

## Interpreting Your Scores

One of the most often asked questions is "What are the right answers?" In this type of test, there are no "right" answers. All five modes of handling conflict are useful in various situations, and each represents a set of useful social skills. Listed below examples:

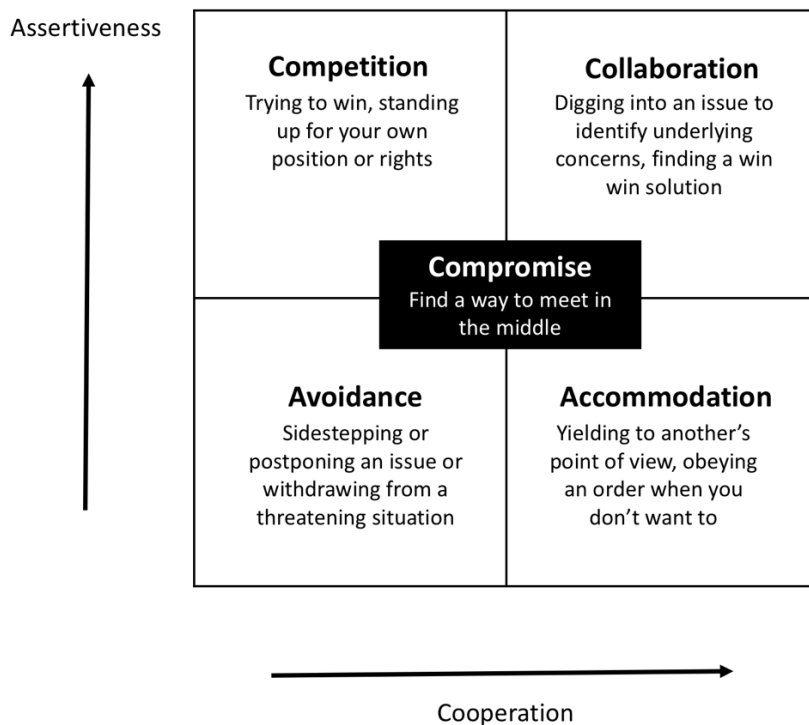
Collaboration: "Two heads are better than one."

Accommodation: "Kill your enemies with kindness."

Compromising: "Split the difference."

Avoiding: "Leave well enough alone."

Competing: "Might makes right."



The effectiveness of any handling any conflict depends on the requirements of the conflict and the skill that is employed.

Each of us is capable of using all five conflict modes, and none of us can be characterized as having a single rigid style of dealing with conflict. However, because of personality traits or by habit, individuals tend to use one or two modes at a greater frequency than the others. Conflict resolution tools that a person employs can be selected based on the personal preference and the requirements of the situation.

The following information may help you judge how appropriately you use the five methods of conflict resolution.

1. Competing is best used:
  - a. when quick decisive action is vital; e.g., emergencies
  - b. with important issues where unpopular courses of action need implementing, such as cost cutting, or enforcing unpopular rules and discipline

- c. with issues vital to company welfare when you know you are right
- d. to protect yourself against people who take advantage of you.

2. Collaborating is best used:

- a. to find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised.
- b. when your objective is to learn; e.g., testing your own assumptions, understanding the views of others.
- c. To merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem.
- d. to gain commitment by incorporating other's concerns into a consensual decision.
- e. to work through hard feelings which have been interfering with an interpersonal relationship.

3. Compromising is best used:

- a. when goals are moderately important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes.
- b. when two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals; i.e., as in labor management bargaining.
- c. to achieve temporary settlements to complex issues.
- d. to arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure.
- e. as a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails to be successful.

4. Avoiding is best used:

- a. when an issue is trivial, of only passing importance, or when other more important issues are pressing.
- b. when you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns; e.g., when you have low power or you are frustrated by something that would be very difficult to change (national policies, someone's personality).
- c. when the potential damage of confronting a conflict outweighs the benefits of its resolution
- d. to let people cool down; i.e., to reduce tensions to a productive level and regain perspective and composure.
- e. when gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision.
- f. when others can resolve the conflict more effectively.
- g. when the issue seems tangential or symptomatic of another more basic issue.

5. Accommodating is best used:

- a. when others can resolve the conflict more effectively.
- b. when the issue is much more important to the other person than to yourself - to satisfy the needs of others, and to show you are reasonable.
- c. to build up social credits for later issues which are important to you.
- d. when continued competition would only damage your cause, i.e., when you are outmatched and losing.
- e. when preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important.
- f. to aid in the managerial development of subordinates by allowing them to experiment and learn from their own mistakes.