

HOW I ACT IN CONFLICTS

The statements below are descriptions of different strategies for resolving conflict. Using the scale, indicate how typical each is for how you act in a conflict. Please answer according to how you actually act, not how you would like to act. After answering, use the score sheet to identify your preferred style. Then read the descriptor on the backside of the score sheet.

5 - very typical of how I act in conflict

4 - frequently typical of how I act

3 - sometimes typical of how I act

2 - seldom typical

1 - never typical

- 1. I try to walk way around a potential conflict before I even get sucked in.
- 2. I lean firmly on my opponent to get my needs met one way or the other.
- 3. I like to speak gently and quietly in order to soften my opponent's heart.
- 4. I like to approach my adversary with an offer to find ways that we can scratch each other's backs.
- 5. I try to draw my opponent into some kind of rational dialogue.
- 6. I bite my tongue before things get out of hand if it's starting to heat up between me and my adversary.
- 7. I'll make a power play when necessary and to heck with the principles at stake.
- 8. I try to de-escalate the conflict with my choice of words so that things can be smoothed out.
- 9. I'd rather get half my case won than risk losing the whole thing.
- 10. When in conflict, I like to get to the facts and deal from that basis even when they go against popular opinion.
- 11. I'll join the battle, but at some point I'll retreat so that I get to go back to the battle later on.
- 12. I like to intimidate my opponent into backing off or running away.
- 13. I prefer to be so nice and sweet that my opponent is disarmed and confused and I ultimately win.
- 14. If I can fight on a level playing field and meet my opponent with equal force, I can accept whatever outcome.
- 15. I like to keep an open mind when I go into conflict because I realize that every person has a piece of the 'truth'.
- 16. I stay away from people who openly disagree with me, who like to pick fights, or who like to debate.
- 17. I like to take the bull by the horns if it looks like a conflict is brewing. I get good results that way.
- 18. I find that speaking kindly is the best way to go when I'm in a conflict. It doesn't cost me much at all.

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- ___ 19. I follow through on doing to others as they have done unto me. It's a law of life and it's fair.
- ___ 20. I have a habit of opening up my mind when I'm in a conflict so that I'm able to hear and learn from my opponent.
- ___ 21. I do what I can to avoid quarrelsome people. They only make my life miserable.
- ___ 22. When I hold my ground firmly in an argument I find it makes the other person back off.
- ___ 23. I ensure harmonious relationships by using soft words when I find myself in touchy situations.
- ___ 24. I find that I make friends and not enemies by doing favors for people who have done favors for me.
- ___ 25. I try to bring smoldering conflicts into the open and face them directly. The best solutions seem to occur that way.
- ___ 26. The best way I have of handling conflicts is to avoid them to begin with.
- ___ 27. I like to draw a line in the sand and then defend my territory.
- ___ 28. I find that when I'm in a dispute, gentleness triumphs over anger.
- ___ 29. I'm happy with getting part of what I wanted when I'm in a conflict. It's better than not getting anything at all.
- ___ 30. I aim at being frank, honest and trusting when I'm part of a conflict. I find acting this way moves mountains.
- ___ 31. When there's a conflict, I just figure there's nothing so important you have to fight over it. I just drop it.
- ___ 32. There are two kinds of people - winners and losers. I like to be a winner.
- ___ 33. If someone deals me a low blow, I just strike that person back with a feather, if you know what I mean.
- ___ 34. When I and the other person manage to give in halfway, I find that a fair settlement has been reached.
- ___ 35. I try to dig and dig for the truth. That's the way I like to arrive at resolution of conflicts I'm involved in.

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Scoring

Enter your score in the space to the right of each question number. Then add each column vertically. Your highest score indicates your preferred style. Your next highest score indicates your backup style.

AVOID	COMPETE	ACCOMMODATE	COMPROMISE	COLLABORATE
1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

Styles of Responding to Conflict

AVOID is another way of saying “getting away from”. When the avoiding style is preferred, a person spends very little energy both getting one's needs met and keeping the relationship with the other person. The person “wants out”, not good timing, not worth it to engage. Conflict may be seen as hopeless, useless or extremely painful. Not getting involved is safest.

COMPETE is another way of saying “trying to win”. When the competing style is preferred, a person spends a lot of energy getting one's needs met and very little energy keeping the relationship with the other person or meeting their needs. Conflict is seen as an all-or-nothing affair; winning proves one's value while losing can be crushing. Taking a stand and fighting for what's right is how you win your cause.

ACCOMMODATE is another way of saying “going along with”. When the accommodating style is preferred, a person spends very little energy getting one's needs met and a lot of energy meeting the needs of the other person. Conflict may be seen as scary or potentially hurtful if it jeopardizes an important relationship. Trying to make sure the other person's needs are met feels like the safest approach.

COMPROMISE is another way of saying “finding the middle ground”. When the compromising style is preferred, a person spends just enough energy to both getting at least part of one's needs met and keeping at least part of the relationship with the other person. Conflict is seen as a mentally challenging give-and-take dance, making a deal, where a fifty-fifty split seems fair. Trying to find the fairest, most even-handed answer seems to make the most sense.

COLLABORATE is another way of saying “working together”. When the collaborative style is used, a person spends a lot of energy both getting one's needs met and keeping the relationship with the other person. Conflict is seen as a natural and even helpful part of life, especially when creative solutions can be found to meet everybody's needs. Trust, openness and working to understand and meet everyone's needs are group priorities.