What Conflict Resolution Style Are You?

We each have our own way of dealing with conflict. The techniques we use are based on many variables such as our basic underlying temperament, our personality, our environment and where we are in our professional career. However, by and large there are five major styles of conflict management techniques in our toolbox. In order to address conflict, we draw from a collaborating, competing, avoiding, accommodating or compromising style of management. None of these strategies is superior in and of itself. How effective they are depends on the context in which they are used.

Each statement below provides a strategy for dealing with a conflict. Rate each statement on a scale from 1 to 5 indicating how likely you are to use this strategy.

Ratings: 1 = never; 2 = seldom; 3 = sometimes; 4 = often; 5 = always

Be sure to answer the questions indicating how you would behave rather than how you think you should behave.

Questions:
1. I avoid being “put on the spot”; I keep conflicts to myself. _____
2. I use my influence to get my ideas accepted. _____
3. I usually try to “split the difference” to resolve an issue. _____
4. I generally try to satisfy other’s needs. _____
5. I try to investigate an issue to find a suitable solution. _____
6. I usually avoid open discussion of my differences with the other. _____
7. I use my authority to make a decision in my favour. _____
8. I try to find a middle course to resolve an impasse. _____
9. I usually accommodate the other’s wishes. _____
10. I try to integrate my ideas with the other’s to come up with a decision jointly. _____
11. I try to stay away from disagreement with the other. _____
12. I use my expertise to make a decision that favours me. _____
13. I propose a middle ground for breaking deadlocks. _____
14. I give in to other’s wishes. _____
15. I try to work with the other to try and find solution that satisfy both our expectations. _____
16. I try to keep my disagreement to myself in order to avoid hard feelings. _____
17. I generally pursue my side of an issue. _____
18. I negotiate with the other to reach a compromise. _____
19. I often go with the other’s suggestion. _____
20. I exchange accurate information with the other so we can resolve a problem together. _____

21. I try to avoid unpleasant exchanges with the other. _____

22. I sometimes use my power to win. _____

23. I use “give and take” so that a compromise can be made. _____

24. I try to satisfy the other’s expectations. _____

25. I try to bring all our concerns out in the open so that the issue can be resolved. _____

Scoring
As stated, the 25 statements correspond to the five conflict resolution styles. To find your most preferred style, total the points in the respective categories. The one with the highest score indicates your most commonly used strategy. The one with the lowest score indicates your least preferred strategy. However, if you are a leader who must deal with conflict on a regular basis, you may find your style to be a blend of styles.

Points: 25-21 = very strong; 20-16 = strong; 15-11 = average; 10-6 = weak; 5-1 = very weak

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