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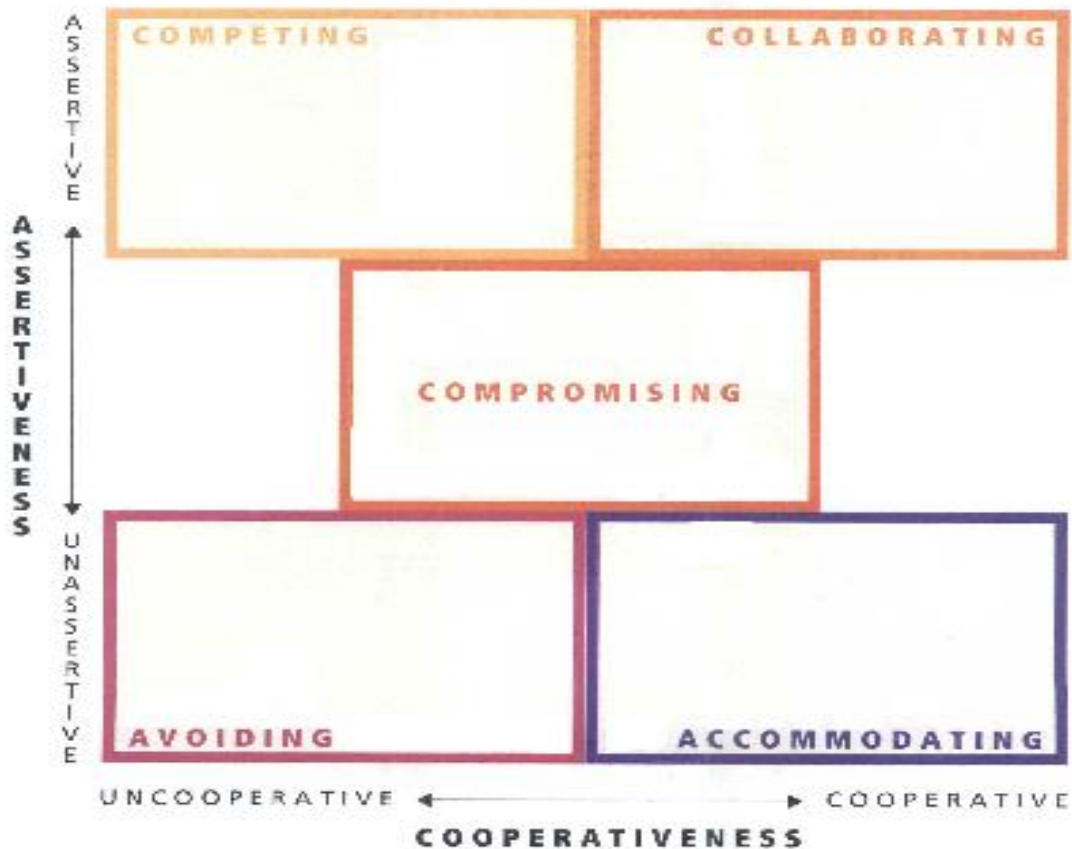


# Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Dr. Susan Cain, Ed. D & Taylor Viering | Corporate Learning Institute

There's always room for improvement. Two-Minute Reads are a free tool you and your organization can use just for that reason.

Managing conflict is a daily reality for managers and leaders. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument assesses an individual's typical behavior in conflict situations and describes it along two dimensions: assertiveness and cooperativeness. It provides detailed information about how that individual can effectively use five different conflict-handling modes, or styles:



Different styles have different goals:

- Competing: The goal is to win
- Accommodating : The goal is to yield
- Avoiding: The goal is to delay
- Collaborating: The goal is multiple participation
- Compromising: The goal is to find middle ground

Competing is effective:

- When quick decisive action is needed.
- When unpopular action must be taken on important issues.
- When the issue is vital and the right course is clear.
- To protect against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.

Accommodating is effective:

- When you are wrong, learning is important, or demonstrating reasonableness is critical.
- When creating goodwill is paramount.
- To build social credits for later use.
- To stop unproductive or damaging competition.
- When harmony is important.

Avoiding is effective:

- When the issue is relatively trivial.
- When you know you can't be satisfied.

- When the costs of conflict outweigh the benefits of resolution.
- To allow “cooling off”.
- When it's important to have more information.
- When others can resolve the issue more effectively.
- When the conflict is tangential to something more important.

Collaborating is effective:

- When it's important that both sides be integrated.
- When you want to learn and fully understand others' views.
- To merge different perspectives and insights.
- To gain commitment through consensual decisions.
- To work through hard feelings that have interfered with interpersonal relationships.

Compromising is effective:

- When goals are less important than avoiding the disruption caused by more assertive conflict resolution styles.
- When opponents have equal power and commitment to mutually exclusive goals.
- To temporarily settle complex issues.
- To quickly achieve an expedient solution.
- As a backup style when collaboration or competition fails.

**Whatever style you use, here are some basic skills for conflict resolution:**

1. Manage anger
2. Listen actively
3. Avoid assumptions
4. Find something on which to agree
5. Be cautious with criticism
6. Negotiate

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