



# Ways to Approach CONFLICT

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When faced with conflict, people are always inclined to respond in different ways. You can discover your most natural response to conflict by taking this survey.



# Styles of Conflict Management

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- **COLLABORATING** – *We both win.*  
*“Two heads are better than one.”*
- **COMPROMISING** – *We meet halfway.*  
*“Let’s split the difference”*
- **ACCOMMODATING** – *I give in.*  
*“I don’t care that much; have it your way.”*
- **AVOIDING** – *I leave. “I’d rather not deal with it now.”*
- **FORCING** – *I take charge. “Might makes right.”*



# COLLABORATING

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**DESCRIPTION:** 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

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## ■ 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.

## ■ NOT GOOD WHEN:

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



# COMPROMISING

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**DESCRIPTION:** 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

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## ■ 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).

## ■ NOT GOOD WHEN:

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



# ACCOMMODATING

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**DESCRIPTION:** 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

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- **IS GOOD WHEN:**

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

- **NOT GOOD WHEN:**

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



# AVOIDING

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**DESCRIPTION:** 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

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- **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.

- **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.



# FORCING

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**DESCRIPTION:** 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

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- **IS GOOD WHEN:**

- ☺ You need 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.

- **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.