

# PREVIEW GUIDE



## Dealing With Conflict

## Materials Included With *Dealing With Conflict*

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The workshop designed to accompany the video-based program offers two training designs, one that lasts 2 ½ hours, the other 3 hours. The workshop kit includes all the materials you'll need to customize and run the program:

- ◆ The **Video program** of *Dealing With Conflict* provides the theory and examples to illustrate the workshop topics. It is closed-captioned.
- ◆ The **Leader's Guide** provides step-by-step instructions for introducing activities, leading discussions, and making transitions between the video, group discussions, and exercises. It includes two Training Designs, along with extensive background information on the five conflict handling modes discussed in the program.

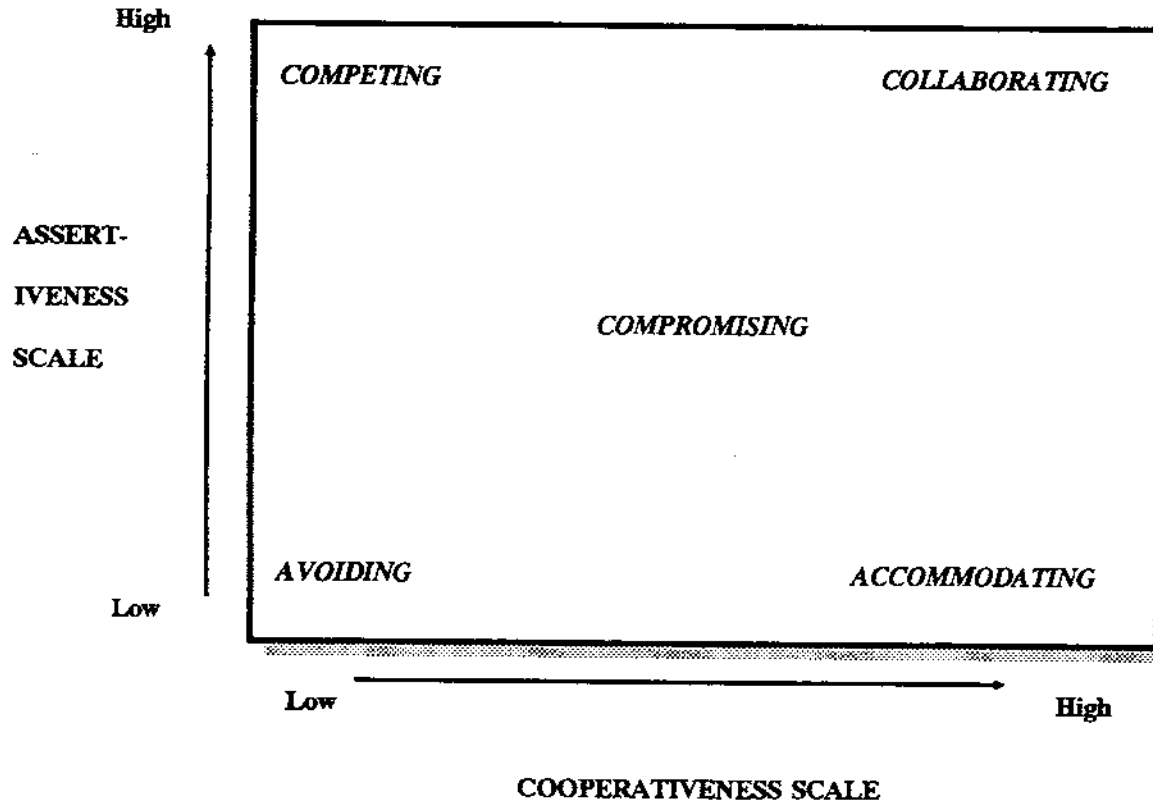
## Related Products Available for Purchase

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- ◆ **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument**, by Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann. Used as a stand-alone product or as an adjunct to our *Dealing With Conflict* video, this instrument is sure to add a powerful component to any conflict management workshop. It's the most widely used self-test available on the subject. It helps users develop skills in understanding the components of conflict, effective conflict resolution, approaching conflict from a self-assessment point-of-view and more.

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**SAMPLE PAGES FROM LEADER'S GUIDE**



## THE FIVE CONFLICT HANDLING MODES

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3.) In **Normative Conflicts**, one party evaluates the other on the basis of how they should behave, in other words, "correct" behavior. This type of conflict plays to our notions of justice, equity and values. Violations of normative standards can trigger the emotional reactions of blame and anger. Reconciliation of normative conflicts may require an apology or reparation from the violating party.

### The Model

Whatever the type of conflict that engages us, we tend to respond in the same way -- by taking a "position" that stakes out our territories. Each position can be defined by how much we try to satisfy our own concerns -- what can be called "assertiveness" -- and how much we try to satisfy the concerns of the other party -- or "cooperativeness."

The degree to which we assert ourselves or cooperate in a conflict is not a single continuum as we might imagine, where we think of cooperation as a "good" trait and assertiveness as somehow "less good." As Dr. Thomas shows us in his model of the Five Conflict-handling Modes (see top of page), "assertiveness" and "cooperation" move along respective vertical and horizontal axes.

### The Five Conflict Positions

During a conflict, the positions we choose strongly affect the direction of the outcome, and determine which of the parties is likely to be satisfied or unsatisfied.

#### AVOIDING (low assertiveness; low cooperativeness)

Avoiding is the position where we are the most unassertive and the most uncooperative. Here, we attempt to satisfy neither our own concerns nor the concerns of the other party. In other words, our position is "not to take a position," and the result is a stalemate where frustration and anger can build. Yet avoiding a conflict can be useful, particularly in situations where we feel the conflict is trivial or where we know we have no chance of satisfying our concerns.

#### ACCOMMODATING (low assertiveness; high cooperativeness)

In taking an Accommodating position during a conflict, we are making an attempt to satisfy concerns -- only they're the concerns of the other party. When we accom-

can gain, or at least find themselves distributing a great deal more value than they initially thought was at stake.”

### Third Party Intervention

Sometimes, an impartial third party acting as a facilitator can help lead us through the collaborative process, by keeping each person focused on concerns. The major breakthrough in the conflict occurs when both parties begin to see the conflict as a mutual problem.

### Long-Term Benefits

For all the time and effort it takes to achieve, a collaboration can actually save time in the long run. Organizations

don't have to keep dealing with the same issues again and again because the conflict has been resolved to the complete satisfaction of both parties. Energy spent on face-saving routines during a conflict can now be channeled into positive pursuits like decision-making and continuous improvement.

### Controlling the Outcome

So, as we can see, it's not the conflict itself, but how we deal with it that ultimately determines the outcome. Knowing more about the positions we can choose gives us a degree of control over the direction of the conflict, and can thereby empower us toward a more constructive and fulfilling resolution. □

## SUGGESTED TRAINING DESIGNS

The Training Designs in this Leader's Guide expand the main points presented in *Dealing With Conflicts*. Training Design #1 helps individuals apply the knowledge and skills they learned in the video to resolving their own conflicts. Training Design #2 is targeted toward managers and members of self-directed work teams who may be called upon to help facilitate conflicts in their organizations.

Both Training Designs explore the five conflict positions and help participants address underlying concerns.

Choose the Training Design that best matches the goals, size and experience of your group. Feel free to tailor the activities, the Conflict Mode Instrument, and Discussion Starters into a Training Design of your own.

## TRAINING OBJECTIVES

After viewing CRM's *Dealing With Conflict* and participating in the Training Designs, participants will be able to remember that:

- ▼ When in conflict, we have five basic conflict-handling positions we can choose. Each of them will have an impact upon the outcome of the conflict, positive or negative --
- ▼ In **Avoiding**, neither you nor I satisfy our concerns.
- ▼ In **Accommodating**, I satisfy your concerns at the expense of my own.
- ▼ In **Competing**, I satisfy my concerns at the expense of yours.
- ▼ In **Compromising**, we both give up half of our concerns in order to satisfy the other half.
- ▼ In **Collaborating**, both you and I approach the conflict as a mutual problem, allowing us to discover alternatives which satisfy all of our concerns.

## DISCUSSION STARTERS

1.) When you're involved in a conflict or witness a conflict, how does it make you feel? Do you know why you respond that way?

2.) What are some of the things that can cause a conflict to escalate?

3.) Is conflict always negative? Name some of the positive aspects of conflict.

4.) What happens when a serious conflict goes unresolved? Think of an unresolved conflict you may have had or may be having right now. How has that affected your relationship with the other person? Have you tried to resolve the conflict? How has it affected your job performance?

5.) Who do you feel is most responsible for resolving a conflict in your organization? The party that initiates it? The party that feels violated? The manager? The work

team leader? Anyone who may be affected by the outcome of the conflict? State your reasons.

6.) What is the difference between a compromise and a collaboration?

7.) What do we mean by a "win-win" outcome? Do you feel a conflict can be truly resolved to everyone's satisfaction or is that pie-in-the-sky? Explain your answer.

8.) How would you describe your work environment – cooperative or competitive? How important are conflict resolution skills to a TQM environment?

### **TRAINING DESIGN #1 (2 hours, 35 minutes)**

(Supplies needed: A flip chart, easel, marking pen or blackboard and chalk.)

1.) Briefly introduce the workshop and explain to participants that the purpose of today's session is to better understand conflict so they can learn how to deal with it in a constructive manner. (10 minutes)

2.) Ask the group two or three questions from the Discussion Starters. (10 minutes)

3.) Ask the participants to review a recent conflict they've had that did not turn out well for them. Why didn't it work out? Did the other party win? What did they lose? Did they express their needs to the other party? (10 minutes)

4.) Now ask the participants to review a conflict that was resolved satisfactorily. How did that conflict differ from the one that didn't work out? Were the issues more or less important to them? (15 minutes)

5.) Have the participants complete Exercise A using the **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument** (For details on how to order multiple copies, call CRM at 1-800-421-0833). (30 minutes)

6.) Show the video **Dealing With Conflict**. (20 minutes)

7.) Invite the participants to return to the conflicts discussed in #3 and #4. For the conflict that did not succeed, where could they have improved – by being more assertive or more cooperative? What was their own position in the conflict? What was their underlying concern? (15 minutes)

8.) Have the group complete Exercise C. (35 minutes)

9.) Finally, review the five basic conflict positions (1) Avoiding, (2) Accommodating, (3) Competing, (4) Compromising, and (5) Collaborating. (10 minutes)

### **TRAINING DESIGN #2 (3 hours, 5 minutes)**

1.) Introduce the workshop briefly and explain that this session will focus on conflict intervention skills and the five basic positions people stake out for themselves during a conflict. (5 minutes)

2.) Have the participants review and discuss a conflict they facilitated that turned out well for the parties involved. Why was the outcome positive? How cooperative were the two parties? How open were they to discussion? (15 minutes)

3.) Ask the participants to review and discuss a conflict intervention that did not turn out well. Why was this outcome destructive? How assertive were the two parties?

Were they willing to talk over the issues? How did they behave toward each other? (15 minutes)

4.) Show the video **Dealing With Conflict**. (20 minutes)

5.) Have the participants complete Exercise A using the **Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument** (For details on how to order multiple copies, call CRM at 1-800-421-0833). (30 minutes)

6.) Ask the participants to think again about the conflicts identified in #2 and #3. What positions did the parties take in the conflict with the successful outcome? What positions did the parties choose in the conflict that had the un-

**IDENTIFYING CONFLICT POSITIONS -- WORKSHEET (Exercise B)**

Each of us finds ourselves involved in conflict situations every day in our personal and worklives. How we respond to these situations can be a prime determinant of how successful we will be at resolving the conflict. There are 5 *conflict handling positions* we can choose -- Avoiding, Accommodating, Competing, Compromising and Collaborating.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill in each blank below with the name of the position you feel is best suited to achieving a satisfactory resolution under the circumstances.

- 1.) \_\_\_\_\_ can be appropriate for situations that demand immediate action -- i.e., emergencies.
- 2.) \_\_\_\_\_ works well when the greater need is for harmony and stability.
- 3.) \_\_\_\_\_ can help you learn something new from the conflict and show how reasonable you are.
- 4.) When a conflict involves a trivial matter, \_\_\_\_\_ may be a good choice.
- 5.) When goals don't match and both parties wield an equal amount of power, \_\_\_\_\_ may help restore order.
- 6.) You may want to try \_\_\_\_\_ if all parties are willing to explore their concerns.
- 7.) When tempers flare and people need to cool down, \_\_\_\_\_ may be your best option.
- 8.) When someone is taking advantage of cooperative behavior, \_\_\_\_\_ may be appropriate.
- 9.) If you're facing a deadline and you need a practical solution, try \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10.) \_\_\_\_\_ is best when you want to build a consensus.

**SCORING:**

Award yourself 10 points for each correct answer (See Exercise B, Page 8 of the Leader's Guide). A score of 90-100 -- you're an expert at matching the right position to a given conflict. A score of 80-90 -- you choose your positions well in a conflict. A score of 70-80 -- you possess an average understanding of the five conflict-handling modes. A score of 60-70 -- you have a limited understanding of the five basic positions. A score of 60 and below -- you need to improve your understanding of the positions you can take in a conflict.

# For more information...

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