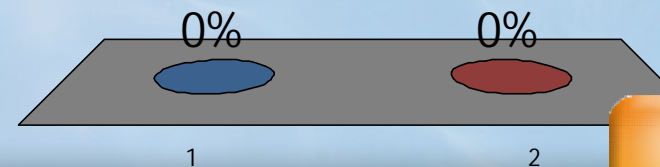


Conflict Resolution

Claire Baldwin, DPS
Management
Consultant, CDM

How was your summer so far
"conflict wise" -- Lets' vote.....
Any business conflicts in the last 3 months?

1. Yes
2. No



5

Countdown

How was your summer so far
“conflict wise” -- Lets' vote.....
Any personal conflicts in the last 3 months?

1. Yes
2. No



5

Countdown

How was your summer so far “conflict wise” -- Lets' vote.....

How bad were they collectively, on a scale of 1 to 10:

- | | | |
|----|-----|------------------|
| 0% | 1. | Horrid |
| 0% | 2. | ... |
| 0% | 3. | ... |
| 0% | 4. | ... |
| 0% | 5. | ... |
| 0% | 6. | ... |
| 0% | 7. | ... |
| 0% | 8. | ... |
| 0% | 9. | ... |
| 0% | 10. | OK but annoying? |

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Countdown

Today's Agenda

- Understanding how conflict occurs and the types of conflict we encounter in both business and our personal lives
- Exploring the stages of conflicts and the emotions within them that can pose a high risk
- Exploration of your personal mode of conflict handling and tools and tips for success

A bit about myself

- 25 years in engineering and construction
- I did my doctoral research on the Role of Emotional Intelligence in Conflict Resolution - to quote my stepson I am a 'fight fair' doctor
- Over a decade of experience as a NYS Certified Mediator – Family Court , Divorce, Parent /Child, PINS and certified instructor in Parents Apart in NYS



So why is conflict in business a big deal

- Estimates suggest that upwards of a third of a manager's time can be lost in resolving the impact of conflict on workplace activities
- The 1998 Employment Practices Liability Survey of 100 U.S. Human Resource executives revealed that 86% had written manuals on human resource policy to guide their employees in their business interactions, and 63% of the group had implemented training programs on conflict resolution for managers and supervisors.
- Bottom line – “people quit bosses more often than jobs” – can we afford that in America?

Further in business we have 2 'new' classes of actions

- Work Place Violence and Bullying: These are becoming formally regulated crimes in many countries outside the US and by many companies and municipalities inside the US
 - The 2007 WBI-Zogby survey show that 13% of U.S. employees report being bullied currently, 24% say they have been bullied in the past and an additional 12% say they have witnessed workplace bullying. [Nearly half of all American workers \(49%\)](#) report that they have been affected by workplace bullying, either being a target themselves or having witnessed abusive behavior against a co-worker.
- Of the approximately 1.7 million incidents of workplace violence that occur in the US every year, and this includes deaths.



Future trends of concern

- As the economy continues to affect the lives of every American, experts anticipate that we may see a rise in workplace violence in the near future. They predict that situations where employees seek revenge on a former employer will not be the biggest issue to worry about.
- Researchers warn human services to be prepared to deal with extremely aggravated customers who are upset over bills they can't afford to pay.
- Employees who work in the public service industry must be trained to handle difficult situations and know how to diffuse them.

Have you recently? Encountered workplace bullying?

1. Yes
2. No



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Have you recently? Encountered workplace violence ?

1. Yes
2. No



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Countdown

Have you recently?

Lost an employee /peer due to this type of behavior ?

1. Yes
2. No



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And on the personal side...

- In the United States, 49% of marriages end in divorce.
- The median duration of first marriages that end in divorce is slightly less than eight years.
- World Divorce Statistics - In case you were wondering, divorce rates do vary substantially in different countries.
 - In Sweden, 64% of marriages end in divorce.
 - In Italy, 12% of marriages end in divorce.
 - Any ideas why it is like this ?

The Economic Impact of Divorce

- Divorced women with children are four times more likely than married women to have an income that is under the poverty line.
- Although 10% of families in the U.S. are headed by a woman, 40% of poor families have a female head of household.
- Of course, divorce also results in a higher cost to society as a whole. According to one study, a single divorce can cost state and federal governments more than \$30,000 in court fees, increased bankruptcies, food stamps, and public housing benefits.

Unintended Costs- Children and Divorce

- About half of all children will witness the breakup of a parent's marriage. Of these kids, nearly half will also witness a parent's second divorce.
- Children who are raised in single-parent homes are less likely to marry and more likely to divorce.
- Teen girls from single parent homes are twice as likely to drop out of high school or give birth to an out-of-wedlock child.

Professionals at risk – that is us !

The Good News

- If you have an annual income of over \$50,000, your risk of divorce decreases by 30%.
- If you wait to marry until you're over 25 years of age, your risk of divorce decreases by 24%.
- If you've attended college, your risk of divorce decreases by 13%.

The Bad news

- Money followed by stress from 2 jobs is one of the highest reasons for break ups
- Travel and work demands increasing cause emotional disconnect that lead to affairs (see the movie - Up in the air)
- Currently professional American workers work 30 % more then their parents and have 40 % less vacation or family time off

And your body... what happens during conflict?

During an emotional event such as conflict ...	Short /long term impacts	Remember this feeling..
Blood pressure elevated	Discomfort and heart strain / stroke	A pounding heart before a conflict or hearing your heartbeat in your ears
Problems with coordination develop	Safety and possible serious injury such as car crash	Dropping things and tripping
Logical thought declines as does process speed	Short term memory gets worse – can't remember solutions , long term depression	Getting so upset you lose your thought or point in a conflict
Learning drops down into single digit range	Mastery of new skill highly limited, low cognitive engagement	Poor motor skills, cut yourself with kitchen knives
Speech /language problems develop as emotions increase	Stuttering during conflict, increase use of swear words due to recall blocks	Being so angry you are speechless or simply scream

So what actually is conflict ?

- Conflict starts when an individual perceives that someone is negatively affecting , or about to affect , something they care about.
- It occurs as a series of episodes between those involved , with each episode shaping how the conflict is subsequently perceived and managed.

Conflict and Negotiation Theories

Original Negotiation Theories

- Negotiator is a rational actor
- Parties act strategically
- Emotions are held in check

Recent Negotiation Theories

- **Emotions play a large role**
- Our gender, age, cultural legacies* and beliefs all impact our actions.

* thoughts, actions, customs and beliefs of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group

Why communication often breaks down

- 7% is spoken words
- 38% is tone of voice
- 55% is facial expression

No wonder there are misunderstandings and conflict arise!



Add in technology and very quickly this happens



- Hit send and depending on my situation ..
 - I might think



What causes us to ignore conflict?

- Pressure – time, peer, procrastination
- Fear of conflict
- Misunderstanding of others viewpoint
- Lacking the courage to advocate their viewpoint

This costs time and money

Levels of conflict

Informal

- More often handled quickly, less noticeable by others in the office and pass with relative ease in the moment- "shake it off"

You Vote:

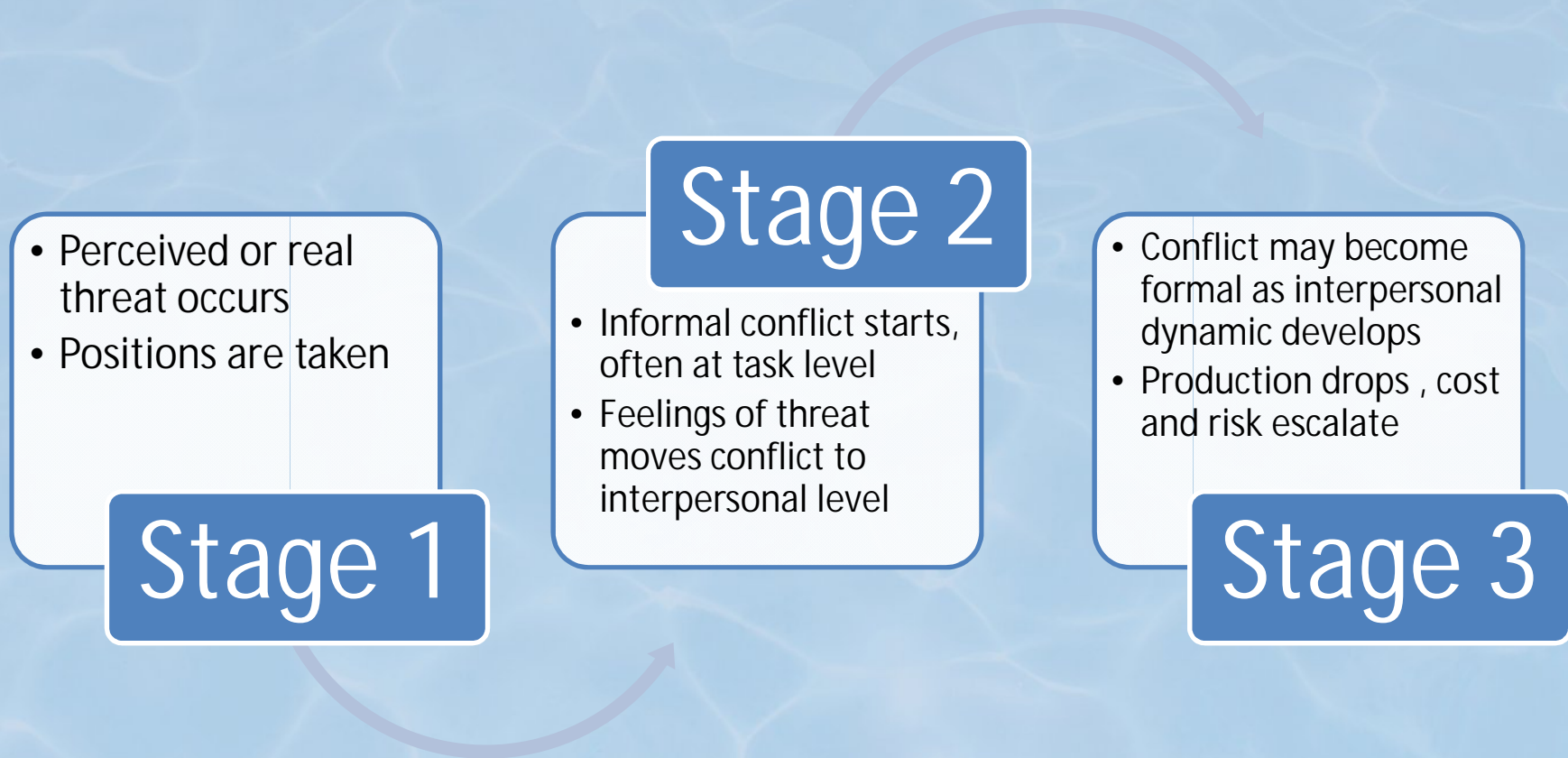
Which do you think is more destructive over time ?

1. Formal or 2. Informal

Formal

- Needs more attention, more skills necessary to resolve or understand what the parties has heard or seen , and how to solve it.
- May involve HR in some situations

Stages of conflict



What types of conflict do we see in the workplace?

- Pre-existing - carry over from previous context
- Spontaneous Reaction - reaction in a critical time in the dialogue
- Cumulative Response - series of negative interactions that result in a overly large 'blow up' , often one party is taken by surprise
- Structural conflicts in the situation (2 firms in a JV)
- Positional conflict on the job (supervisor/subordinate)

What do you think can be changed

Sources of conflict

- Differences in Perspective
- Differences in Perception
- Differences in Knowledge
- Differences in Tastes/Style
- Differences in Values/Beliefs
- Differences in Interests

Can this be changed?

1. Yes
2. No



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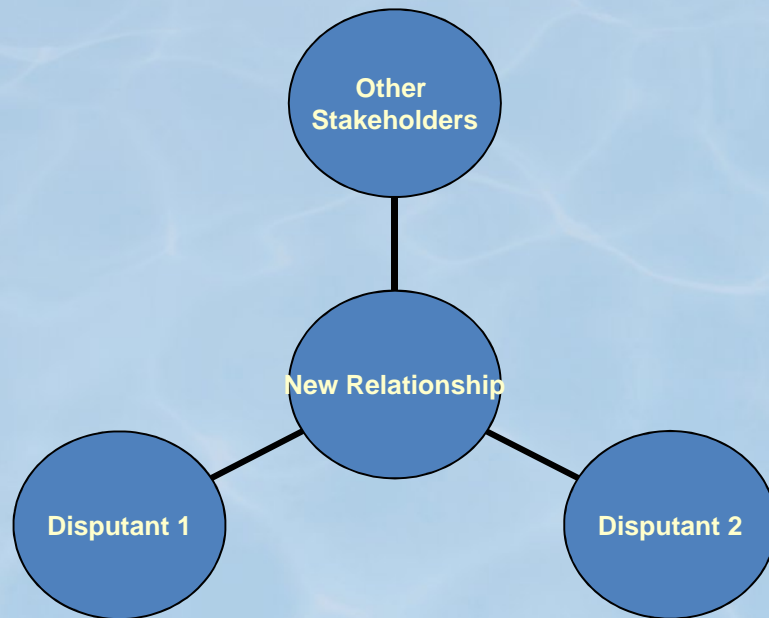
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Often successful conflict resolution means finding mutually acceptable new form of relationship



Resolving conflict is most effective when led by people who understand the power of relationships.

Be careful never to mediate' your own conflict if you are in it!

Types of dispute resolution at work

You impact outcomes

The law controls outcomes

Negotiation is a discussion between two or more people solving disagreements, deciding what to do

Conciliation is the use of a third person to help resolution of their dispute.

Facilitation involves a neutral who helps members of a group solve a problem.

Mediation is a method for discussing problems with the help of a trained neutral.

Arbitration is a formal proceeding that uses neutrals to listen to evidence and render a decision.

Litigation is a legal dispute argued in court.

FIVE CONFLICT MODES

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument



Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

- TKI measures five conflict modes from the Dual Concerns Model
- Measures preferences or predispositions on two dimensions.



Assertiveness – concern for self needs and interest



Cooperativeness – concern for others needs and interests

Behavioral choice along - these 2 dimensions

COMPETING

Assertive & uncooperative
– power oriented mode

COLLABORATING

Assertive and
cooperative
Deep dive into problem

COMPROMISING

Dead middle – look for
comfort zones for both
parties

AVOIDING

Unassertive and
uncooperative – can be
sidestepping , postponing
or withdrawing

ACCOMMODATING

Unassertive and
cooperative – opposite of
competing - self is ignored



ACCOMMODATING

- Strongly oriented toward
 - Placing more weight on the relationship than the situation warrants
 - Getting satisfaction from solving other people's problems
 - Having/keeping a good relationship and being sensitive to others
 - May be vulnerable to competitively oriented people



COMPROMISING

- Strongly oriented toward
 - Eager to close the gap based on fair standards or formulae
 - Wants to be seen as being a reasonable person and as men & women of principle.
 - May rush to the closing stage, and make concessions too readily due to internal 'principals'
 - However details really count as they tend to make an issue out of every detail



AVOIDING

- Strongly oriented toward
 - Adept at deferring & dodging confrontational aspects
 - Seen as tactful and diplomatic
 - Don't mistake avoiding direct conflict for having a conflict game plan
 - Will often pass up legitimate opportunities to negotiate.
 - If interpersonal conflict is a functional aspect of organization, avoiders can be a bottleneck preventing the flow of information



COLLABORATING

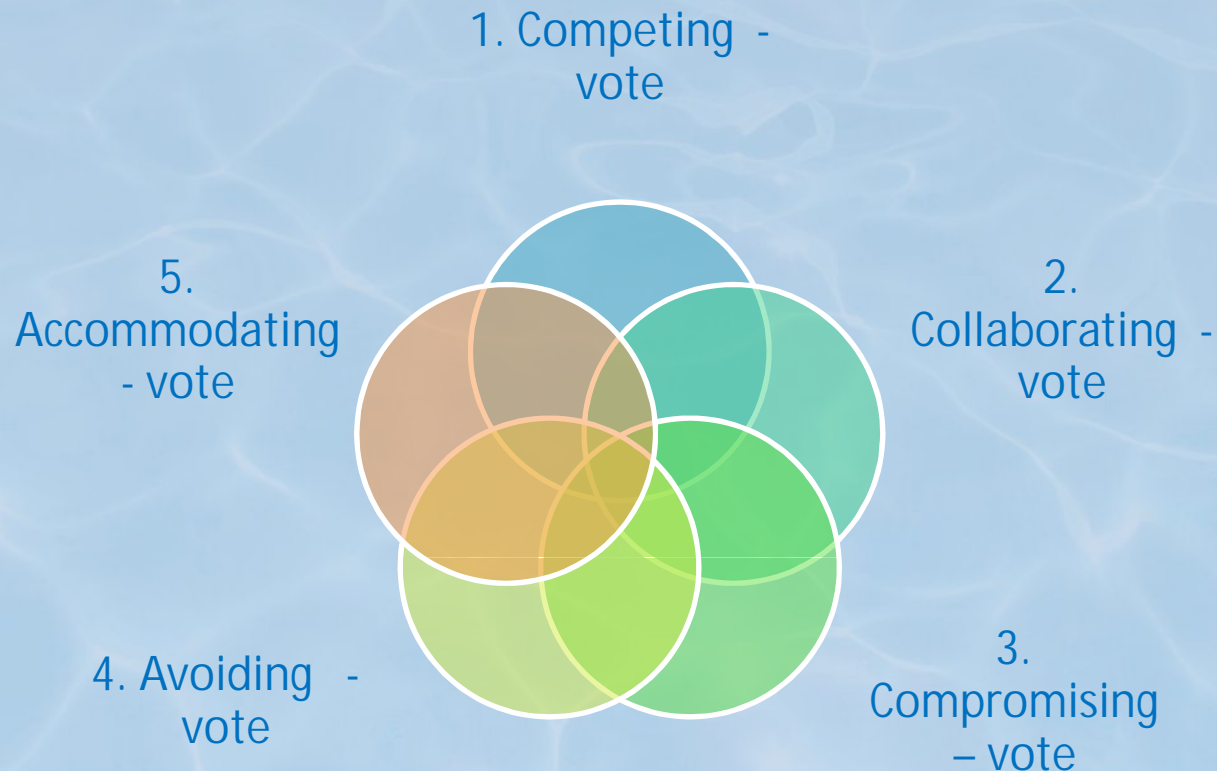
- Strongly predisposed toward
 - Enjoy negotiating because they enjoy problem solving in engaged, interactive ways
 - Dislike bargaining process; prefer to have problems clearly specified before the negotiation & to stick to their bargaining plan as to not do so detracts from the team work aspect
 - May unknowingly transform simple situations into more complex (and interesting) transactions
 - Can be at risk with a highly competitive counterpart. Why?



COMPETING

- Strongly oriented toward
 - Like to negotiate because they see it as a chance to win
 - They are at their best when stakes are high, time is limited, & bluffing is possible
 - Have excellent instincts about leverage, deadlines, openings, final offers, ultimata
 - Hard on relationships
 - Focus on issues easiest to count in terms of winning & losing-like \$, and overlook other issues

What do you think your style is ?



General population profile of City Managers



Additional Data points

Women

- Top preferred styles
 - Collaborating
 - Compromising

Men

- Top preferred styles
 - Collaborating
 - Competing

Conflict behavior by organizational level

Executive (note: top exs – competing is stronger)

Collaborating

Comprising

Supervisor

Comprising

Avoiding

Entry Level Staff

Accommodating

Avoiding

Conflict resolution requires special interpersonal skills which can be built

- Must build new ideas around the relationship very quickly
- Participants are always in emotionally charged situation by the time formal conflict occurs

Being able to “read” emotions and give appropriate responses in stressful situations is a key to success

If you seriously want to resolve a conflict

Define the problem in behaviorally specific terms. Your anger (frustration, irritation, hurt feelings, etc.) is not the real problem. Carefully examine the situation and identify a non-accusatory, objective description of it.

Deliver the invitation to meet. Resist the urge to get drawn-in to a conversation on-the-spot. You want to schedule a time for a conversation.

Decide on a time and place for a discussion. For a serious conflict .Set aside 2 hours for an uninterrupted conversation. It may not take the full 2 hours and remember fatigue

Our natural response tends to create two behaviors that short-circuit effective conflict conversations

What is yours? Fight/flight ?

- “Fight” response often leads to the “power-play” approach - raised voice, aggressive body language, and emotional outbursts. Power-plays usually lead to hurt feelings and damaged relationships.
- “Flight” response often leads to the “walk-away” approach - withdrawal, leaving the room, and avoidance. Walk-aways leave conflict unresolved and issues unaddressed.

Key skills to develop for 'better conflict'

- PACE

- Go both at your own pace and that of the other person
- Deep conflict take time to build and break down



- PAUSE

- Pause often to take break this is called emotional labor this type of interpersonal work
- It is very hard on human and needs a lot of rest points

Key components in resolving conflict

- Great listening skills
- Flexibility
- Willingness to change
- Agree to disagree



Listening skills

- Maintain eye contact
- Do not interrupt - let them finish
- Good posture - maintain a non-threatening position
- Mentally rehearse situations you might become emotional in so you can manage yourself and stay calm

Flexibility

- Be able to adjust to any situation
- Do not try to handle the situation alone - use your partner(s) at work and home – work as a team at time (mom and dad) but be careful not to gang up
- Understand you are not going to please everyone - agree to disagree - this is a two way street

Willingness to change

- If change is necessary - make the change on your part first it builds credibility
- Support your conflict partner(s) - you are a team if resolution is a goal

Discuss the problem and how you will resolve it.

During the
discussion:

- Resist the urge to leave too soon (walk-away) or to push too hard (power-play). Encourage the other party to do the same.

Notice and
comment

- on anything positive the other person says. For example, make sure you verbally recognize when they: acknowledge your perspective, apologize for their actions, or take responsibility for their contribution.

Stick with it

- until you both agree on a course of action. You do not have to agree on every individual point, and you do not need to reach the point of liking each other. You just need an action plan for moving forward.

Document your action plan.

In many cases, both of you may want to sign and keep a copy of your agreement both at home and work .

- To many people, this step seems overly formal. I completely understand this feeling.
- However, writing the agreement down helps to clarify everyone's understanding, to cement it in everyone's memory, and to minimize misunderstandings later.
- With children especially this is helpful

So what are you going to do
differently after this ?

- Flip chart comments

Remember as you go out there

“Some problems are so complex that you have to be highly intelligent and well informed just to be undecided about them.”

Laurence J. Peter (Peter's Almanac, entry for 24 September 1982)

Questions and Answers



Claire R Baldwin, DPS

- Thank you and remember
 - “Pace and pause “
- Baldwinrcr @cdm.com