

Communication and conflict assignment

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Dealing with conflict can be difficult. In order to be effective when dealing with conflict, one must learn how to communicate effectively given the problem at hand. According to Retell (2010), " A communication style of conflict management is ones orientation toward conflict. The purpose of this paper is to provide a text explanation of conflict/conflict management, explain the five communication styles of conflict management that I feel can be applied to organizational communication, when each should be used, when to choose another option, and which styles are cost likely to be effective and which are least likely. Definition of Conflict/Conflict Management Conflict is, " the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims, and values, and who see other parties as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals. " (Ginsberg et al. , 2010).

The Five Communication Styles of Conflict Management The first communication style of conflict management to be highlighted is collaborating. Collaborating allows for a cooperative approach to a given conflict. This approach demonstrates that someone using this style is highly concerned about he task at hand and the social relationships in the groups. In the collaboration style there are three main components. They are confrontation, integration, and smoothing. According to Retell (2010) confrontation is, " The overt recognition that conflict exists in a group and the direct effort to manage it effectively. From a conflict management standpoint, confrontation is a way to incorporate all the elements of assertive communication (describe, express, specify, and identify consequences) and supportive communication (description, problem

orientation, etc.) (Retell, 2010). Confrontation is meant to deal with all parties effectively and productively. It is also very important to decide what issues are worth confronting and what issues are best dealt with in a different manner, if at all. Integration is a technique that is used to devise a solution that is satisfactory to all parties in the conflict.

Negotiating a resolution for all parties involved generally is less effective in that it is rarely done to maximize effectiveness. According to Pursuit (1981), “ Negotiators tend to reach an agreement on the first satisfactory proposal that comes along rather than looking for better solution. ” The third component of collaboration to be presented is smoothing. Put simply, the act of smoothing is an attempt to calm the tensions of members off group during conflict. (Retell, 2010). Through the act of smoothing it allows the calming effect to open the door to more effective conflict management such as confrontation.

Since the tensions have been so high, collaboration would not be suitable as an approach too situation where the conflict is so heated. (Retell, 2010). The second communication style to be demonstrated is accommodating. When one is accommodating, they show a higher concern for the people and the social relationships at the expense of the task that needs accomplished. When accommodating, it is important to allow the smaller issues that are of little concern to one group but of much concern to another to be allowed to the other party. Retell, 2010). Jensen, A. & Tremolo, S. (2008) had this to say: This is not to say that one should let go of their convictions. Generally, if one stands their ground on an issue while allowing for other issues that are less important to them, but more important to another group, it allows for a “
<https://assignbuster.com/communication-conflict-assignment/>

you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" type attitude where both parties are equally satisfied. The third communication style to be illustrated is compromising. Once again this, would appear as another " you scratch my back, etc. Scenario, but in this case it is a lose - lose situation where neither group is fully happy with the outcome. Compromise elicits both positive and negative reactions in the outcome. Generally compromise is useful in issues that are not considered critical or as using compromise as a short term settlement when no eatable resolution can be reached. (Retell, 2010). The fourth communication style to be shown is avoiding. Avoiding entails withdrawing from potentially volatile situations or conflicts.

An example of this would be when a group changes the subject soon after the topic they are trying to avoid is brought up. This may seem like a suitable solution, but in the long run it only puts off the problem temporarily. When using this style of communication it shows little concern for the task and social relationships at hand in the group. Avoiding may be advantageous to someone who the consequences of dealing with the problem right then might be harmful to, or when a volatile situation might fizzle out if it were just left alone long enough to allow for this. Retell, 2010) The final communication style of conflict management to be dealt with is competing. Competing occurs when conflict is approached from a win- lose standpoint. When competing it shows a high level of concern for the task at hand but not for the social relationships of the people involved. According to Jensen, A. & Tremolo, S. (2008), " This is not to say that they don't care about the social legislations at all, but it is not their greatest priority in any manner. "

Generally, competing shows a want or a need for personal gain or accomplishment more so than for that of the group.

Which Styles to Use and When Every style plays a specific role when utilized properly. Generally speaking, collaborating is the most effective option. It allows for its use in a variety of contexts and yields the greatest satisfaction with the result. (Retell, 2010). That being said, even when the style with the greatest historical outcome is chosen, when and where is used is still important. For example, when confronting an issue, one does not want to leave the other side without enough time to mount a response. All this will do is frustrate both sides as no outcome will be produced.

On the other hand, competing should be used as a strategy of last resort except when there is no time to mount a more effective plan. Generally, competing and then attempting to collaborate does not work either as bridges have already been burned or the other side is scorned by the behavior. At times, withdrawing following a failed attempt at competing can allow for the tensions to settle and collaboration to resume. Finally, when choosing an approach, situational factors such as conflict type and cultural views should be brought into consideration. Retell, 2010). Conclusion In conclusion, this paper provided a text explanation of conflict/conflict management, explained the five communication styles of conflict management that I feel can be applied to organizational communication, when each should be used, when to choose another option, and which styles are most likely to be effective and which are least likely. I, like many others, deal with conflict on a daily basis. In many cases I have to aka use of the five communication styles to try to diffuse the situation.

<https://assignbuster.com/communication-conflict-assignment/>

I feel through my use of any or all of the styles, there are few situations I cannot handle. One last observation I would like to make is my belief in consensus. The idea that together we are strong, but if we let conflict get the better of us, then our effectiveness is negatively effected. There can be times when neither side is going to be happy, but through compromising and agreeing upon a consensus, it can open the door to a longer lasting dialogue between the warring parties and maintain a working relationship.