Resolving Conflicts at Work:

10 Strategies for Everyone on the Job

Kenneth Cloke

"We have thought of peace as passive and war as the active way of living. The opposite is true. War is not the most strenuous life. It is a kind of rest cure compared to the task of reconciling our differences... From War to Peace is not from the strenuous to the easy existence; it is from the futile to the effective, from the stagnant to the active, from the destructive to the creative way of life... The world will be regenerated by the people who rise above these passive ways and heroically seek, by whatever hardship, by whatever toil, the methods by which people can agree."

Mary Parker Follett   1868-1933

What is Conflict?

Statistics on Workplace Conflict

According to a study commissioned by CPP Inc. — publishers of the Myers-Briggs Assessment and the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument — U.S. employees spend on average 2.1 hours per week involved with conflict, which amounts to approximately $359 billion in paid hours (based on average hourly earnings of $17.95), or the equivalent of 385 million working days. According to the report "Workplace Conflict and How Businesses Can Harness It to Thrive," the following statistics demonstrate how pervasive conflict is in the workplace:

- 85 percent of employees deal with conflict on some level
- 29 percent of employees deal with it almost constantly
- 34 percent of conflict occurs among front-line employees
- 12 percent of employees say they frequently witness conflict among the senior team
- 49 percent of conflict is a result of personality clashes and "warring egos"
- 34 percent of conflict is caused by stress in the workplace
- 33 percent of conflict is caused by heavy workloads
- 27 percent of employees have witnessed conflicts lead to personal attacks
- 25 percent of employees have seen conflict result in sickness or absence
- 9 percent have seen workplace conflict cause a project to fail
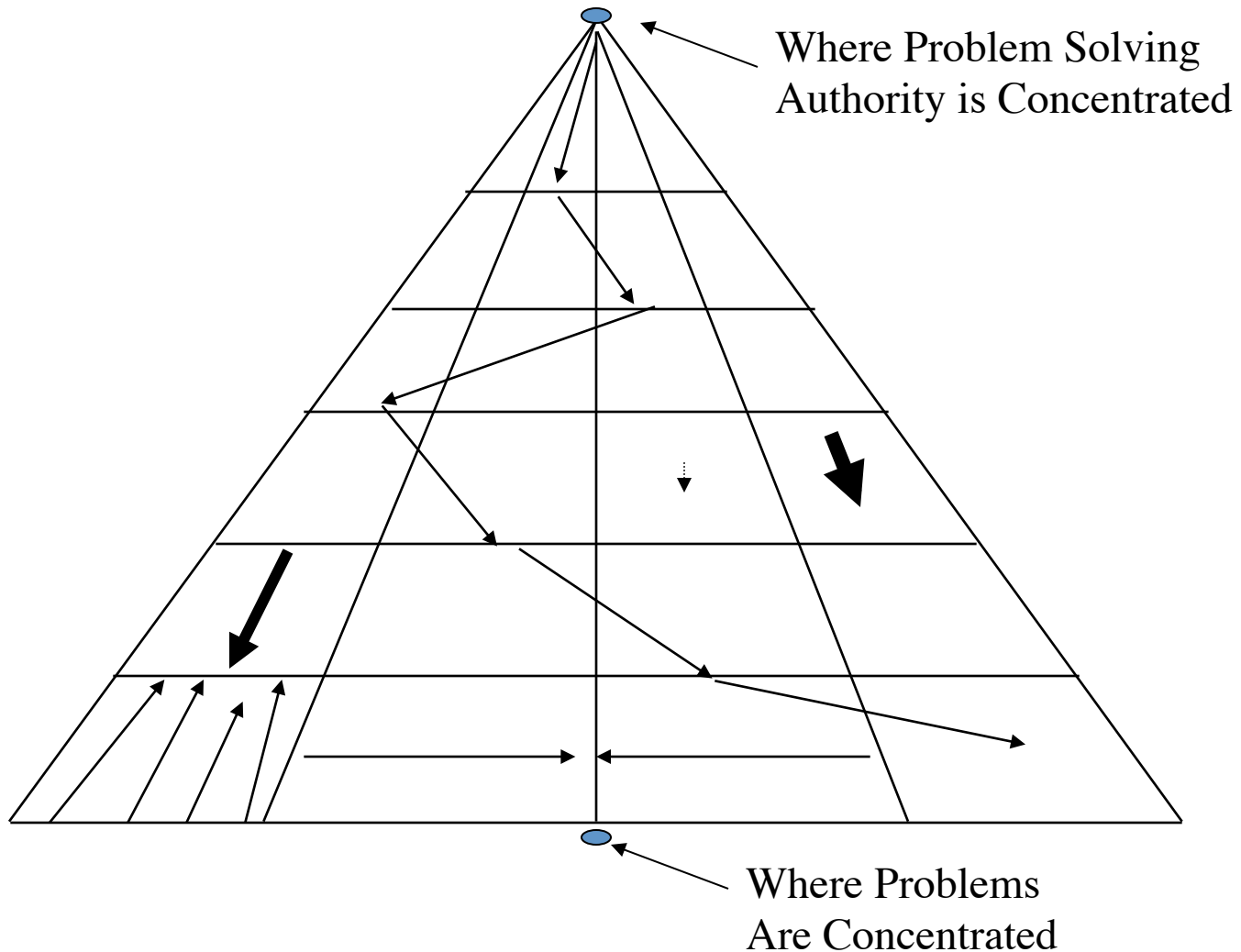
White-Collar Salt Mine

A 2013 survey of 12,115 workers worldwide found that many lacked a fulfilling workplace. MAY 31, 2014

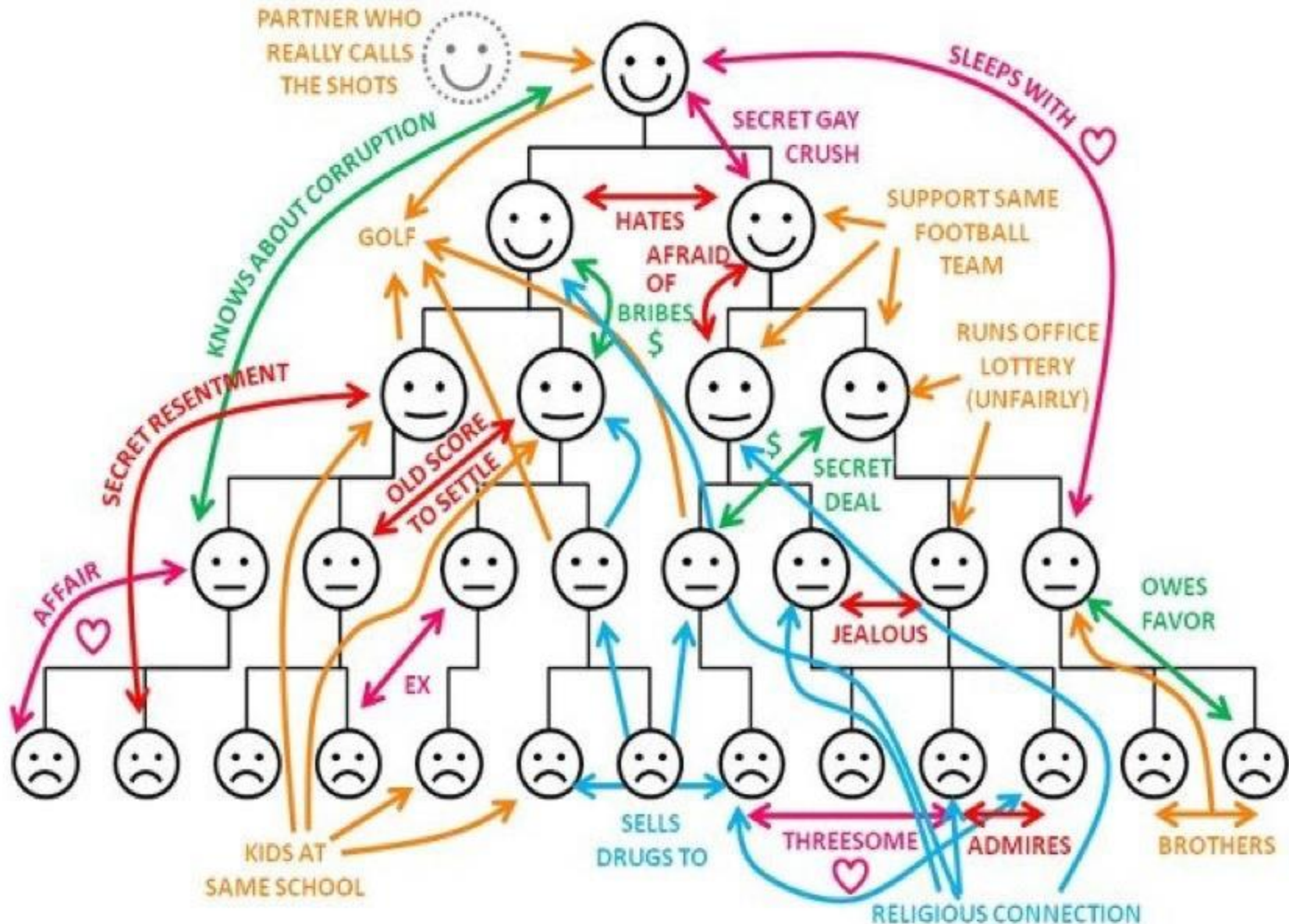| DO NOT HAVE THIS AT WORK		DO HAVE THIS
70%	Regular time for creative or strategic thinking	**18%**
66	Ability to focus on one thing at a time	**21**
60	Opportunities to do what is most enjoyed	**33**
50	Level of meaning and significance	**36**
50	Connection to your company's mission	**25**
49	A sense of community	**35**
48	Opportunities for learning and growth	**38**
47	Opportunities to do what you do best	**36**
46	Ability to prioritize your tasks	**36**
45	Overall positive energy	**36**
43	Understanding of how to be successful	**40**
40	Ability to balance work and home life	**37**
40	Ability to disengage from work	**42**
40	Comfort in truly being yourself	**45**

Source: The Energy Project

94 percent of those surveyed were in white-collar jobs; 6 percent were in blue-collar jobs.

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Hierarchies and Communication

Where Problem Solving
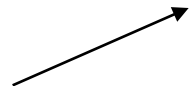Authority is Concentrated

Where Problems
Are Concentrated

REAL ORGANIZATION CHART

PARTNER WHO REALLY CALLS THE SHOTS

SLEEPS WITH ♡

SECRET GAY CRUSH

KNOWS ABOUT CORRUPTION

GOLF

HATES

AFRAID OF BRIBES $

SUPPORT SAME FOOTBALL TEAM

RUNS OFFICE LOTTERY (UNFAIRLY)

SECRET RESENTMENT

OLD SCORE TO SETTLE

SECRET DEAL

AFFAIR ♡

OWES FAVOR

EX

JEALOUS

KIDS AT SAME SCHOOL

SELLS DRUGS TO

THREESOME ♡

ADMIRES

BROTHERS

RELIGIOUS CONNECTION

Aggressive Responses to Conflict

If A attacks B (A→B), B can respond in several ways:
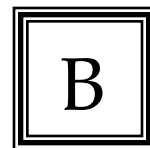
A → | (counter attack)

(defend)

B   (roll over)

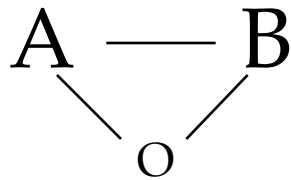→ C   (blame someone else)

→   (run away)

[B]   (refuse to budge)

A   (undermine A)
↓

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Collaborative Responses to Conflict

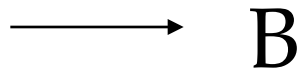A — B   (bring in a mediator)

O

●

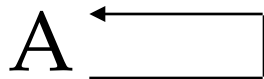A ↑ B   (focus on the problem as an "it")
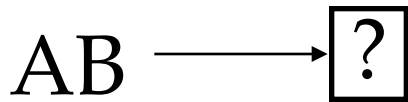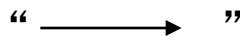
AB ⟶ ?   (focus on the future and/or interests)

⟶ B   (welcome difference, invite it in)

A ⟵▭   (create introspection)

" ⟶ "   (reframe the issue)

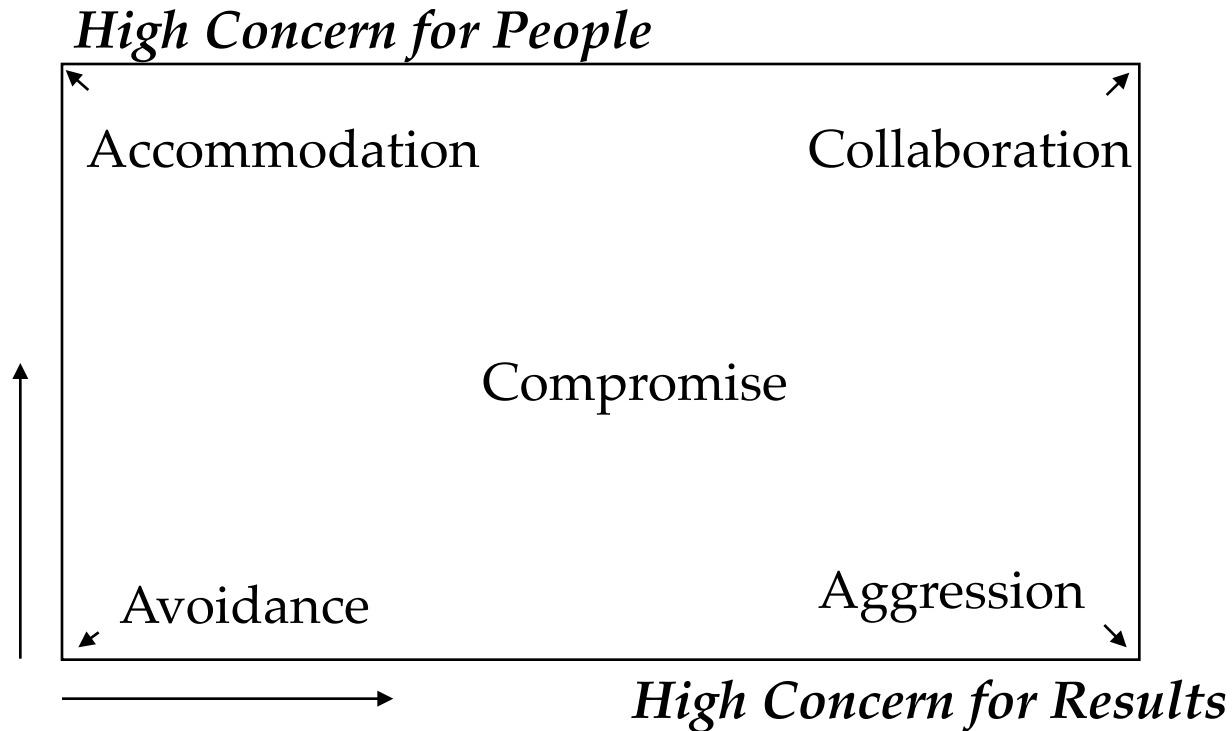(let it pass through you)

B⟶

Two Approaches to Conflict

	Win/Lose, Adversarial, Competitive		Win/Win, Cooperative, Collaborative	
Communication	1. Guarded, secretive, deceptive 2. Coercive 3. Blaming and fault finding 4. Judgmental language		**Communication**	1. Open, honest 2. Persuasive 3. Little blaming or fault finding 4. Neutral language
Attitudes	1. Mistrust, suspicion 2. Individualistic 3. Past focused 4. Aggressive/Defensive 5. Negative		**Attitudes**	1. Trusting 2. Mutual 3. Future focused 4. Assertive/Non-defensive 5. Positive
Process	1. Bargain from positions 2. Attack each other 3. Use whatever standards will advance position 4. Consider only options which will advance position		**Process**	1. Bargain from interests 2. Attack problems 3. Develop fair, objective standards 4. Invent options for mutual gains
Outcome	1. Win/Lose 2. Compromise between positions 3. Feeling of being overpowered 4. Battle scars, distrust 5. Alienation		**Outcome**	1. Win/Win 2. Mutual needs met 3. Mutual ownership 4. Dignity, increased trust 5. Relationship

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Based on work by Steve Erikson

Conflict Styles

High Concern for People

Accommodation   Collaboration

Compromise

Avoidance   Aggression

High Concern for Results

[Thomas-Kilman Instrument]

Conflict Resolution Strategies (1)

1. **<u>Avoiding Conflict</u>**	2. **<u>Engaging in Conflict</u>**
 • When an issue seems trivial. • When one has no power or can't change. • Where damage due to conflict outweighs its benefits. • In order to cool down, reduce tensions or regain composure. • When the need to gather information outweighs the need to make an immediate decision. • When others can resolve the conflict more effectively. • When the issue is tangential or symptomatic.	• To achieve quick, decisive action. • In an emergency. • To enforce unpopular rules or discipline. • When the issues are vital and one knows one is right. • To protect one's self against people who take advantage of non-competitive behavior. 3. **<u>Accommodating Conflict</u>** • When one is wrong, or to show one is reasonable. • When the issue is more important to others, in order to establish good will. • To build up credits. • When one is outmatched or losing. • To preserve harmony or avoid disruption. • To help subordinates develop by letting them learn from their mistakes.

Conflict Resolution Strategies (2)

4. **<u>Compromising</u>**

- When goals are moderately important.
- When opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals.
- To achieve a temporary settlement of complex issues.
- To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure.
- As a backup when competition or collaboration fails.
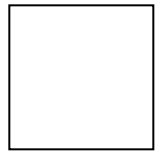
5. **<u>Collaborating</u>**

- To find an integrative solution when both sides find it difficult to compromise.
- When the objective is to learn.
- To merge insights from different perspectives.
- When long-range solutions are required.
- To gain commitment by consensus.
- To empower one or both participants.
- To work through hard feelings.
- To model cooperative solutions for subordinates.
- To solve problems between people who work closely together.
- To end conflict rather than paper it over.
- To improve morale.
- To increase motivation and productivity.
- When a team effort is required.
- When creative solutions are needed.
- When all other methods fail.

[Thomas-Kilman Instrument]

Dimensions of Conflict Resolution

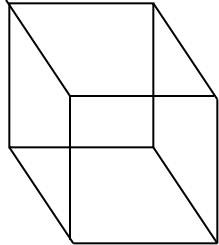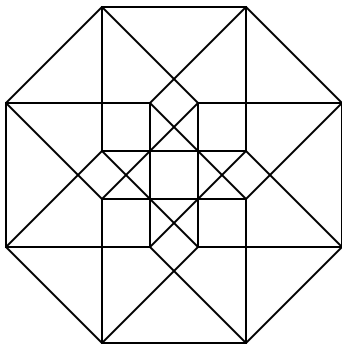● = 0 Dimensions = Impasse, Chaos, Anarchy

| = 1 Dimension = *Power*-Based, Dictatorial, My Solution, Factually Informed, *Obedience*

□ = 2 Dimensions = *Rights*-Based, Adversarial, Compromise, Legally Informed, *Acceptance*

▢ = 3 Dimensions = *Interest*-Based, Collaborative, Emotionally Informed, *Consensus*

▣ = 4 Dimensions = *Heart*-Based, Caring, Relationally Informed, *Unanimity*

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Dimensions in Teenage-Parent Conflicts

#	Form	*Focus*	Parent	Teenager
0.	Impasse	*Accusations, Insults*	"Irresponsible."	"Bossy."
1.	Command	*Position*	10 PM	Obedience or Punishment
2.	Negotiation	*Compromise*	10 PM	2 AM
3.	Emotional Exchange	*Empathy, Dialogue*	Anger, Fear	Resentment, Shame
4.	Discussion of Interests	*Negotiation*	Safety	Freedom
5.	Spiritual Awareness	*Learning, Forgiveness*	Death of Family	Loss of Security / Support
6.	Heartfelt Desire	*Relational Intimacy*	Love, Acceptance	Love, Trust
7.	Family System	*Change, Transcendence*	Prevention, Change	Supportive Relationship

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4 Dimensions of Organizations (2)

Height: CEO

Transformation

Width: Organization

Managers

Departments

Strategies

Tactics

Teams

Team Leaders

Individuals

Depth: Status Quo

Staff

Time: Past   Present   Future
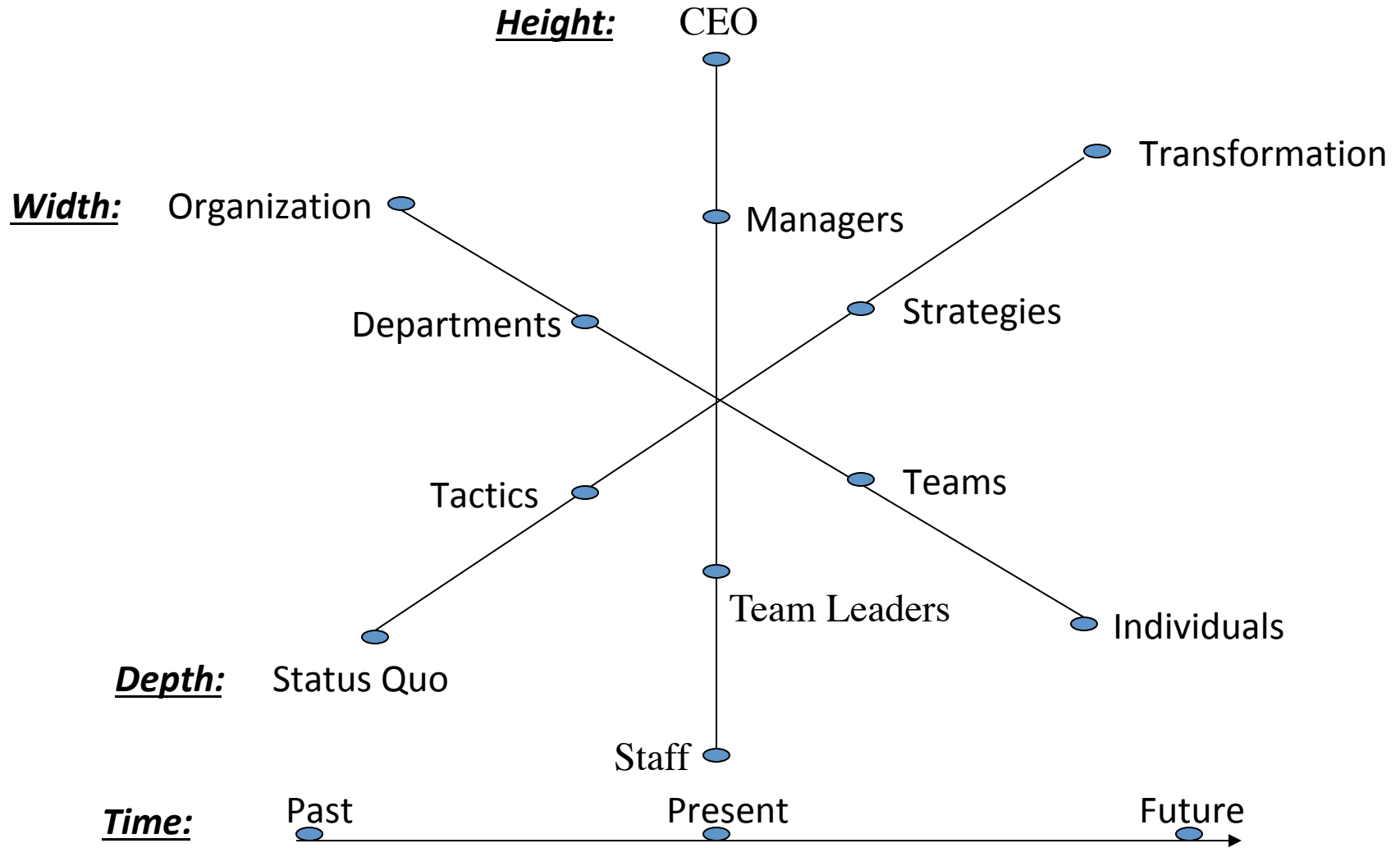
What Can't Be Managed

Trust

Caring

Creativity

Curiosity

Insight

Synergy

Integrity

Consensus

Craftsmanship

Values

Perseverance

Initiative

Flow

Collaboration

Attitude

Dedication

Leadership

Honesty

Courage

Empathy

Compassion

Understanding

Wisdom

Passion

Forgiveness

Unity

Fortitude

Follow-through

Three *Locations* of Conflict

We experience, engage in, resolve, transform, and transcend conflicts in three fundamental locations, arenas, or "fields," each with its own characteristics, rules, processes, algorithms, and dynamics:

1. *Internally* or personally, as sensory perceptions, neurophysiological responses, mental activities, emotional reactions, heartfelt desires, qualities of energy, and spiritual states that happen *inside* us;

2. *Relationally* or socially, as active and passive communications, responsive behaviors, relationships, and interactions with others that take place *between* us;

3. *Environmentally* or systemically, as cultures and contexts, rites and rituals, customs and practices, systems and structures that take place in couples and families, organizations and institutions, nations and societies; along with the backdrops and settings, histories and experiences, economic and political conditions, ethics and values, and countless other circumstances that occur *around* us.

The Crossroads of Conflict

Problems we are
required to solve

Evolution
of conflicts

Problem solving skills
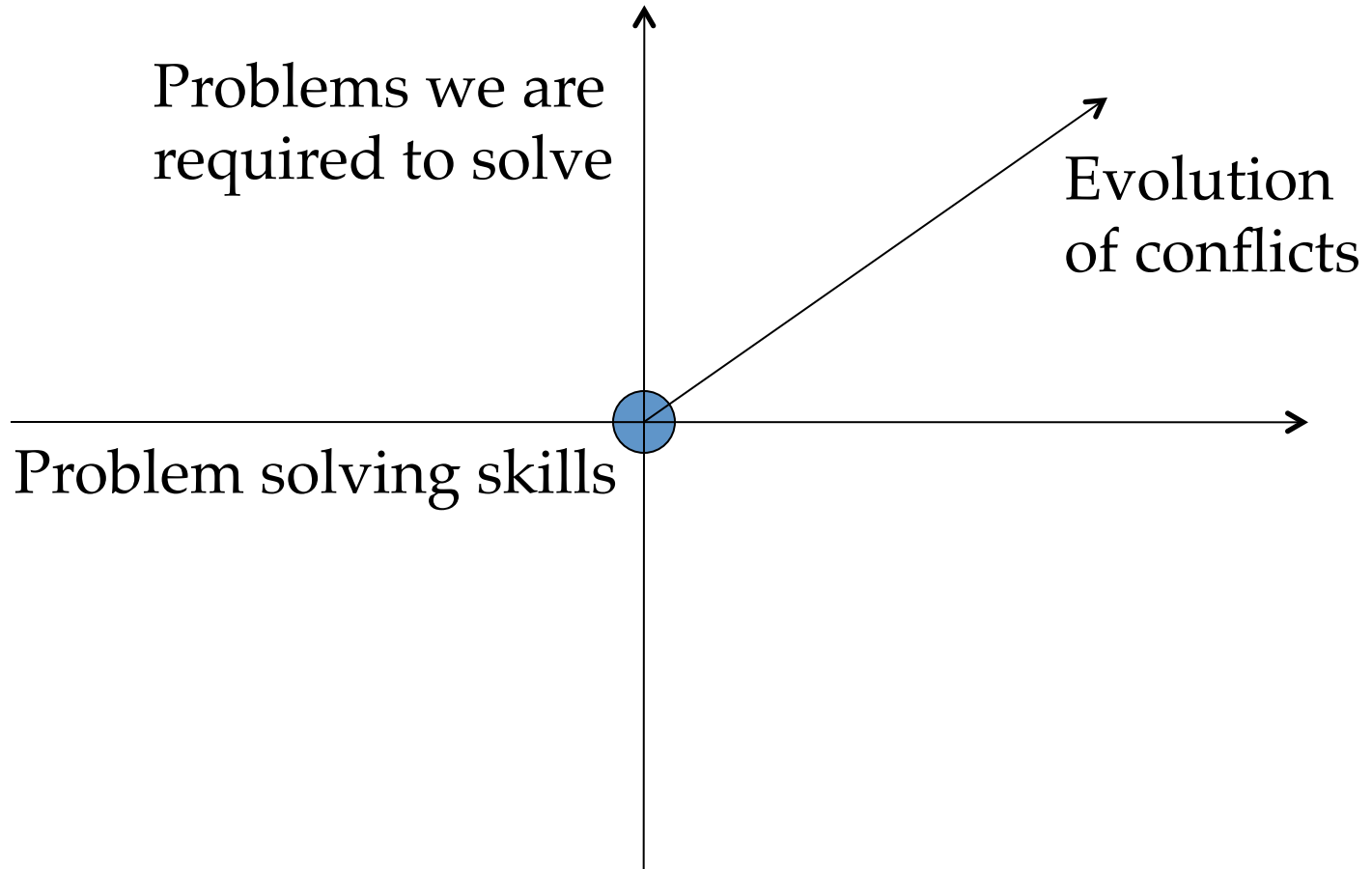
Some Crossroads in Conflict

- Whether to engage in the conflict and behave badly, or calm down and try to discuss it.

- Whether to acknowledge the other person's truth or deny it, remain rooted in one's own story, and slip into biased or delusional thinking.

- Whether to experience intense negative emotions and feelings, or to repress and sublimate them.

- Whether to experience one's opponent as an equal human being entitled to respect, or to demonize him or her and victimize oneself.

- Whether to aggressively assert and hold tight to one's position, or to search for solutions that satisfy both sets of interests.

- Whether to acknowledge and grieve one's losses and then let them go, or hold on to one's pain as something precious and continue reliving them.

- Whether to learn from one's opponent and the conflict so as to transcend it, or hold on to one's grievances and being right, and leave it bottle it up inside.

- Whether to forgive one's opponent and release ourselves from the burden of our own false expectations, or remain isolated and wounded deep inside.

- Whether to reopen our hearts, reconcile and re-integrate with one's opponent, or remain closed-hearted.

- Whether to ignore the systemic sources of chronic conflict, or redesign the systems that created them to prevent future disputes, so others will not have to experience what we experienced.

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The Systemic Nature of Conflict

- Every conflict takes place not only between individuals, but within a *context*, culture, and environment; surrounded by social, economic, and political forces; inside organizational systems, structures, and technological settings; among a diverse community of people; at a particular moment in time and history; on a stage, milieu, or backdrop.

- None of these elements is conflict-neutral. Each contributes – sometimes in veiled and unspoken, yet profound ways to the nature, intensity, duration, impact, and *meaning* of our conflicts.

- Each profoundly affects the quality of our work lives, our personal capacity for joy and compassion, and our ability to collaborate in solving our problems.

- Like ripples in a pond, every conflict and every resolution in the workplace extends outward, impacting others and creating a "mediation butterfly effect."

- As a result, we are each responsible as organizational citizens for building conflict resolution capacity in our workplaces.

What are Chronic Conflicts?

Chronic conflicts are those that nations, societies, organizations or individuals

- Have not fully resolved

- Need to resolve in order to grow and evolve

- Are capable of resolving

- Can only resolve by abandoning old approaches and adopting new ones

- Are resistant to resolving because they are frightened, dissatisfied, insecure, uncertain, angry, or unwilling to change

Features of Chronic Conflict

Chronic conflicts can often be distinguished by their:

- Repetition
- Low levels of resolution
- Incongruity between high level of emotion and apparent triviality of the issues over which people are fighting
- Being commonly mistaken for miscommunications or personality clashes
- Tolerance of disrespectful and adversarial behaviors,
- Seeming irrationality
- Accidental misunderstandings
- Apparent idiosyncratic causes and circumstances
- Underlying similarities

5 Aspects of Conflict
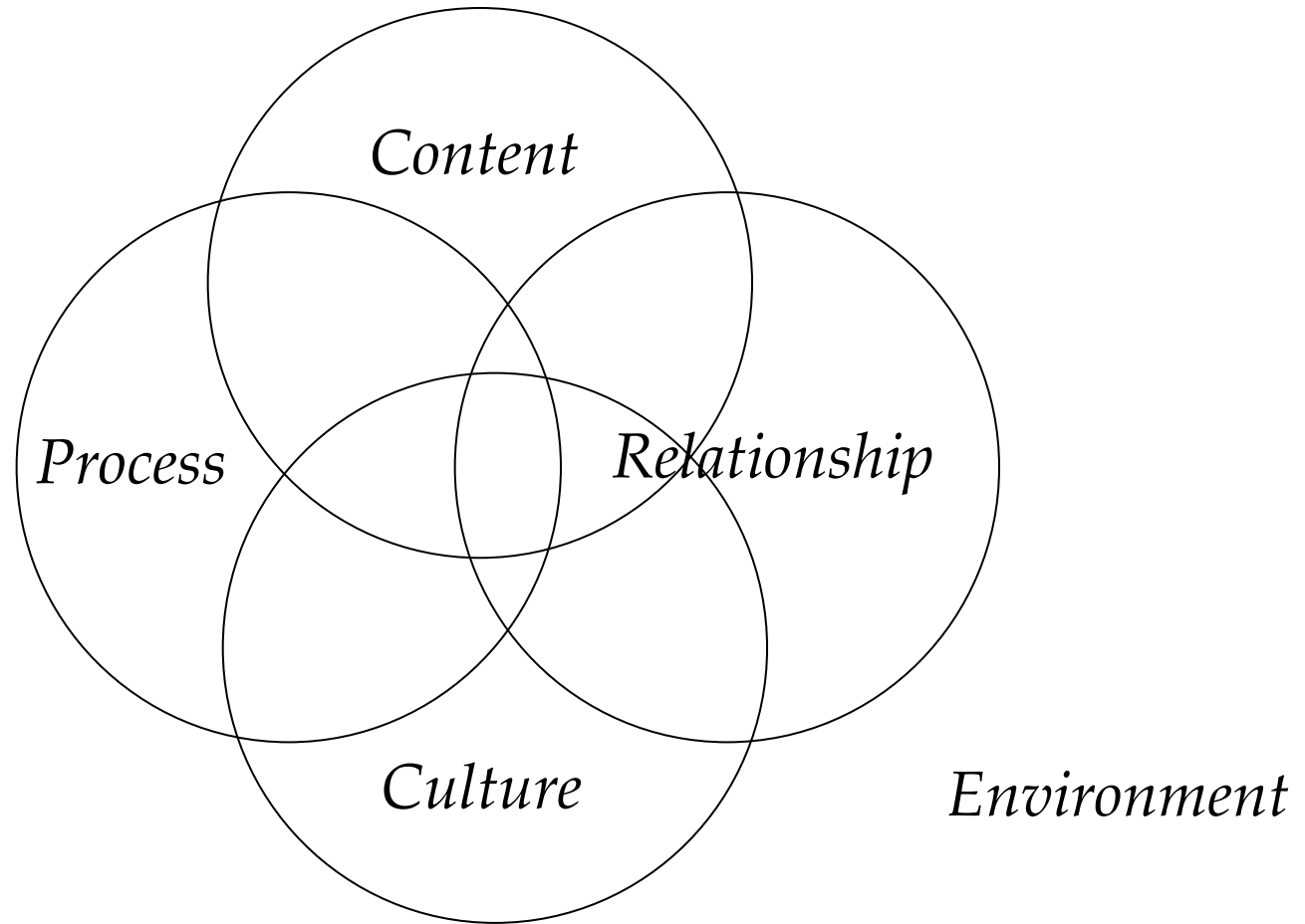
Conflicting Forces in Organizational Life

Centralization vs. Decentralization

Competition vs. Collaboration

Change vs. Consolidation

Center vs. Periphery

Individuation vs. Integration

Creativity vs. Control

Destructive vs. Generative

Uniformity vs. Diversity

Individualism vs. Team-Work

Specialization vs. Generalization

Integrity vs. Advantage

Security vs. Risk

Emotional vs. Logical

Anarchy vs. Order

Complexity vs. Creativity

Movements vs. Institutions

Global vs. Local

Spontaneity vs. Strategy

Democracy vs. Autocracy

Transparency vs. Need to Know

Positions vs. Interests

Responsiveness vs. Planning

Short-Term vs. Long-Term

Artistic vs. Scientific

Tradition vs. Transformation

Closure vs. Continuity

How Do We Get to Resolution?

"[T]he 'conflicts' of most people are actually attempts to avoid the real conflicts. They are disagreements on minor or superficial matters which by their very nature do not lend themselves to clarification or solution. Real conflicts between two people, those which do not serve to cover up or to project, but which are experienced on the deep level of inner reality to which they belong, are not destructive. They lead to clarification, they produce a catharsis from which both persons emerge with more knowledge and more strength."

Erich Fromm

Ten Reasons We Get Stuck in Conflict (1)

1. *Conflict defines us and gives our lives meaning.* Having an enemy is a quick, easy source of identity, because we *are* whatever they are *not*. By defining our opponents as evil, we implicitly define ourselves as good.

2. *Conflict gives us energy*, even if it is only the energy of anger, fear, jealousy, guilt, shame, and grief. We can become addicted to the adrenaline rush, the flash-point intensity, and the *intimacy* of combat..

3. *Conflict ennobles our misery* and makes it appear that we are suffering for a worthwhile cause. Without conflict, we may feel we suffered in vain, and forced to critique our choices and regret the wasted lives we've led.

4. *Conflict safeguards our personal space* and encourages others to recognize our needs and respect our privacy. For many of us, conflict seems the only way of effectively declaring our rights, securing the respect of others, restoring our inner balance, and protecting ourselves from boundary violations.

5. *Conflict creates intimacy*, even if it is only the transient, *negative* intimacy of fear, rage, attachment, and loss. Every two-year old instinctively knows that it is better to be noticed for doing something wrong than not to be noticed at all.

Ten Reasons We Get Stuck in Conflict (2)

6. *Conflict camouflages our weaknesses* and diverts attention from sensitive subjects we would rather avoid discussing. It is a smokescreen, a way of passing the buck, blaming others, and distracting attention from our mistakes.

7. *Conflict powerfully communicates what we honestly feel,* allowing us to vent and assuage our pain by unloading our emotions onto others.

8. *Conflict gets results* and forces others to heed us, especially faceless bureaucrats, clerks, and "service representatives," who only seem to respond to our requests or do what we want when we yell at them.

9. *Conflict makes us feel righteous* by encouraging us to believe we are opposing evil behaviors and rewarding those that are good. Our opponents' pernicious actions justify us in giving them what they "rightly deserve."

10. *Conflict prompts change,* which feels better than impasse and stagnation. Many changes only take place as a result of conflict— not because it is actually necessary to achieve a given result, but because people's fear and resistance make it so.–

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Power, Rights and Interests

Power
Dictatorship, Autocracy and Hierarchy, Command and Control
Violence, Orders, Pronouncements, Negotiation by Force

↓

Rights
Legal Institutions, Rules and Regulations, Coercion and Voting
Adjudication, Arbitration, Decision, Positional Negotiation

↓

Interests
Community or Civil Society, Needs and Desires, Consensus and Participation
Informal Problem Solving, Mediation, Dialogue, Collaborative Negotiation

Conflict Evolution in the Sandbox

Power:

- Grab the toy, hit and scream.

- Get someone in authority to solve it for you.

Rights:

- Create rules like "first come, first served."

- Manipulate the rules, cite technical reasons why you are right, and appeal to a higher authority.

Interests:

- Offer them questions they can ask each other to find out what they want and resolve it themselves.

- Help them learn how to play together.

10 Questions for Anyone in Conflict

1. What happened?

2. How did it feel?

3. What do you want?

4. Why do you want it?

5. What are you doing in order to get it?

6. Is that working?

7. What do you think you might do instead?

8. What is one thing the other person could do that could help solve this problem?

9. What have you learned from this experience that you want to do differently next time?

10. Is there anything else you want to say to each other before we end?

20 Ways to Reduce Conflict (1)

1. Stop arguing, accusing and insulting each other, and sit down together to talk.
2. Take turns speaking and listening without interrupting.
3. Summarize, clarify and acknowledge what the other person has said and feels.
4. Repeat what you think the other person is saying. Ask if you are correct. If not, listen again.
5. Avoid accusations. Say: "I feel … when you … because …"
6. Focus on the future rather than the past. Offer unilateral concessions.
7. Focus on problems and behaviors rather than personalities.
8. Focus on interests rather than positions. Ask "Why do you want that?" "Why is that important to you?"
9. Break the problem down into smaller parts. Focus on the easiest.
10. Search for creative solutions. Brainstorm ideas.

20 Ways to Reduce Conflict (2)

11. List, categorize and prioritize all possible solutions, then try to reach consensus on the best option.
12. Agree on criteria that will make the outcome fair and workable.
13. If you can't agree, take a break and come back to it later.
14. Write down what you want and what you are willing to do to end the dispute.
15. Move on to other issues and circle back after reaching smaller agreements.
16. Split the difference 50/50. Consider what you want in exchange for agreeing to something that is important to them.
17. Consider trade-offs and ways to "expand the pie."
18. Say what will happen and what you will do next if the dispute is not resolved, then ask if that is what you want and return to options.
19. Write down and confirm your agreements. Jointly evaluate your progress in implementing them.
20. Ask someone you both trust to mediate or arbitrate the issues.

25 Conflict Resolution Processes

1. Active, empathetic and responsive listening
2. Appreciative inquiry
3. Non-violent communication
4. Emotional intelligence
5. Collaborative, mutual gain and interest-based negotiation
6. Consensus building
7. Prejudice reduction and bias awareness
8. Support for diversity and cross-cultural communication
9. Team building
10. Community organizing
11. Mediation
12. Dialogue facilitation
13. Circles
14. Opening heart-to-heart conversations
15. Restorative justice
16. Victim-offender mediation
17. Awareness, mindfulness and meditation
18. Informal problem solving
19. Conflict coaching
20. Conflict resolution consulting
21. Participatory feedback and evaluation
22. Conflict resolution systems design
23. Apology and acknowledgment
24. Forgiveness and reconciliation
25. Training and capacity building

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10 Levels of Resolution

1. Engagement/Aggression/Impasse/Revenge

2. Conflict Suppression/Shaming and Blaming/Punishment

3. Conflict Denial/Disengagement/Separation/Avoidance

4. Stopping the Fighting/Cease Fire/Stalemate/De-Escalation

5. Conciliation/Compromise/Accommodation/Civility

6. Settlement of the Issues/Collaborative Negotiation/Compromise

7. Resolution of Emotional Issues/Satisfaction of Underlying Interests

8. Forgiveness/Self-Forgiveness/Letting Go/Completion

9. Reconciliation/Open Heartedness/Return of Trust/Caring/Closure

10. Prevention/Conflict Resolution Systems Design/Renewal

Why Mediation Works, from A to Z (1)

A. Mediation breaks issues down into "bite-sized" bits, isolating issues so they seem less complex.
B. The process in mediation is collaborative rather than confrontational.
C. Mediation acknowledges and values all human needs.
D. Mediation does not rely on memory or credibility.
E. Mediation allows the parties to decide the outcome.
F. Mediation encourages creative remedies.
G. Mediation is future-oriented, as opposed to law which tries to resolve what happened in the past.
H. Mediation permits parties to become human to each other and appear less like cardboard figures.
I. Mediation allows both sides to see the problem as a whole.
J. Mediation employs the synergy between the parties to bring about agreement.
K. Mediation compliments the parties as opposed to insulting them.
L. Mediation equalizes the power of the parties to compel a result, regardless of the difference in their real power outside the mediation.

Why Mediation Works, from A to Z (2)

M. Mediation surfaces hidden agendas.

N. Mediation lets quiet people speak and talkative people be quiet.

O. Mediation allows parties to "fine-tune" results or change their minds.

P. Mediation encourages the parties to <u>actually</u> tell the whole truth, including the subjective and emotional truth.

Q. Mediation connects parties through empathy.

R. Mediation permits the mediators to model useful behavior and techniques for avoiding future conflicts.

S. Mediation allows both sides to win.

T. In mediation, the focus is shifted from people to positions and from positions to interests.

U. Mediation permits dialogue to occur in the language of metaphor.

V. Mediation reveals the parties' deeper motivations.

W. Mediation allows for constructive feedback without the appearance of judgment.

X. Mediation empowers both sides to say no.

Y. Mediation lets the parties compromise and save face.

Z. Mediation encourages the parties to substitute internal for external constraints and avoids enforcement problems due to resistance.

20 Steps in Mediating Disputes

1. Welcome the parties

2. Set the stage

3. Introduce the process and yourself

4. Set the ground rules

5. Answer any process questions

6. Choose one party to start

7. Model active listening

8. Let the other party speak

9. Explore hidden agendas / caucus if necessary

10. Set the agenda/contract to solve the problem

11. Identify a problem to start on

12. Select criteria, brainstorm options, and prioritize solutions

13. Facilitate negotiations

14. Fine-tune solutions

15. Explore and resolve impasses

16. Establish criteria for success, next steps

17. Summarize agreements

18. Acknowledge participants

19. Confirm process, content, and psychological satisfaction

20. Celebrate successes

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Some Mediative Interventions

- *Transparency* — "What just happened in the conversation we were having?"
- *Inquiring* — "What do you think should be done? Why do you think so?"
- *Supporting* — "I appreciate your willingness to speak up and express your opinions. Here is an example that supports your point."
- *Acknowledging* — "You took a risk in making that apology/concession."
- *Refereeing* — "What ground rules do we need so everyone can feel we are behaving fairly? "
- *Concretizing* — "Can you give a specific example?"
- *Exploring* — "Can you say more about why you feel so strongly about this issue?"
- *Summarizing* — "Is this what you are trying to say ... ?"
- *Challenging* — "Is that consistent with the ground rules/what the group has already decided?"
- *Coaching* — "Is there a way you could respond less defensively?
- *Connecting* — "That point connects directly with what was said earlier … ."
- *Re-orienting* — "I think we're lost. Can we get back on track? Are we talking about the real issue?"
- *Problem Solving* — "What do you see as possible solutions?"
- *Uniting* — "What can we agree on here?
- *Contextualizing:* — "Why did you decide to come together to discuss this issue?"

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10 Strategies to Resolve Conflicts at Work

Strategy One: Understand the Culture and Dynamics of Conflict

Strategy Two: Listen Actively, Empathetically, and Responsively

Strategy Three :   Search Beneath the Surface for Hidden Meanings

Strategy Four: Acknowledge and Reframe Emotions

Strategy Five: Separate What Matters from What Gets in the Way

Strategy Six: Solve Problems Creatively and Paradoxically

Strategy Seven: Learn from Difficult Behaviors

Strategy Eight: Lead and Coach for Transformation

Strategy Nine: Explore Resistance and Negotiate Collaboratively

Strategy Ten: Mediate, and Design Systems for Prevention

8 Steps to Resolution (1)

1. **Set the Stage:** The mediator arranges the environment, welcomes the parties, introduces him/herself, asks those present to introduce themselves and establishes the ground rules for the session.

2. **Listen to the Stories:**   Each person explains the conflict from his or her point of view. The mediator uses active listening skills to clarify, restate and summarize; asks questions that will help both parties understand the problem better.

3. **Acknowledge the Emotions:** The mediator acknowledges and validates important feelings, and identifies issues for problem solving or negotiation.

4. **Identify the Interests:** The mediator discovers the underlying interests for each party by asking not only what they want, but *why* they want it.

5. **Solve the Problems:** The mediator helps the parties search together for practical solutions to their problems, including the problem of how to improve their communication and their relationship.

8 Steps to Resolution (2)

6. **Negotiate the Differences:** The mediator helps the parties negotiate their differences collaboratively and arrive at a fair solution, by encouraging both sides to focus on problems rather than people; on interests, rather than positions; on the future rather than the past; and generate options for resolving their differences by finding mutually satisfactory solutions, prioritizing them and searching for solutions that may prevent the conflict from reoccurring.

7. **Confirm the Commitments:** Agreements are written down in a contract which is very specific in terms of who will do what, by when, etc. The agreement is balanced and non-judgmental, and signed copies are given to both parties.

8. **Close the Process:** Once agreement has been reached, the mediator compliments the parties on their success and on the lessons learned, confirms their ownership of the agreement, and sends them away feeling good about themselves and what they have accomplished.

It is possible to break the process down into 2 steps: listening and problem solving; or 20 steps or 100. What is important is to create or discover the areas in something new can happen.

How to Rebuild Trust

- Honesty about yourself
- Openness about problems
- Unconditional respect
- Clarity about boundaries
- Consistency over time
- Actions based on vision or values
- Collaboration and joint action
- Empowerment of others
- Teamwork, joint participation
- Listening, empathizing
- Dependability in crises and hard times
- Congruency between words and actions
- Social interactions
- Curiosity and asking open-ended questions
- Personal sharing, especially about mistakes
- Willingness to sacrifice something important
- Sincere apologies

"Now, there are many, many people in the world, but relatively few with whom we interact, and even fewer who cause us problems. So, when you come across such a chance for practicing patience and tolerance, you should treat it with gratitude. It is rare. Just as having unexpectedly found a treasure in your own house, you should be happy and grateful to your enemy for providing that precious opportunity."

The Dalai Lama