



CONFLICT RESOLUTION



WKU

ADVISING & CAREER
DEVELOPMENT CENTER



CONFLICT NEGOTIATION

Conflict is inevitable when working with others. It may arise from personality differences, miscommunication, or workplace pressures. While often seen negatively, conflict can lead to growth and improved collaboration when handled constructively.

Signs of conflict may include reduced participation, behavioral changes, increased absences, or decreased morale. Many conflicts can be resolved through open communication and active listening.

CONFLICT STYLES: THOMAS-KILMAN MODEL

Researchers Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann identified five main conflict styles based on assertiveness and cooperation:

Competitive – Firm and decisive; useful in emergencies but may damage relationships.

Collaborative – Seeks solutions that satisfy everyone; ideal for complex issues.

Compromising – Each side gives up something to reach a solution.

Accommodating – Prioritizes others' needs; maintains harmony but may sacrifice personal goals.

Avoiding – Withdraws from conflict; appropriate for minor issues but not long-term solutions.

Understanding these styles helps you adapt your approach depending on the situation.



SEVEN KEYS TO REACHING A RESOLUTION



- **Stay calm.** Take time to cool off before discussing the issue.
- **Use positive language.** Focus on solutions rather than blame.
- **Listen fully.** Allow others to express their perspective.
- **Ask questions.** Clarify misunderstandings respectfully.
- **Agree on the problem.** Find common ground before seeking solutions.
- **Brainstorm options.** Explore multiple ideas together.
- **Negotiate respectfully.** Aim for a balanced outcome that considers everyone's needs.

TIP: Be calm, patient, and respectful throughout the process.

WIN-WIN NEGOTIATION

A win-win negotiation occurs when collaborative discussion leads to a solution that benefits all parties. Everyone leaves feeling heard and valued, strengthening relationships and teamwork.





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