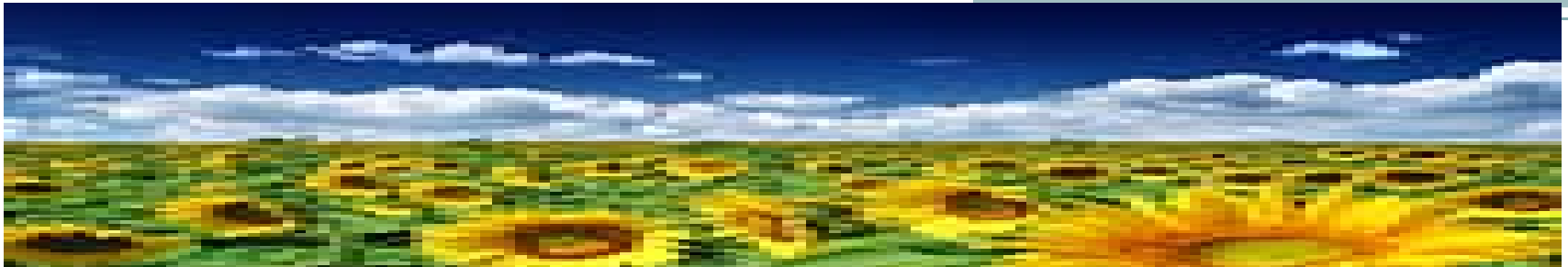


Managing Conflict for Supervisors



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Objectives

- Define conflict
- Assess the pros, cons and misconceptions
- Identify 5 styles of addressing conflict
- Explore techniques for facilitating dynamic conflict resolution
- Examine communication skills that facilitate conflict resolution in relationships
- Discuss strategies for managing anger and mistrust

Differences

Consider this...

What makes us different from each other?

Opinions

Ideas

Needs/Drives

Wishes

Lifestyles

Values

Attitudes

Personalities

Beliefs

Dreams

Definition of Conflict

- Conflict is defined as: “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals.”

Hocker, J.L. and Wilmot, W.W. (1991). *Interpersonal conflict*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.

Types of Conflict

- **Internal** – emotional dissonance, stretch between what you say you want and what you do about it
- **Interpersonal**
 - Needs: to be valued, to be in control, self esteem, consistent
 - Common responses: retaliate, dominate, isolate, cooperate
 - Types: substantive, personalized, communication
- **Inter Group** – most complex, involves all of above in addition to politics, rumors and innuendo

Pickering's Potential Positives

- Increased motivation
- Solution identification
- Increased knowledge
- Progress toward goals
- Group cohesiveness
- Reality adjustment
- Enhanced creativity
- Incentive for growth

Pickering's Potential Negatives

- Decreased productivity
- Morale problems
- Coalition of polarized positions
- Decision making paralysis
- Erosion of trust
- Unproductive time
- Secrecy and reduced information flow
- Procrastination and missed opportunities

Common Misconceptions

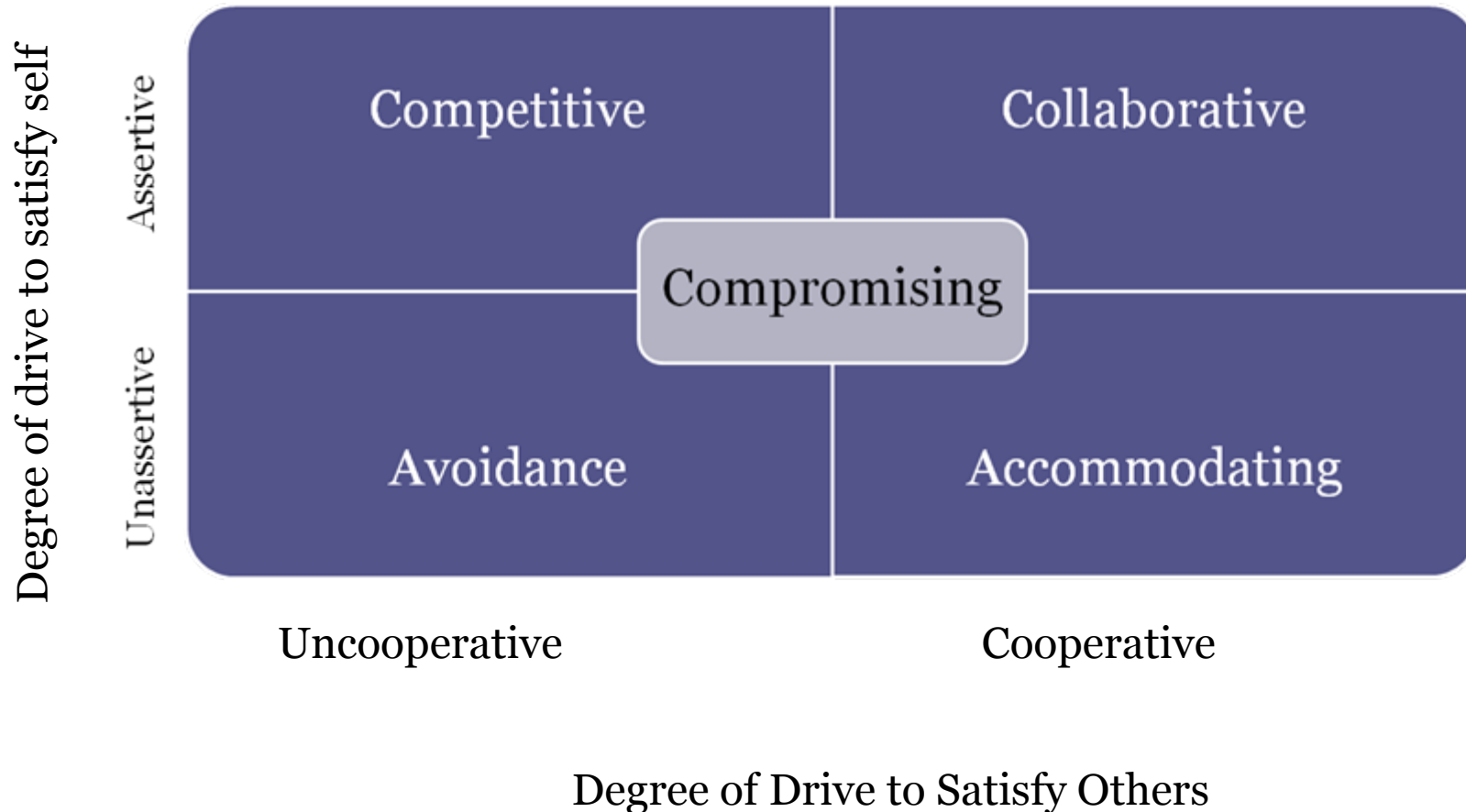
- Conflict, if left alone, will take care of itself.
- Confronting an issue or person is always unpleasant.
- Presence of conflict in an organization is a sign of poor management.
- Conflict among staff is a sign of low concern for the organization.
- Anger is always negative and destructive.

Levels of Discord

- EVERYDAY CONCERNS – passage, discussion, deliberation, dialogue, debate
- ARGUMENT – discord, dissention, quarrel, competition, wanting to win, win/lose
- CONFLICT – battle, hostility, strife, wanting to hurt, polarization of sides
- Work towards CONFLUENCE...a gathering together of two or more forces...a juncture where ideas meet.

Styles of Handling Conflict

Resolving Conflict by Gini Scott based on the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, 1972



Assess Goals for Negotiations

- **COMPROMISE**

- Both parties outline their positions at the outset, both make concessions and consider counteroffers, until an agreement is made in the center.

- **COLLABORATION**

- You go beyond the initial positions to look at the underlying interests, needs and concerns of both parties.

An Unconditionally Constructive Strategy

Taken from Getting Together by Fischer & Brown

- Rationality – Even if they are acting emotionally, balance emotion with reason
- Understanding – Even if they misunderstand us, try to understand them
- Communication – Even if they are not listening, consult with them before deciding on issues that affect them.
- Reliability – Even if they are trying to deceive us, neither trust them or deceive them; be reliable.
- Non-coercive modes of influence – Be open to persuasion and try to persuade them.
- Acceptance – Even if they reject us, accept them as worthy of our consideration, care about them, and be open to learning from them.

Principles of Negotiation

Adapted from the book Messages: the communication skills book by McKay, Davis & Fanning

- Separate the people from the issues.
- Understand the people.
- State the problem in terms of interests.
- Options – prepare, brainstorm, offer “yes-able” proposals, be creative.
- Assess styles, choose most appropriate track.
- Set up a time to evaluate, process and be open to adjustments.

Approach with a 3 Part Direct Perception Check

- Although this is separated into 3 parts, it is said in one statement.
 - Part 1: State the behavior that you noticed.
 - No evaluation
 - No judgement
 - Part 2: Give 2 possible but different reasons why you think the behavior happened.
 - Part 3: Ask for clarification.

The Emotional Contagion Theory

- **Emotional contagion** is the tendency to catch and feel emotions that are similar to and influenced by those of others. One view developed by John Cacioppo of the underlying mechanism is that it represents a tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally.
- A broader definition of the phenomenon was suggested by Sigal G. Barsade- "a process in which a person or group influences the emotions or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioral attitudes".

What if they are more powerful?

Taken from Getting to Yes by Fischer & Ury

- Develop your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)
 - Invent a list of actions you might conceivably take if no agreement is reached
 - Improving some of the more promising ideas and converting them into practical options
 - Selecting, tentatively, the one option that seems best
- The better your BATNA, the greater your power

Strengthening Relationships

- Always Consult Before Deciding
- Improve your ability to negotiate differences in ongoing relationships
 - Balance emotion with reason
 - Promote better understanding and two-way communication
 - To be more reliable, establish a trusting environment
 - Establish cooperation and acceptance
 - Be honest about ambivalence
 - Not necessary to abdicate power or authority

Listening is Key!

- Decide you want to listen.
- Minimize distractions.
- Ask open ended questions.
- Ask for clarification.
- Paraphrase – restate key points in your own words (not parroting)
- Perception checking
- Search for specificity
- Ask probing questions
- Summarize

G.R.O.W.

- Gain self-control
- Request specifics
- Observe & analyze
 - Weigh the costs

The Pillow Method

Taken from Adler, R. B. & Proctor, R.R. (2007). *Looking Out, Looking In*.

- This exercise will only work if you can suspend your present position long enough to imagine how it would feel to hold the other position.
- The objective is to understand, not necessarily accept, the other person's position after incorporating the pillow method.

The Pillow Method

Taken from Adler, R. B. & Proctor, R.R. (2007). *Looking Out, Looking In*.

- ✓ -Try doing this when you have a point of conflict:
- Detail the disagreement with the following:
 - Your position is correct, your opponent's position is incorrect.
 - Your opponent's position is correct, your position is incorrect.
 - Both positions are correct, both positions are incorrect.
 - It is not important which position is right or wrong.
 - Affirm the fact that there is truth in all four positions.

Defending Yourself From a Verbal Attack

- Wait a few seconds before responding or take a time out.
- Speak slowly and softly.
- Show that the feeling/complaint are important
- Treat person as a valued individual
- Help them see options/choices
- Watch your non-verbals

Dealing with Angry People

- Defuse the Anger
- Try not to take it personally & keep your cool
- Listen attentively
- Analyze the problem
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Emphasize what you can do
- Act on the issue and follow through
- Ask exactly how he/she wants it resolved

Overcoming Anger & Mistrust

- Put aside anger when it is causing escalation, in service of a future solution.
- Use Self-Talk, deep breathing, support systems, or physical release and orient it around a positive center to put your anger aside
- Take time out from the negotiations if the build-up of frustrations is too great, when you are obsessing and when damage is being done to the relationship

In Conclusion

- **Successful conflict resolution**
 - Put aside position and embrace interests
 - Practice continuous process improvement by taking responsibility for the process and acquiring conflict resolution skills
 - Practice flexibility of style, choose the tact that best fits the situation
 - Communication and resilient ongoing relationships are key to conflict resolution
 - Manage your own emotions and the conflict resolution process by putting space between stimulus and response



- Thank you for attending this training presentation.
- Please fill out the evaluation and leave it on the table on your way out.