

Lightbulb Moments

Conflict Resolution with Emotional Intelligence

(No. 1 in a series of 24)

What is Conflict?

Conflict occurs between at least two interdependent parties.

One party usually has more power.

Each party asserts that they have the right to limited resources or to a course of action.

Each party can frustrate the desires of the other(s).

There are often perceptions around incompatibility, resource allocation and interferences about achieving their goals.



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Conflict resolution is the practice of identifying and handling conflict in a sensible, fair and efficient manner.

There needs to be a solid foundation of **TRUST**.

Without healthy conflict, teams cannot reach their potential.



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Conflict is

- 💡 a normal, inescapable part of life
- 💡 occurs in any relationship from time to time
- 💡 an opportunity to understand opposing preferences and values

Life would be boring without conflict!



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Indicators of Conflict

- 💡 Anger and frustration
- 💡 Lack of trust
- 💡 Lack of honesty
- 💡 Poor decision making
- 💡 Lack of motivation
- 💡 Low morale
- 💡 Absenteeism
- 💡 Unmet business goals



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The Cost of Conflict

- 💡 Increased stress
- 💡 Increased absence from work
- 💡 Inappropriate decisions
(unclear, unfocused)
- 💡 Delayed and missed deadlines
- 💡 Lower productivity
- 💡 Divisions as people take sides
- 💡 Time spent in resolution
- 💡 Attrition
- 💡 Costs in arbitration, mediation,
negotiation
- 💡 Potential legal costs



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The Benefits of Conflict

- 💡 Promotes growth and learning
- 💡 Promotes creativity and innovation
- 💡 Opens up communication
- 💡 Develops new perspectives
- 💡 Broadens horizons
- 💡 Promotes personal development
 - increased self-awareness
 - interpersonal skills
 - mutual understanding



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Sources of Conflict

Facts – people see things from different view points

Methods – people have different preferences around how tasks are done

Goals – people have different objectives and are working towards different goals

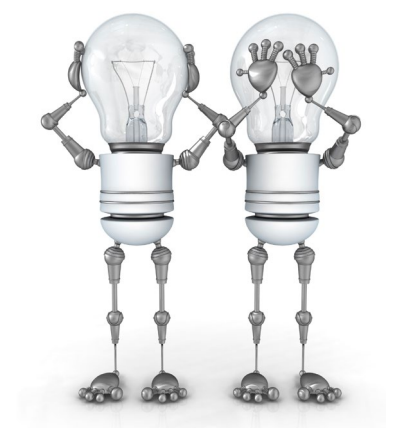
Values – people have different basic values



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Issues That Get In The Way

- 💡 Imposing your own goals and priorities
- 💡 Attacking the legitimacy of other's positions and priorities
- 💡 Minimising or ignoring other's concerns
- 💡 Suppressing differences
- 💡 Refusing to temporarily remove constraints
- 💡 Going through the motions of managing the difference but refusing to carry it through
- 💡 Playing politics
- 💡 Taking things personally



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Factors that Impact upon Conflict

- 💡 How important is this for me?
- 💡 What is my attitude to conflict?
- 💡 How important is my relationship to you?
- 💡 How skilled am I at dealing with conflict?
- 💡 Do I trust you?



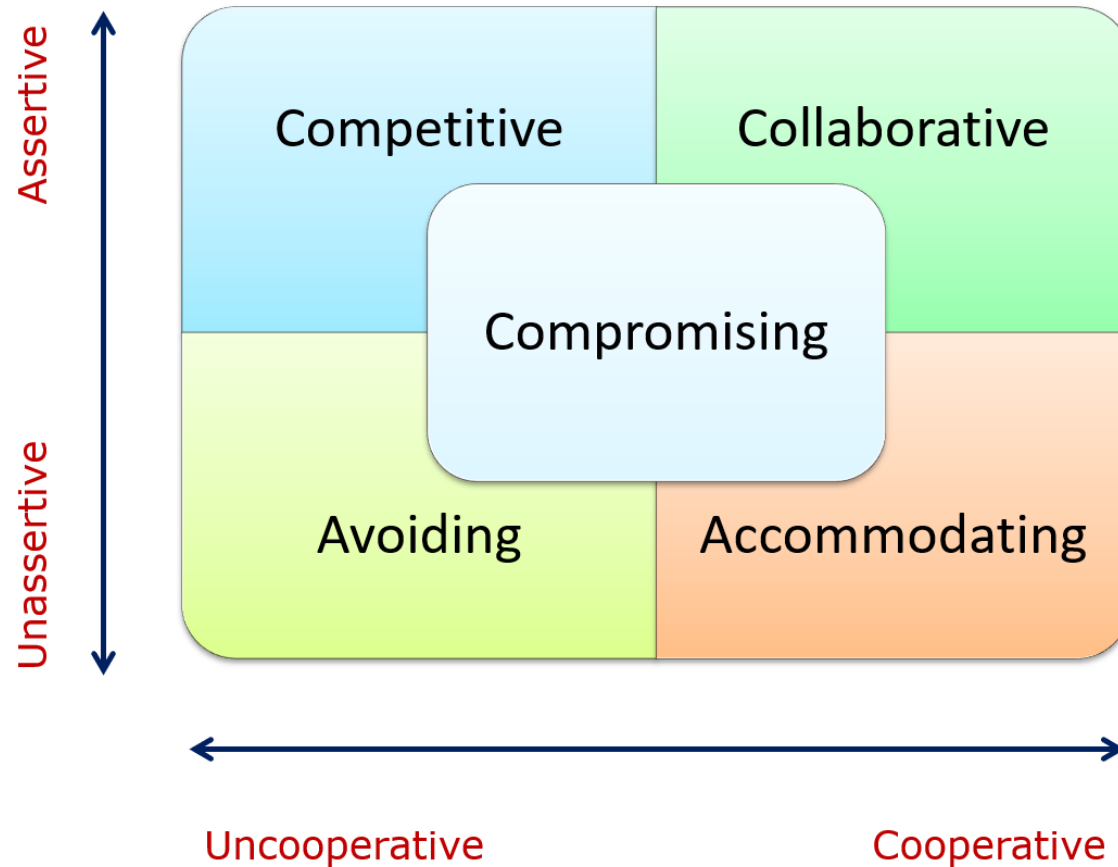
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Understanding Conflict



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Understanding Conflict - Accommodating

- 💡 When you know that you are wrong
- 💡 When you know the other party needs your help
- 💡 When the issue is more important for your opponent
- 💡 When there is the need to build relationships

A people-oriented approach - placing other's needs above yours

Exhibiting selflessness to build harmonious relationships

You lose, they win (Lose / Win)



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Understanding Conflict - Avoiding



- 💡 When the issue is trivial
- 💡 When you need to get more information
- 💡 When there is no chance of you winning
- 💡 When the disruption can be costly
- 💡 When the time is not right

Driven by a fear of confrontation, pretending that the issue doesn't exist

May be seen as too challenging and there is too much at stake

You lose, they lose (Lose / Lose)



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Understanding Conflict - Competing

- 💡 When it's an emergency
- 💡 When quick, decisive action is needed
- 💡 When a win for you is vital

A goal oriented approach

Gives a short term advantage

Satisfies your own needs first so reflects assertive behaviour

You win, they lose (Win / Lose)



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Understanding Conflict - Collaborating

- 💡 When both parties are willing to discuss and decide
- 💡 When both sides are committed to their cause
- 💡 When the goals for both the sides are too important to be compromised

A goal-oriented and a people-oriented approach

Leads to creative solutions

Requires good negotiation skills

Both sides are winners (Win / Win)



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Understanding Conflict - Compromising



- 💡 When you need to find a solution
- 💡 When both sides have equally strong arguments

Pursuing a course of action midway between both parties

Each side gives up and takes away something at the same time

Neither side completely loses or wins (50 / 50)



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We all like to be listened to and to be understood.

This makes us feel affirmed and validated.

Seek first to understand and then be understood.



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Dealing with Conflict

Recognise

- 💡 where you are
- 💡 where the other person is
- 💡 where you want to be
- 💡 what your intent is
- 💡 which position the other person may realistically move to
- 💡 what you need to do or say in order to allow the other person to move



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The Words used can have a Big Impact (I)



Yes, but ...

This has the potential impact of

- negating the other person's contribution
- positioning your idea as the right one



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The Words used can have a Big Impact (II)



Yes, and ...

This has the impact of

- affirming the other person's ideas
- communicating that they have been heard
- building upon their ideas



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The Words used can have a Big Impact (III)

The importance of **AND**

It is important in conflict resolution to recognise *what* you would like to achieve and *how* you would like to do it.

I want to maintain
my position **AND**
treat the other
person with respect.

I agree their solution
is better than mine
AND I want to retain
my authority.

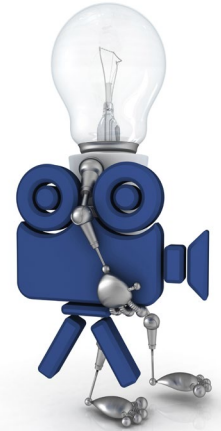
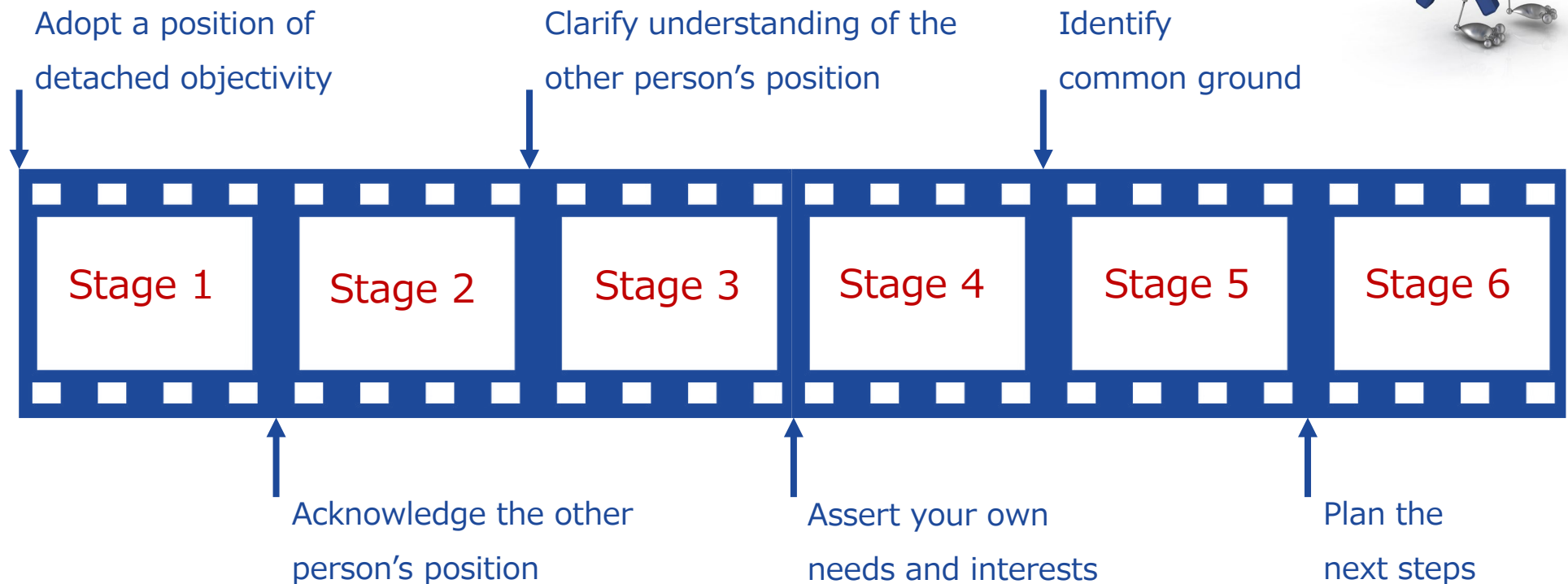


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Managing Conflict in Six Stages



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Third Party Intervention

1. Let everyone have their say
2. Listen carefully and dispassionately
3. Agree and emphasis the similarities
4. Ask for ideas on how to move forward
5. Focus on and plan for the future
6. Make sure everyone is happy with the end result



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A Few Bits of Wisdom

- 💡 Don't dwell on conflict symptoms and trace it to its source
- 💡 There is no gender or age effect in conflict handling
- 💡 How any disagreement is expressed influences the conflict situation
- 💡 Personalities affect how conflict is managed
- 💡 Aggression breeds aggression
- 💡 Challenging and clear goals can defuse conflict
- 💡 How you handle conflict affects group satisfaction



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Difference makes life interesting.

Accept it and work with it!



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