

National Association of Bar Executives
Annual Meeting - August 5-8, 2008

Becoming a Conflict Competent Bar Executive



Presented By
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Conflict is not inherently destructive, but our responses to it can be.

You have the power to choose how you respond to conflict, and in doing so, affect the outcome.

Responses to Conflict
How Do You Respond?

Before

When an unpleasant conflict with another person is just beginning, I . . .

When another person seriously provokes me before a conflict, I . . .

Responses to Conflict
How Do You Respond?

During

When I am having a conflict with someone, I . . .

During a tense conflict with another person, I . . .

Responses to Conflict

How Do You Respond?

After

When a conflict has been going on for some time, I . . .

After an intense conflict with someone has ended, I . . .

An Introduction to the Conflict Dynamics Profile

1. The CDP is explicitly based on behavioral orientation
2. People can change the way they respond to conflict
3. Conflict can best be thought of as an unfolding process
4. The earliest responses to conflict have the largest effect on how conflict unfolds
5. The more people know, the better equipped they will be to change



Types of Conflict

Cognitive Conflict (task-oriented)

Focuses on ideas not personalities

Can occur during times of creativity and productivity

Affect is neutral or positive


Unrelated, or positively related to group functioning



Types of Conflict

Affective Conflict (personal)

Focuses on people, not ideas
 Can occur at any time
 Negatively related to group functioning
 Can escalate rapidly




CDP Hot Buttons

Hot buttons refer to people or situations which may irritate you enough to provoke conflict by producing destructive responses.

The "hotter" the hot button, the more likely it is to produce:


- Strong negative emotions
- Feelings of personal provocation
- Automatic and impulsive responding
- Increased tension

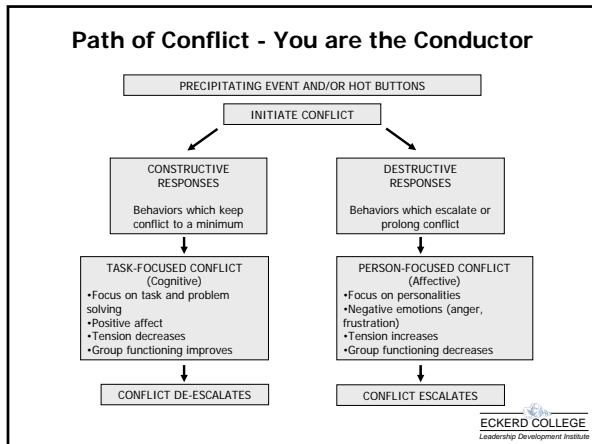


CDP Hot Buttons

36 items tapping the 9 situations/people causing the greatest degree of irritation to the individual. The CDP Hot Buttons measured are:

- Unreliable
- Unappreciative
- Micro-managing
- Abrasive
- Hostile
- Overly analytical
- Aloof
- Self-centered
- Untrustworthy





Constructive Responses

Behaviors which research has demonstrated to be highly effective in keeping the harmful effects of conflict to a minimum

Constructive responses emphasize:

- Task-completion and focus on problem-solving
- Creative problem-solving & focus on exchange of ideas
- Expression of positive emotions & optimism
- Not provoking the other person

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Typical Outcomes of Constructive Responses

- Win-win solutions
- Open & honest communication of feelings
- Both parties' needs are met
- Non-judgmental actions
- Not sticking adamantly to one position
- Actively resolving conflict (not allowing conflict to continue)
- Thoughtful responses (not impulsive)
- Team performance improves

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Destructive Responses

Behaviors which research has demonstrated to escalate or prolong conflict

Destructive responses emphasize:

- Displaying negative emotions
- Trying to win, no matter what
- Lack of respect for the other person
- Avoiding conflict rather than facing it



Typical Outcomes of Destructive Responses

- Feelings of anger & frustration
- Judgmental actions
- Getting even & keeping score
- Other party does not have its needs met
- Closed channels of communication
- Refusing to deal with issues
- Decreased self-confidence
- Tasks not completed
- Team performance decreases



Active & Passive Responses to Conflict

Research has further demonstrated the usefulness of classifying conflict-related responses into two additional categories.

Active

Behaviors which involve overt responses, taking action, or making an effort. Outcome can be either constructive or destructive.

Passive

Behaviors which involve withholding a response, not taking action, or not making an effort. Outcome can be either constructive or destructive.



Conflict Response Categories

| | Constructive | Destructive |
|---------|---|---|
| Active | Perspective Taking Creating Solutions Expressing Emotions Reaching Out | Winning at All Costs Displaying Anger Demeaning Others Retaliating |
| Passive | Reflective Thinking Delay Responding Adapting | Avoiding Yielding Hiding Emotions Self Criticizing |

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Sample CDP Items

Constructive Responses

Perspective Taking

- Imagines what the other person is thinking and feeling
- Tries to understand how things look from that person's perspective

Creating Solutions

- Attempts to generate creative solutions
- Brainstorms with the other person to create new ideas

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Sample CDP Items

Constructive Responses

Expressing Emotions

- Talks honestly and directly to the other person
- Directly communicates his/her feelings at the time

Reaching Out

- Tries to repair the emotional damage caused by the conflict
- Makes the first move to get the communication started again

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Sample CDP Items

Constructive Responses

Reflective Thinking

- Analyzes the situation to determine the best course of action
- Reflects on the best way to proceed

Delay Responding

- Delays responding until the situation has settled down
- Lets things calm down before proceeding

Adapting

- Tries to stay flexible and optimistic
- Tries to just make the best of the situation

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Sample CDP Items

Destructive Responses

Winning at All Costs

- Argues vigorously for his/her own position
- Tries to win at all costs

Displaying Anger

- Raises his/her own voice
- Uses harsh angry words

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Sample CDP Items

Destructive Responses

Demaneing Other

- Rolls his/her eyes when the other person speaks
- Is sarcastic toward that person

Retaliating

- Tries to get even
- Passively obstructs the other person

Avoiding

- Acts distant and aloof toward that person
- Keeps as much distance as possible from that person

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Sample CDP Items
Destructive Responses

Yielding

- Lets the other person have his/her way in order to avoid further conflict
- Gives in to the other person just to make life easier all the way around

Hiding Emotions

- Hides his/her true feelings
- Feels upset but doesn't show it

Self Criticizing

- Is critical of himself/herself for not handling the conflict better
- Replays the incident over & over in his/her mind

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Remember you are in control . . .

You have the power to choose how you respond to conflict, and in doing so, affect the outcome.

If you are patient in one moment of anger, you will escape a hundred days of sorrow.

- Chinese proverb

Nora Riva Bergman

As a coach and Practice Advisor with Atticus, Nora is dedicated to helping attorneys create the lives and law practices they dreamed of when they were in law school. She knows the frustrations that attorneys experience every day and is committed to helping them change their lives for the better.

Nora brings a deep understanding of the practice and business of law to her work as coach and Practice Advisor. She has practiced as an employment law attorney and certified mediator and has served as a professor at both Stetson University College of Law and the University of South Florida, teaching courses in alternative dispute resolution and negotiation. In addition, Nora has been a speaker at conferences for the American Bar Association, The Florida Bar and other national legal associations. She has also served as the Executive Director of the St. Petersburg Bar Association.

Her background as an attorney, law professor and bar executive gives her a unique perspective on the challenges lawyers face and makes her a powerful coach. In addition to her broad experience with all aspects of the law firm, Nora understands the importance of, and is committed to, helping attorneys leverage technology in order to maximize their ultimate success.

Nora is a graduate of the prestigious Leadership Development Program (LPD) at Eckerd College, and is certified in the Conflict Dynamics Profile® developed by the LDP to help individuals and organizations learn how to deal with conflict constructively. She is also certified in the DISC® Behavioral Style Assessment.

Nora received an undergraduate degree in journalism, *summa cum laude*, from the University of South Florida and her J.D., *cum laude*, from Stetson University College of Law, where she was a member of the law review and served as a mentor for incoming students.

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