



LEAD to Succeed™ Conflict Style Inventory

Section 2: 1.5

Adapted from the Rahim Organization Conflict Style Inventory

This activity will help you assess your conflict management style. Once you complete this self-assessment, you will tally up your scores to determine which of the five styles of conflict management your answers most closely align with.

- Integrating
- Obliging
- Dominating
- Avoiding
- Compromis

ing Remember, there are no right or

wrong answers!

When completing the inventory and answering each question, think about a specific person that you work with and a recent difficult conversation. Please check whether you agree or disagree to indicate how you handled your disagreement or conflict with that individual.

Answer the following questions as they connect with that person, including their name in your mind whenever you see a blank space.

Choose if you agree or disagree with each statement.

| Question | Agree | Disagree |
|---|-------|----------|
| 1) When a conflict arises with my __, I try to find an acceptable solution. | | |
| 2) I generally try to help my ___ when needed. | | |
| 3) I try to avoid being “put on the spot” and try to keep my conflict with my _____ to myself. | | |
| 4) I try to integrate my ideas with my _ to come up with a joint decision. | | |
| 5) When having conversation with my _ I give some to get some. | | |
| 6) When a conflict arises with my __, I try to work with them to find a solution that we can both agree on. | | |
| 7) I usually avoid confrontation with my ___. | | |
| 8) I usually hold on to my solution to a problem. | | |

| Question | Agree | Disagree |
|--|-------|----------|
| 9) I try to find a happy medium to resolve a disagreement or conflict. | | |
| 10) I use my influence to get my ideas accepted | | |
| 11) I use my authority to make a decision in my favor | | |
| 12) I usually try to make my __happy. | | |
| 13) I give in to the wishes of my _. | | |
| 14) When addressing conflicts with my ____, I win some and I lose some. | | |
| 15) I always share all the necessary information with my __so we can work together to problem solve. | | |
| 16) I sometimes help my __to make a decision in her/his favor. | | |
| 17) I usually compromise with my _ , even if it's not what I want. | | |
| 18) I will argue my case with my _to prove my point. | | |
| 19) I try to play down our differences to reach a compromise. | | |
| 20) I usually propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks. | | |
| 21) I negotiate so a compromise can be reached. | | |
| 22) I try to stay away from disagreement with my _____. | | |
| 23) I avoid any encounter with my _. | | |
| 24) I use my expertise to make a decision in my favor. | | |
| 25) I often go along with the suggestions of my _. | | |
| 26) I use "give and take", when interacting with my____so that a compromise can be made. | | |
| 27) I am generally firm in pursuing my side of an issue. | | |
| 28) I try to bring all concerns out in the open so that the issues can be resolved in the best possible way. | | |
| 29) I collaborate with my _to come up with decisions acceptable to us | | |
| 30) I try to satisfy the expectations of my _____ | | |
| 31) I sometimes use my power to win a competitive situation | | |
| 32) I try to keep my disagreement with my _to myself in order to avoid hard feelings. | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 33) I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with my _. | | |
| 34) I generally avoid an argument with my _. | | |
| 35) I try to work with my _ for a proper understanding of a problem. | | |

Scoring Key:

Agree = 1

Disagree = 0

Put "1" for each question you answer "Agree" and "0" for "Disagree" to the corresponding numbered question.

1. Integrating Style

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| 1 | 4 | 6 | 15 | 28 | 29 | 35 | TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | |

2. Obliging Style

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| 5 | 12 | 13 | 16 | 17 | 25 | 30 | TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | |

3. Dominating Style

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| 8 | 10 | 11 | 18 | 24 | 27 | 31 | TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | |

4. Avoiding Style

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| 3 | 7 | 22 | 23 | 32 | 33 | 34 | TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | |

5. Compromising Style

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|--------------|
| 2 | 9 | 14 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 26 | TOTAL |
| | | | | | | | |

The highest score reflects your particular style, although you may fall into more than one category.

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Dominating

- **Dominating style**, also known as competing, indicates a high concern for self and a low concern for others.
- A dominating person stands up for their own wants and needs and ignores the needs of others.
- They defend personal positions that they believe are correct and right.
- This is a win-lose style that can be seen as bullying or intimidating to win one’s position.

| Conflict Style | Works best in situations when... | Not suited for situations when... |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Dominating | 1. The issue is trivial. 2. A speedy decision is needed. 3. The unpopular course of action is implemented. 4. It is necessary to overcome assertive subordinates or coworkers. | 1. The issue is complex. 2. The Issue is not important to you. 3. Both people have positions of authority. 4. The decision does not have to be made quickly. 5. Your subordinates |

Conflict Style Assessment

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>5. An unfavorable decision by the other party may be costly to you.</p> <p>6. Subordinates or coworkers lack expertise to make the decision.</p> <p>7. The issue is important to you.</p> | <p>possess a high degree of competence.</p> |
|--|--|---|

Adapted from:

Rahim, M. Afzalur. "Toward A Theory of Managing Organizational Conflict." *International Journal of Conflict Management*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2002, pp. 206–235., doi:10.1108/eb022874.

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Obliging

- The **obliging style**, also known as accommodating or placating, is about giving in to others.
- It places a very high value on others and a low concern for self.
- An obliging person neglects and sacrifices what they want to satisfy the concern of the other person.
- This style is non-confrontational, minimizes differences and emphasizes what you have in common to satisfy the other person.
- This style may take the form of selfless generosity, charity or obedience .
- An obliging person will likely absorb conflict and can be seen as acting friendly in the face of hostility.

| Conflict Style | Works best in situations when... | Not suited for situations when... |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Obliging | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You believe that you may be wrong. 2. The issue is more important to the other person. 3. You are willing to give up something in exchange for something from the other person in the future. 4. Preserving the relationship is important. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The issue is important to you. 2. You believe that you are right. 3. The other party is wrong or unethical. |

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Avoiding

- The **avoiding style**, also known as suppression, indicates a low concern for self and others.
- People with this style fail to satisfy their own concerns, as well as concerns of others.
- It has been associated with buck-passing and sidestepping situations.
- This style may take the form of postponing an issue until a better time, or simply avoiding the situation altogether.
- This style often seems as though the individual has little concern toward the issues or people involved in conflict and may deny the existence of conflict in public.

| Conflict Style | Works best in situations when... | Not suited for situations when... |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| Avoiding | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The issue is trivial. 2. The potential conflict of confronting the other person outweighs the benefits of resolution. 3. A cooling-off period is needed. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The issue is important to you. 2. It is your responsibility to make a decision. 3. The people involved are unwilling to defer and the issue must be resolved. 4. Prompt attention is needed. |

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Integrating

- The **integrating conflict style**, also known as problem solving or collaborating, indicates a high concern for self and others.
- It involves teamwork between co-workers who are willing to reach a mutual and acceptable solution.
- People who practice the integrating style of conflict management solve problems by being open and exchanging information in an effort to come to a constructive solution.
- The two distinctive elements of this style are:
 1. **Confrontation.** This is characterized by open communication, clarifying misunderstandings and examining the underlying causes of conflicts.
 2. **Problem solving.** Confrontation is a prerequisite of problem solving. When problem solving, one would also identify appropriate solutions to satisfy all who are involved.

| Conflict Style | Works best in situations when... | Not suited for situations when... |
|----------------|---|---|
| Integrating | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The issues are difficult. 2. A collaboration of ideas is needed to come up with better solutions. 3. A commitment is needed from all involved for a successful resolution. 4. Time is available for problem solving. 5. One person alone cannot solve the problem. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The task or problem is simple. 2. An immediate decision is needed. 3. Other staff members are unconcerned about outcome. 4. Other staff members do not have problem-solving skills. |

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Compromising

- The **compromising style** indicates intermediate concern for self and others.
- Those involved participate in a give-and-take or sharing of solutions, where both people give up something to make a decision that works for all.
- A compromising style may involve splitting the difference, or seeking a quick, middle-ground position.

| Conflict Style | Works best in situations when... | Not suited for situations when... |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Compromising | 1. The goals of those involved are mutually exclusive. 2. An agreement could not be reached. 3. A temporary solution to a complex problem is needed. | 1. One person has more authority. 2. The problem is complex enough to need a problem-solving approach. |

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