avoid it. Overlook differences, accept disagreement or get out.

Avoiding IS 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.

Avoiding IS NOT Good When:

- 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.