

# Latino conflict management

[Business](#), [Management](#)



It cannot be argued that the Latinos/Hipics are now making their presence felt in most facets of American society more specifically in the urban communities and the workplace. This group of people is of Latin American descent with inherent unique ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Due to this difference it is possible that conflicts may arise in their interaction with Americans and other races.

In resolving conflicts with Latinos/Hipics it is important to at first understand situations or behaviors that easily lead to conflicts with them and to know their attitude or personal concept regarding conflicts. In this way effective approaches or strategies for the resolution of conflict may be undertaken. According to Gabrielidis and et al, “ Some of the most severe problems in intercultural relations arise as a consequence of interpersonal conflicts” (1197, p. 661).

The greatest difference in the attitudes between the Latinos/Hipics with the Americans is that Latinos are a people who give prime importance to family relationships before other goals or ideas, obligation to in-groups (family, relatives or people of the same race or cultural and ethnic background) and the surrendering of personal interests and needs in favor for the good of the group or community while the Americans, on the other hand, adopted a culture of individualism in which the interests, activities and goals of the individual are top priority. I do not infer here that the Americans do not value family relationships or disregard the interest of others but that it seems that the Latinos placed these issues in higher degree.

In the Latino context the innate goodness or uniqueness of a person sometimes do not show itself in their actions or achievements so they emphasized the respect and protection of dignity of a person regardless of social class while the Americans on the other hand believed that a person can be judged by his actions and achievements. Also while both groups had similar definitions of close friendship, Americans emphasized freedom in the expression of their ideas in the company of a friend and may incline give up the friendship if it stands in the way of self-expression and the attainment of personal goals while the Latinos emphasized support and expression of feelings and make necessary adjustments in goals to keep the friendship.

Understanding this difference will help me put the conflict in proper perspective. Through this I can analyze whether the source of conflict was that if I made a Latino feel that his family or race was unimportant or that I perceived him as a person of lower dignity or status when I attempted to judge him based on what he had accomplished in life or that I made him feel as if it was his fault that he had a low economic status..

Based on what I had researched and observed the Latinos mostly want to connect with people and as much as possible maintain harmonious relationships with others. In most cases they tend to avoid conflict to the extent that they are non-confrontational. They worry more on “ saving the face “ of family and others so that most of the times they do not say directly what they mean, as a *respeto* (a Spanish term which means respect to the dignity of the person). This attitude is very opposite to the frankness of Americans in their interaction with others.

An example is this, instead of saying that the clothes I wore do not look good on me they will say that my clothes was not exactly nice but that I still look good wearing it. In resolving conflicts with them it is necessary to adopt this kind of indirect communication or else I may aggravate the situation. For example when I differ with opinions with the Latinos and he seemed to insist that he is right, instead of saying that “ I was not happy at all with his attitude” I may say instead that “ I understand why he acted the way he did and that he meant well but that it is better to listen also to the opinion of others”.

In the positive aspect, the idea that Latinos wants to maintain harmonious relationships with others means that they are less likely to initiate conflict and may be open for reconciliation whenever conflict arise. However, it must be remembered that Latino conflict resolution should be appropriate to the setting and must be able to maintain individual pride and honor (Markus & Lin, 1999). Also extra attention must be given to the tone of voice and proper eye contact.

In resolving Latino/Hipic conflicts, there are different styles to be use depending on the ethnic and cultural identity salience of the Latino. “ Ethnic identity” means that he give more importance to his ethnic origin while “ cultural identity” means “ that he give more importance to the larger culture in whom he is interacting with which in this case is the American culture. Those with strong American cultural identity prefers integrating (high concern for self and high concern for other; also called “ collaborating”) and compromising (moderate concern for self and moderate concern for

other) and uses emotionally expressive styles more as compared to those with weak cultural identity.

Also those with a strong ethnic identity use integrating and accommodating (low concern for self and high concern for other; also called “obliging) more and third party less than those with weak ethnic identity in conflict styles (Cai & Fink, 2002). Latinos, on the other hand, with weak cultural identity used avoiding (low concern for self and low concern for other; also called “withdrawing”) more than other ethnic groups irregardless of cultural orientation perhaps due to the Latino value of respeto and wanting to maintain respect, dignity and harmony in social situations (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000).

Armed with all this knowledge, I am hoping that I will be better equip in handling Latino conflict in the future.

## REFERENCE

Cai, D. A., & Fink, E. L. (2002)

Gabrielidis, C., Stephan, W. G., Ybarra, O., Dos Santos Pearson, V. M., & Villareal, L. (1997).

Preferred styles of conflict resolution: Mexico and the United States. *Journal of Cross-*

*CulturalPsychology*, 28, 661.

Markus, H. R., & Lin, L. R. (1999). Conflict ways: Cultural Diversity in the Meanings and

Practices of Conflict. In D. A. Prentice & D. T. Miller (Eds.), *Cultural divides: Understanding and overcoming group conflict* (pp. 302-333). New York, NY:

Russell Sage Foundation.

Ting-Toomey, S., Yee-Jung, K. K., Shapiro, R. B., Garcia, W., Wright, T. J., & Oetzel, J. G.

(2000) Ethnic/cultural identity salience and conflict styles in four U. S. ethnic groups.

*International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24, 47-81.

<https://assignbuster.com/latino-conflict-management/>