



Five Modes of Handling Conflict and Considerations for Situational Use

Avoiding

- Does not immediately pursue own concerns or those of the other person
- This might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation

Accommodating

- The opposite of competing
- An element of self-sacrifice
- Neglects own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person
- May take form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another's order when you prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view
- Might mean standing up for your rights, defending a position you believe is correct, or simply trying to win

Competing

- Power-oriented
- Uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one's own position
- May pursue own concerns at other person's expense

Compromising

- Objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties
- Falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating
- Might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a middle ground position

Collaborating

- Attempts to work with other person to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both parties
- Involves digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns and trying to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns
- Might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other, resolving something that might otherwise have had them competing for resources, or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem

Approach	Characteristics	Examples of Appropriate Use
Avoiding	You don't want to deal with conflict so you stall or ignore issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When one or more parties need time to calm down or consider a situation. • When issues are of low importance.
Accommodating	You forego your concerns, act selflessly, and simply obey orders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are learning a new skill. • The issue is of low importance.
Compromising	You split the difference with the other party to reach a quick agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision is a temporary solution. • The issue is of moderate importance.
Competing	You want to get your way no matter how it affects the other party.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securing a contract with a new customer (competing with the other service providers, not the customer). • When a quick decision is needed.
Collaborating	You are concerned with fully satisfying both sides. You work long and hard to find a solution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When integrating long term solutions. • When gaining commitment.

When to Apply a Different Style?

Style vs: Situation

