



Conflict Management

Course Manual



STATE CIVIL SERVICE
COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC TRAINING PROGRAM

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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This training allows participants to improve their abilities to resolve conflict situations through analysis of issues, determination of underlying causes, and use of targeted strategies to best address the situation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Analyze conflict situations to determine the underlying causes and effects.
- ✓ Use targeted strategies to resolve and manage conflict situations.

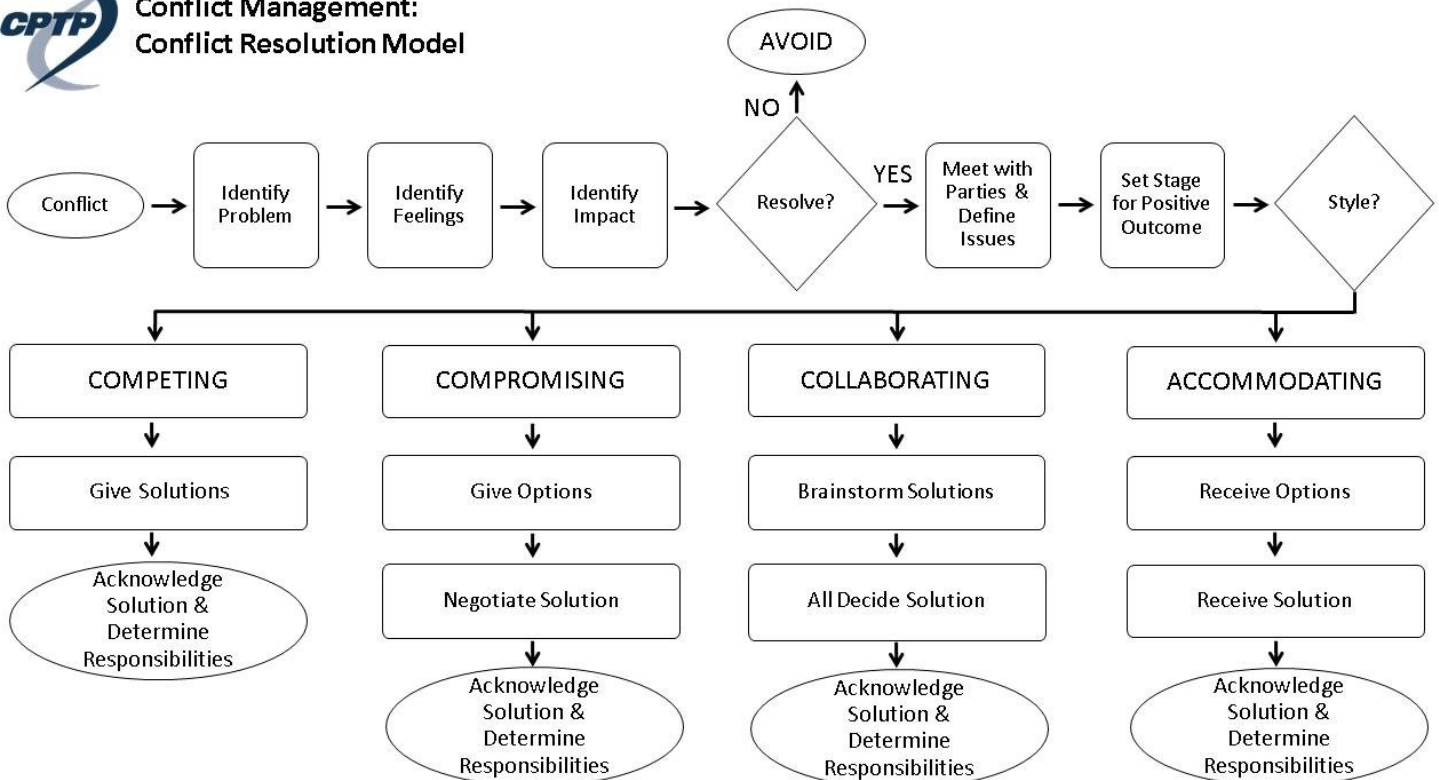
INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

Use the area below to record insights, ideas, and discoveries from today's session. Each time you have an opportunity to speak during the workshop, make notes of what you do well, what you'd like to work on, and ideas on how to apply the information you hear.

AN OVERVIEW OF CONFLICT



Conflict Management: Conflict Resolution Model



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

CONFLICT RESOLUTION MODEL

STEP	NOTES
1. IDENTIFY PROBLEM	Is this the complete problem or a symptom of a bigger issue?
2. IDENTIFY FEELINGS	Identify emotions involved and how they are affecting the situation.
3. IDENTIFY IMPACT	How is this affecting you, others, or workplace operations?
4. DECIDE TO RESOLVE	Resolve or not?
5. MEET WITH PARTIES AND DEFINE ISSUES	Involve those who are affected by the issue to define issues involved.
6. SET STAGE FOR POSITIVE OUTCOME	Determine what a successful, positive outcome will look like.
7. DETERMINE STYLE	Determine which style of conflict resolution is appropriate.
8. IMPLEMENT	Follow the steps of the appropriate style.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES



Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model

Source: Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann (1974),
Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument. Tuxedo, NY: Xicom Inc.

Assertive

Cooperative

AVOIDING

Assertive — High Medium Low

Cooperative — High Medium Low

ACCOMMODATING

Assertive — High Medium Low

Cooperative — High Medium Low

COMPETING

Assertive — High Medium Low

Cooperative — High Medium Low

COMPROMISING

Assertive — High Medium Low

Cooperative — High Medium Low

COLLABORATING

Assertive — High Medium Low

Cooperative — High Medium Low

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

AVOIDING



YOUR GROUP'S TASK:

Teach us about the Avoiding Conflict Management Style.

Use the information below and your own personal experience.

Present a situation when this style would be appropriate to use.

You may present this information in any method, including a demonstration, group presentation, or leading a class discussion.

Here are basic notes about this style of conflict management. Your group's task is to teach us about this style, and tell us when it might be appropriate, and when it should not be used.	Use this column to make notes from the other group's presentation on this conflict management style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Low assertive * Low cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> When avoiding, an individual does not immediately pursue his or her own concerns or those of the other person; they do not address the conflict. <input type="checkbox"/> It might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from threatening situations. 	
<p>USES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When an issue is unimportant or when other, more important issues are pressing <input type="checkbox"/> When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns <input type="checkbox"/> When you need to let people cool down <input type="checkbox"/> When gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision <input type="checkbox"/> When others can resolve the issue more effectively <input type="checkbox"/> When the issue seems like a symptom of another, more basic issue 	

IF OVERUSED

- Does your coordination suffer because people have trouble getting your input on issues?
- Does it often appear that people are "walking on eggshells"?
- Sometimes a disproportionate amount of energy is devoted to caution and avoiding issues, indicating that those issues need to be faced and resolved. Are decisions on important issues getting made by default?

IF UNDERUSED

- Do you find yourself hurting people's feelings or stirring up hostilities?
- You may need to exercise more discretion in confronting issues or more tact in framing issues in nonthreatening ways. Tact is partially the art of avoiding potentially disruptive aspects of an issue.
- Do you often feel harried or overwhelmed by a number of issues? You may need to devote more time to setting priorities.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

ACCOMMODATING



YOUR GROUP'S TASK:

Teach us about the Accommodating Conflict Management Style.

Use the information below and your own personal experience.

Present a situation when this style would be appropriate to use.

You may present this information in any method, including a demonstration, group presentation, or leading a class discussion.

Here are basic notes about this style of conflict management. Your group's task is to teach us about this style, and tell us when it might be appropriate, and when it should not be used.	Use this column to make notes from the other group's presentation on this conflict management style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Low assertive * High cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> This is the opposite of competing. <input type="checkbox"/> When accommodating, an individual neglects his or her own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view. 	
<p>USES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When you realize that you are wrong—to allow a better solution to be considered, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable <input type="checkbox"/> When the issue is much more important to the other person than it is to you; to satisfy their needs as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship <input type="checkbox"/> When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important <input type="checkbox"/> When you want to help someone develop by allowing them to experiment and learn from their own mistakes 	

IF OVERUSED

- Do you feel that your ideas and concerns sometimes don't get the attention they deserve? Deferring too much to the concerns of others can deprive you of influence, respect, and recognition. It can also deprive the organization of your potential contributions.
- Does this cause you to allow others to do things that do not follow the rules or policies? This can be harmful to the mission of your agency.

IF UNDERUSED

- Do you have trouble building goodwill with others?
- Accommodating on minor issues that are important to others is a gesture of goodwill.
- Do others often seem to regard you as unreasonable?
- Do you have trouble admitting when you are wrong?
- Do you recognize legitimate exceptions to the rules? Do you know when to give up?

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

COMPETING



YOUR GROUP'S TASK:

Teach us about the Competing Conflict Management Style.

Use the information below and your own personal experience.

Present a situation when this style would be appropriate to use.

You may present this information in any method, including a demonstration, group presentation, or leading a class discussion.

Here are basic notes about this style of conflict management. Your group's task is to teach us about this style, and tell us when it might be appropriate, and when it should not be used.	Use this column to make notes from the other group's presentation on this conflict management style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High assertive * Low cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Pursues own concerns at the other person's expense <input type="checkbox"/> A power-oriented mode of conflict management <input type="checkbox"/> May mean standing up for one's rights, defending a position that is important, or simply trying to win. 	
<p>USES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When quick, decisive action is vital—for example, in an emergency <input type="checkbox"/> On important issues when unpopular courses of action need implementing <input type="checkbox"/> When one needs to protect him/herself from others who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior <input type="checkbox"/> On issues vital to agency welfare when one is certain he/she is correct 	

IF OVERUSED

- People may agree because they've given up trying to influence you.
- You may be closed off from new information.
- People won't ask for information and opinions from you.
- People are unable to learn from you.

IF UNDERUSED

- Do you often feel powerless in situations? If you underuse competing, you may be unaware of the power you have because you are uncomfortable with the idea of competing. This can lower your effectiveness because you are unable to get your ideas considered as easily as those who are more competitive.
- Do you have trouble taking a stand? Worrying too much about others' feelings can cause you to hesitate in taking a stand, postpone making decisions, and thus add to the difficulties of the situation.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

COMPROMISING



YOUR GROUP'S TASK:

Teach us about the Compromising Conflict Management Style.

Use the information below and your own personal experience.

Present a situation when this style would be appropriate to use.

You may present this information in any method, including a demonstration, group presentation, or leading a class discussion.

Here are basic notes about this style of conflict management. Your group's task is to teach us about this style, and tell us when it might be appropriate, and when it should not be used.	Use this column to make notes from the other group's presentation on this conflict management style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> MEDIUM ASSERTIVENESS and MEDIUM COOPERATION <input type="checkbox"/> Finds a convenient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. <input type="checkbox"/> Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position. 	
<p>USES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When goals are moderately important but not worth the effort or the potential disruption involved in using more assertive modes <input type="checkbox"/> When two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals —as in labor—management bargaining <input type="checkbox"/> When you want to achieve a temporary settlement of a complex issue <input type="checkbox"/> When you need to arrive at an expedient solution under time pressure <input type="checkbox"/> As a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails 	

IF OVERUSED

- Do you concentrate so heavily on the practicalities and tactics of compromise that you sometimes lose sight of larger issues?
- Doing so may lead to unintended and costly compromises of principles, values, long-term objectives, or company welfare.
- Does an emphasis on bargaining and trading create a cynical climate of gamesmanship? Such a climate may undermine interpersonal trust and deflect attention from the merits of the issues being discussed.

IF UNDERUSED

- Do you sometimes find yourself too sensitive or embarrassed to engage in the give-and-take of bargaining?
- This reticence can keep you from getting a fair share in negotiations—for yourself, your team, or your organization. Do you sometimes find it difficult to make concessions?

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES

COLLABORATING



YOUR GROUP'S TASK:

Teach us about the Collaborating Conflict Management Style.

Use the information below and your own personal experience.

Present a situation when this style would be appropriate to use.

You may present this information in any method, including a demonstration, group presentation, or leading a class discussion.

Here are basic notes about this style of conflict management. Your group's task is to teach us about this style, and tell us when it might be appropriate, and when it should not be used.	Use this column to make notes from the other group's presentation on this conflict management style.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> HIGH ASSERTIVENESS and HIGH COOPERATION <input type="checkbox"/> When collaborating, an individual attempts to work with the other person to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both. <input type="checkbox"/> It involves digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns. 	
<p>USES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> When you need to find an integrative solution and the concerns of both parties are too important to be compromised <input type="checkbox"/> When your objective is to learn and you wish to test your assumptions and understand others' views <input type="checkbox"/> When you want to merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem <input type="checkbox"/> When you want to gain commitment by incorporating others' concerns into a decision <input type="checkbox"/> When you need to work through hard feelings that have been interfering with a relationship 	

IF OVERUSED

- Spending time discussing issues in depth that don't seem to deserve it?
- Overusing collaboration and consensus sometimes represents a desire to minimize risk—by diffusing responsibility or postponing action.
- Does your collaborative behavior fail to elicit collaborative responses from others? You may be missing some cues which would indicate the presence of defensiveness, strong feelings, impatience, competitiveness, or conflicting interests.

IF UNDERUSED

- Is it difficult for you to see differences as opportunities for joint gain, learning, or problem solving?
- Approaching all conflicts with pessimism can prevent you from seeing collaborative possibilities. Are subordinates uncommitted to your decisions or policies?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT? • IS IT A ONE-TIME OR ONGOING RELATIONSHIP? • WHAT'S THE RISK?

CASE STUDY WORKSHEET

A Joe is an analyst in your department. Joe is a bright and young recruit. He sticks out in your department for many reasons. First, Joe learns on the job quickly. He turns in his work faster than the others and the work is usually more accurate. However, unlike the other analysts in your department, he is loud, animated and is a big talker. You constantly hear him teasing the other co-workers, laughing and talking louder than the others. You and the other analysts think he is annoying, offensive, and you wonder if he is creating a verbally harassing environment.

You are going to have to travel with Joe to a local state agency to conduct an audit, and you are worried about how to handle Joe. You don't want him to blow this big assignment for you. In addition, you are not looking forward to spending so much time working with this annoying co-worker.

Answer the next four questions:

- How important is the issue to you?
- What is the nature of the relationship with the other person?
- What are the possible consequences?
- What conflict management style should you use, if any?

B You work in a back office area. Your work is detailed and tedious and you require quiet to ensure that your work is accurate. However, Sabrina, your co-worker enjoys listening to the radio. You can hear it at your desk most days. It is, in your opinion, too loud for the office especially since everybody works in cubicles rather than offices with doors on them.

You've heard her mention that she is glad she doesn't have regular contact with external customers so that she can listen to her favorite songs on the radio. Sabrina is well-liked and has an important social position in the office. Furthermore, you haven't heard anybody else complain about the music. You spend a lot of time trying to concentrate and tune out the music.

Answer the next four questions:

- How important is the issue to you?
- What is the nature of the relationship with the other person?
- What are the possible consequences?
- What conflict management style should you use, if any?

C You are leading a team that is responsible for completing a project that involves producing a report that is due in one month. Sam, one of the team members has not drafted her part of the report because she says she is too busy with her other duties. In the last team meeting, you told her that she had until today to catch up. But she didn't even come to the meeting.

Today, you called her to ask her why she didn't show up to the meeting and it didn't go exactly how you planned. Sam questioned your authority and said that she is currently focusing on other projects. You've been asked to lead this team and your supervisor expects you to deal with any problems that come up in the team yourself. This project is important to the agency and is a high visibility assignment. You are hoping to prove yourself in the organization and need Sam to do her part on the project.

Answer the next four questions:

- How important is the issue to you?
- What is the nature of the relationship with the other person?
- What are the possible consequences?
- What conflict management style should you use, if any?

I MESSAGE MODEL

A TOOL FOR ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

When you ...

(Describe the behavior without emotion or exaggeration.)

I feel ...

(Explain the effect of the behavior on you and/or the workplace.)

This is important because ...

(What negative effect does this have on the workplace?)

I would like...

(Ask for the behavior you would like to see.)

?

(Ask for their agreement, suggestions, or acknowledgement.)

- 1: When you...
- 2: I feel ...
- 3: This is important because...
- 4: I would like...
- 5: ?

A	B	C
<p>JOE</p> <p>Remember obnoxious Joe that we met in the earlier exercise?</p> <p>It's almost time to travel with Joe to that local state agency to conduct an audit and you don't want him to blow this big assignment for you. You haven't had a talk with him yet about his annoying behaviors, but you can't wait any longer.</p> <p>Come up with an I-Message statement to address this with Joe.</p> <p>1: When you...</p> <p>2: I feel ...</p> <p>3: This is important because...</p> <p>4: I would like...</p> <p>5: ?</p>	<p>SABRINA</p> <p>Sabrina, your co-worker is still listening to the radio very loudly each day in her cubicle. And that cubicle is right next to yours. And no, you can't get moved to another cubicle.</p> <p>You're spending a lot of time trying to concentrate and tune out the music. You finally realize that you need to address this with her.</p> <p>Write the I-Message that explains the situation to Sabrina.</p> <p>1: When you...</p> <p>2: I feel ...</p> <p>3: This is important because...</p> <p>4: I would like...</p> <p>5: ?</p>	<p>SAM</p> <p>Sam is still not helping on the team project. She has questioned your authority and said that she is currently focusing on other projects. You've been asked to lead this high visibility project and your supervisor expects you to deal with any problems that come up in the team yourself. It's time to talk to Sam about this.</p> <p>Write the I-Message that explains the issue, its importance, and the change you need from Sam.</p> <p>1: When you...</p> <p>2: I feel ...</p> <p>3: This is important because...</p> <p>4: I would like...</p> <p>5: ?</p>

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PRACTICE

INSTRUCTIONS

- Select a role:
 - Practice Person
 - Practice Partner
 - Observer
- Review your situation.
- Practice Situation A for four (4) minutes
- Observers use evaluation form below to note strengths and areas for development.
- When time is called, discuss the outcome.
- Switch roles and practice Situation B.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION EVALUATION

STEP	NOTES
1. IDENTIFY PROBLEM	<input type="checkbox"/> Did the person conducting the resolution session begin the discussion in a positive manner? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she ask questions to determine the real issue at hand? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she keep the conversation on a single topic? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
2. IDENTIFY FEELINGS	<input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she listen and respond objectively? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she allow participants to vent? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she demonstrate active listening skills? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
3. IDENTIFY IMPACT	<input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she ask effective questions to determine the impact of the situation? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she determine what would happen if this issue was not resolved? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
4. DECIDE TO RESOLVE	<input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she decide that this situation warranted resolution? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she help others understand why this decision was made? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
5. MEET WITH PARTIES AND DEFINE ISSUES	<input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she determine the single issue to be resolved? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she ask effective questions to determine parties' points of agreement? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
6. SET STAGE FOR POSITIVE OUTCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she maintain a positive tone? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she set guidelines for follow up? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes:
7. DETERMINE STYLE	<input type="checkbox"/> Could you tell which style he/she decided to adopt? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she use the steps of the style effectively? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes
8. IMPLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> Were others engaged in the resolution process? <input type="checkbox"/> Did he/she set up a system of follow-up for the solution? <input type="checkbox"/> Other notes: