

MANAGING CONFLICT STYLES PRODUCTIVELY

1 The Avoider

This style is most effective when

- The issue or relationship is not important to you
- Situational factors preclude productive conflict management
- You or the other person is overly emotional or unwilling to problem solve

It sometimes results in:

- Negative assessments of self and others
- Issues remaining unresolved and generally becoming more intense
- Physical symptoms
- Inappropriate venting to others
- Weakening of relationship and trust

As an avoider, you may consider:

- Putting forward your own thoughts
- Shifting self-talk to "I need to let him/her know what I need"
- Depersonalizing the issue
- Taking a risk and putting out a message
- Not assuming that all issues discussed will lead to conflict.

2 The Compromiser

This style is most effective when

- Used as a temporary solution until collaboration is possible
- Goals are truly compatible and collaboration is impossible
- Some negotiation is important to maintain good will
- Goals are only moderately important to both parties

It sometimes results in:

- Positive assessments of self and others

- Creation of harmonious environment
- The real issue remaining unresolved, resentment building

As a compromiser, you may consider:

- Slowing down and getting more information
- Giving more information
- Avoiding moving too quickly to a solution

3 The Accommodator

This style is most effective when

- The issue is not important to you
- The situation is such that maintaining harmony is crucial
- The other person has legitimate power and authority
- You are wrong

It sometimes results in:

- Negative assessments of self and/or others lower self-esteem
- Goals not being achieved
- Others "walking all over you", resulting in resentment
- Weakening of relationship and trust

As an accommodator, you may consider:

- Stepping back to think about what is important to you

4 The Competitor

This style is most effective when

- An emergency or crisis occurs or when quick decisions are needed
- A situation where losing could compromise basic values, principles
- Other styles have not worked

It sometimes results in:

- Negative assessments of self and others

- Defense or counter-attack by others
- Compliance of others accompanied by desire for revenge
- Weakening of relationship, trust and respect

As a Competitor, you may consider:

- Putting out messages in a more neutral way
- Asking more open-ended questions
- Thinking about saying, :How is what I am saying affecting you?"

5 The Collaborator

This style is most effective when

- The issue is important
- The relationship is important
- Resolving most conflicts

It sometimes results in:

- Positive assessments of self and others
- Issues being solved in a way that allows both to win
- Trust and respect being preserved and relationship enhanced

As a Collaborator, you may consider:

- Whether collaboration is appropriate under certain time constraints
- Whether the issue is important enough to want collaboration
- Defense or counter-attack by others
- Compliance of others accompanied by desire for revenge
- Weakening of relationship, trust and respect

As a Competitor, you may consider:

- Putting out messages in a more neutral way
- Asking more open-ended questions
- Thinking about saying, :How is what I am saying affecting you?"

