

Conflict Resolution Styles

Conflict resolutions styles are different methods for addressing conflict. Everyone has a default or go-to style but using different styles in different contexts may result in a better outcome.

Accommodation

Accommodation is giving up what you want in order to let them get what they want. It's putting aside one's own needs and concerns in order to satisfy the needs of the other person.

“I satisfy your concerns at my expense.”

Use when...

- Relationships are more important than the outcome.
- You want to reach a quick, temporary solution.
- You realize you're wrong.



Avoidance

Avoidance is knowing that there is a conflict but choosing not to deal with it. Avoiders do not acknowledge or talk about the conflict with the other person and maybe avoid the person with whom he or she is having the conflict.

“Neither you nor I satisfy our concerns.”

Use when...

- Potential harm outweighs potential benefits.
- Time is needed to collect information or cool down.
- Someone else can be more effective in reaching a resolution.
- The outcome is not important in the big picture.
- Change is not possible or realistic, such as policy or personality.



Compromise

Compromise is splitting the difference 50/50. Each person gets and gives up a little of what they want. It is an attempt to seek middle group.

“I give up some of my concerns to satisfy you and you do the same.”

Use when...

- You need to achieve temporary solutions for complex issues.
- The decision is time-sensitive and not worth fighting over.
- Collaboration or competing did not result in consensus.
- Two parties of equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals.



Competition

Competition assumes that in order for one person to win, the other must lose. Competition is getting what you want AND ensuring the other person does not get what they want.

“I get what I need at your expense.”

Use when...

- Unpopular actions must be implemented.
- You need to be quick; the decision is paramount.
- Achieving one’s goal is paramount.



Collaborating

Collaboration is talking through differences to uncover what each person needs rather than what they want. Collaborating generates unique solutions that satisfy the needs of both people. It involves win-win problem-solving and assumes that both people can get their needs met.

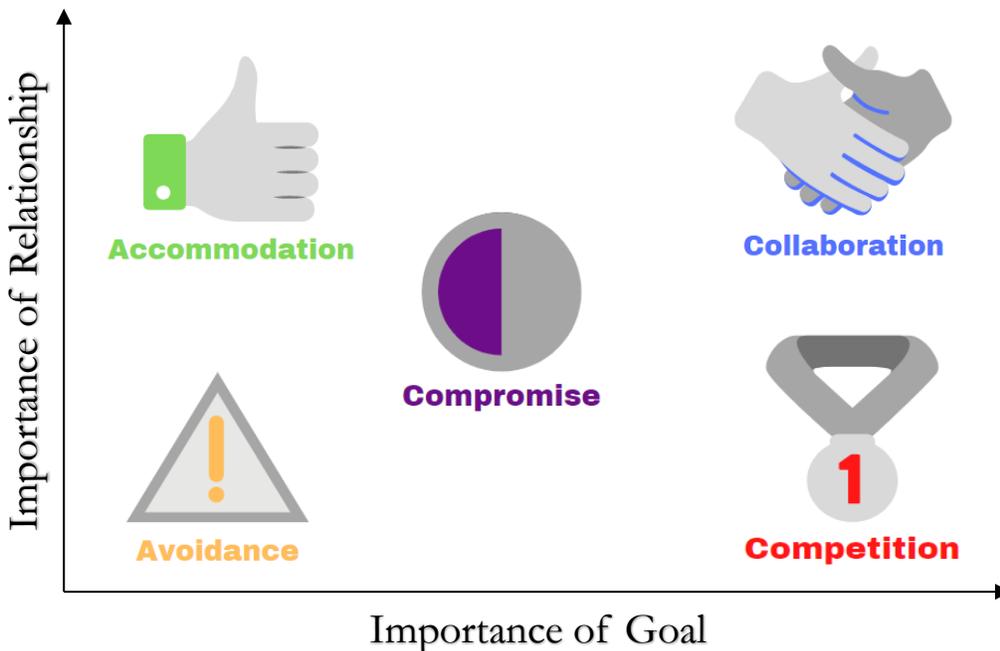
“We discover a unique and creative way to satisfy both of our important concerns.”

Use when...

- Relationships and issues are both important.
- Reaching a consensus is paramount.
- You need to gain commitment and acceptance for a high-quality decision.



Using Conflict Styles Appropriately



About the Conflict Resolution Program

The Conflict Resolution Program (CRP), part of the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration (IPA) is a resource dedicated to supporting transformational and organizational change in nonprofit, public, government, and educational settings. This is done primarily through teaching and promoting effective communication, collaborative problem-solving, and conflict resolution.

To learn more about our work, visit

<https://www.bidenschool.udel.edu/ipa/serving-delaware/crp>



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