

Growth Matters, LLC

An Executive Training Company



LEADERSHIP. COMMUNICATION. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.



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OBJECTIVES

- Introduce Conflict Resolution Thomas-Kilmann Components
- Apply conflict resolution strategies using scenarios
- Make connection between conflict resolution + DISC

Why Conflict Arises

They arise when there are clashes of interests, desires, opinions, and beliefs. They can often be grouped into four broad categories:

- **A team member** believes s/he may have been discriminated against or harassed by another.
- **A team member** communicates poorly, resulting in inefficiencies and mistakes.
- **Team members** who work together have vastly different personalities and working styles.
- **Team members** in different **roles** have opposing objectives and values.

TKI Kilmann Method

Take 3 minutes to skim this document.



COMPETING

Competing is assertive and uncooperative, a power-oriented mode. When competing, an individual pursues his or her own concerns at the other person’s expense, using whatever power seems appropriate to win his or her position. Competing might mean standing up for your rights, defending a position you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

COLLABORATING

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative. When collaborating, an individual attempts to work with the other person to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both. 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. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other’s insights, resolving some condition that would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

COMPROMISING

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. When compromising, an individual has the objective of finding an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. Compromising falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating, giving up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding but doesn’t explore it in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

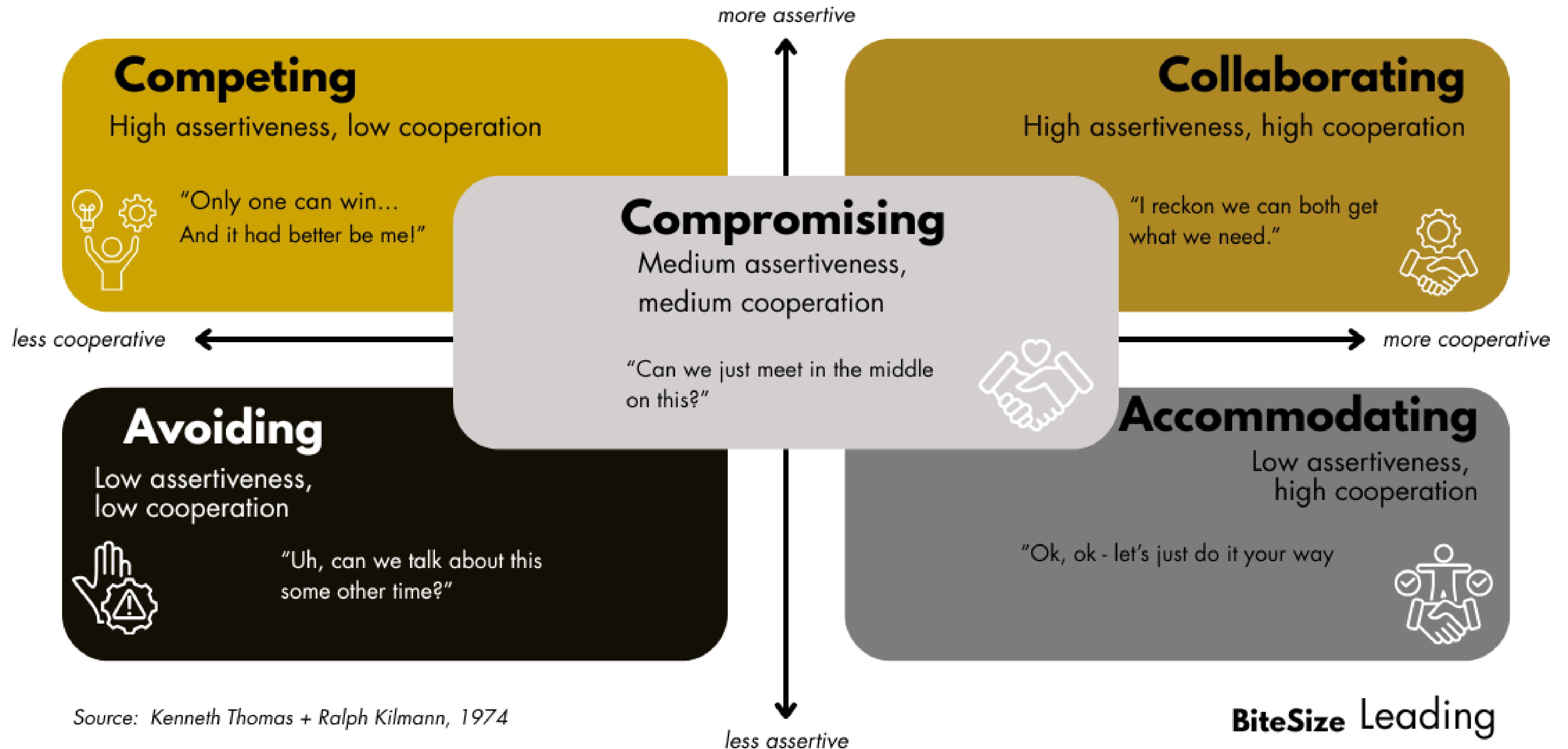
AVOIDING

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative. When avoiding, an individual does not immediately pursue his or her own concerns or those of the other person. He or she does not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

ACCOMMODATING

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of competing. 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. 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.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Model





Don't be Petty

- Genuine interest in coming to a resolve
- Facts [**OBSERVABLE + VERIFIABLE**] vs.
Judgment [**OPINION, INTERPRETATION, ASSUMPTION**]
- R.U.L.E.S. = Rules, Understand, Listen generously,
Execute, Solve

Scenario #1

Scenario 1: "The Unspoken Workload"

Background

A five-person project team is preparing for an important presentation to senior leadership. During the past month, one team member, Jordan, has quietly taken on several extra tasks because deadlines were approaching.

When the presentation is over, Jordan tells another coworker, "I carried this entire project while everyone else just showed up."

That comment quickly spreads throughout the team.

Meanwhile, the other team members feel blindsided because they believed Jordan volunteered for the extra work and never asked for help.

Now the team atmosphere is tense.

Discussion Questions

- What is the real conflict?
- What assumptions were made by both sides?
- What conversations should have happened earlier?
- Who owns responsibility for resolving this?
- How could this situation strengthen the team instead of dividing it?

Scenario #2

Scenario 2: "The Meeting After the Meeting"

Background

Your department meets every Monday morning.

During meetings, everyone appears agreeable.

However, immediately afterward, several employees gather privately to complain about decisions that were made.

Eventually, one employee discovers these conversations and says, "If everyone disagrees, why didn't anyone speak up during the meeting?"

Now trust has been damaged.

Some employees insist they were simply "processing."

Others believe people were gossiping.

Discussion Questions

- When does venting become gossip?
- Why do people stay silent during meetings?
- How can leaders create psychological safety?
- What expectations should teams establish about disagreement?

Scenario #3

Scenario 3: "The Email That Changed the Tone"

Background

A team member sends an email reminding everyone that monthly reports are overdue.

The message simply states:

"Please submit your reports by noon. Leadership is waiting."

One employee interprets the email as rude and disrespectful.

Instead of asking for clarification, they respond with a defensive email copied to the entire team.

Now everyone feels uncomfortable.

The original sender insists,

"I was just trying to keep everyone informed."

Discussion Questions

- How much conflict comes from perception versus intention?
- What role does tone play in written communication?
- What should have happened before replying?
- When should someone pick up the phone instead of sending another email?

Scenario #4

Scenario 4: "Different Priorities"

Background

Two team members share responsibility for a community event.

Taylor believes every detail should be perfected before anything is shared publicly.

Morgan believes it's better to move quickly, make adjustments later, and avoid overthinking.

As the deadline approaches, frustration grows.

Taylor feels Morgan is careless.

Morgan feels Taylor is slowing everyone down.

Neither person is wrong—they simply work differently.

The project begins falling behind because they spend more time debating than producing.

Discussion Questions

- How do different work styles create conflict?
- How can personality differences become strengths?
- What agreements could help both people succeed?
- What role should the team leader play?

Scenario #5

Scenario 5: "Recognition Gone Wrong"

Background

At the monthly staff meeting, leadership recognizes one employee for successfully leading a major initiative.

Afterward, several team members privately express frustration.

They believe the project was truly a team effort, yet only one person received public recognition.

The recognized employee now feels awkward and guilty.

The rest of the team feels overlooked.

Leadership had no intention of creating division.

Discussion Questions

- Why is recognition such an emotional issue?
- How could leadership have handled this differently?
- Should the recognized employee respond?
- How can organizations celebrate individual excellence while honoring team contributions?

Clarifying Questions to Navigate Conflict

- What specifically is the main concern for you?
- What outcome are you hoping for?
- Give an example so that I can better understand.
- What did you interpret from what was said or done?
- What background information might be missing here?

Clarifying Questions to Navigate Conflict

- What hasn't been shared that might need consideration?
- Who else needs to be involved in this conversation?
- What costs/time/compromise is associated with this matter?
- How does this align with our _____?

What we've learned:

1. Conflict is everywhere
2. Thomas-Kilmann Instrument (TKI)
3. Don't be Petty
4. R.U.L.E.S.
5. If unable to negotiate, escalate: mediation, arbitration
6. Pursue Peace; Meekness is not weakness; Strength under pressure

QUESTIONS?



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