

Conflict Management: A DiSC[®]-Based Approach

This Sample Participant Workbook contains selected portions of an Individualized Participant Workbook. An Individualized Participant Workbook is generated from EPIC after the respondent completes the questions of the corresponding learning model.



Prepared exclusively for:

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Module 1: Introduction to Your Tendencies in Conflict

Goals

- Discover your own natural tendencies in conflict.
- Understand how others' tendencies differ from yours.

Conflict occurs when two or more people are in a disagreement or struggle about something. What if we could create environments where conflict doesn't linger, people feel understood, and good decisions get made?

Notes:

Session Goals and Process

Session Goals

Our goal is to help people move productively through conflict so that everyone can contribute and spend their energy doing things that matter.

In this way

- Conflict doesn't linger
- People feel better understood
- Good decisions get made



My own goals for the session:

Session Process

The DiSC[®] Learning Model will inform each step of today's process. We will

- **Explore** four different approaches to conflict and understand how our natural styles influence those approaches.
- **Discover** the importance of finding common goals in conflict situations.
- **Learn** how to share all perspectives in a productive way.
- **Explore** ways to improve our ability to generate solutions.
- **Discover** how a balanced approach can lead to better decisions that satisfy the needs of all involved.



Defining Conflict



There are many different ways to look at conflict. But for today, we'll define conflict as when

- Two or more people are in a disagreement or struggle about something

- There are strong emotions involved, such as
 - anxiety
 - resentment
 - frustration
 - anger
 - hurt feelings

What does conflict look like? What are some of the actions or behaviors we see that alert us to conflict?

Conflict Approach Cards

Activity Instructions:

- You have three cards that describe **approaches to conflict**.
- Select the **one** card that is **least** like you when you are in conflict with someone else. Place it **face-down** in front of you.
- **Trade** with others until you have two cards that more accurately describe you when in conflict with others.
- Between the two cards you now have, select the card that least describes you and place it on your table, this time **face-up**. Turn over your other card as well.
- Keep your remaining card and **find** one more card that accurately describes you among the discarded cards.
- **Write** down your final two Conflict Approach cards below.



Conflict Approach Statement

Color

1. _____

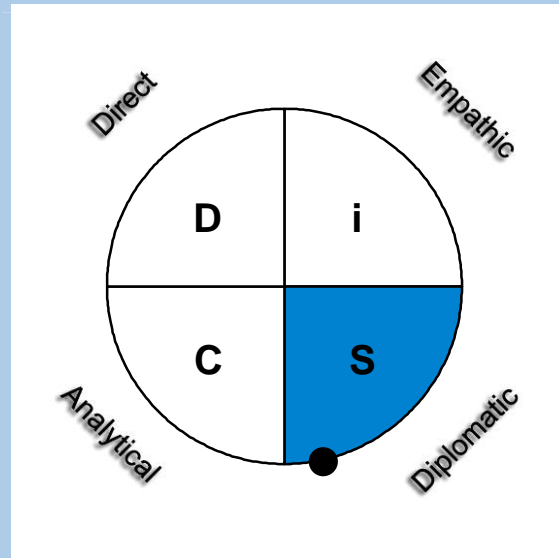
2. _____

Your DiSC[®] Conflict Approach

Read the information below about your DiSC[®] Conflict Approach. Personalize your feedback by putting a ✓ checkmark next to things that are like you, an X next to items that are not like you, and a ? question mark next to things you aren't sure about.



As the dot on the circle to the right shows, you tend most strongly toward the **S** or **Steadiness** DiSC style, which suggests that you take a fairly **Diplomatic Approach** to conflict. In addition, however, you have some leaning toward the **C** or **Conscientiousness** style, which means that the **Analytical Approach** to conflict is also very natural for you. Like other people with a high-S style, you are likely patient and calm. When a conflict arises, therefore, you usually play the peacemaker and try to resolve the issues quickly. And because you have some high-C tendencies, you may also be uncomfortable with emotionally heated conflict, so you may be willing to give people space if you think it will help the situation cool off. Therefore, you may avoid conflict or work to minimize its effects.



Your Strengths in Conflict

Your Diplomatic Approach to conflict probably means that you consider everyone's interests and look for common ground, even when people seem far apart. This can be a great benefit when a steady, calm presence is needed to find a compromise that appeases everyone. In addition, you likely are tactful and measured in your responses, even under the pressure of conflict, and this can help soothe tensions and reduce stress. Furthermore, your Analytical Approach to conflict means that you probably focus on logical solutions and avoid emotional pleas or personal attacks, which can also help to keep problems from multiplying. In essence, you tend to look for rational solutions that please everyone, and you generally are not concerned with being the winner of an argument.

Your Challenges in Conflict

The Diplomatic Approach can also be overused in conflict situations. If you strive for harmony at all costs, you could accept poor solutions in your desire to rapidly end conflict. In a similar way, if you give in too easily, people may believe that you support certain ideas when, in fact, you are unhappy about the proposals, leading to resentment all around. Furthermore, your tendency toward the Analytical Approach means that you may emphasize facts and data, while neglecting the emotional aspects of a solution. In addition, you may remove yourself completely from the situation if it becomes too heated. This may cause the conflict to remain unresolved, or if a resolution is reached, it may not include your perspective or buy-in.

Listen Without Interruption

When we listen without interruption, we give others our full attention, allowing them to share their perspectives completely.

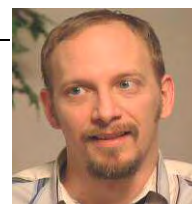
By listening in this way, we

- Show respect
- Are less likely to escalate the conflict by frustrating the speaker
- Collect more complete information
- Model behavior we hope to have reciprocated when it is our turn to speak.



As you watch the video, use the questions below to take notes on what you see.

Why do you think Jim kept interrupting?



Jim

How did it make Marvette feel when Jim interrupted her a number of times?



Marvette

What was the result?

Avoid Exaggeration

People are often tempted to embellish facts to make their situation appear extreme, often using statements like

- “You always do that”
- “You never listen to me”

When we exaggerate we

- Risk pulling attention away from the real issues
- Tend to put others on the defensive
- Make it more difficult to progress toward a resolution



As you watch the video, use the questions below to take notes on what you see.

How did Sonja exaggerate the situation?



Sonja

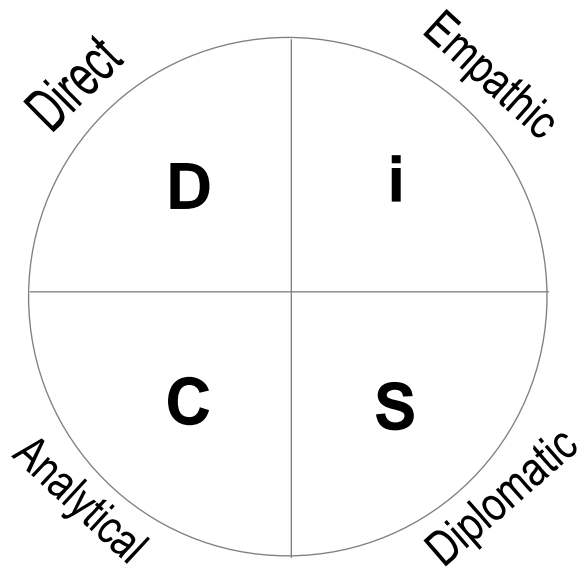
How did it make Emil feel?



Emil

What was the result?

Using a Balanced Approach



All four DiSC[®] conflict approaches — Direct, Empathic, Diplomatic, and Analytical — are important when working toward resolution because they each bring unique perspectives.

- The **Direct** Approach is **candid** and **straightforward**.
- The **Empathic** Approach is **reassuring** and **expressive**.
- The **Diplomatic** Approach is **tactful** and **flexible**.
- The **Analytical** Approach is **objective** and **reflective**.

Agreements and solutions rarely happen unless each person involved finds a way to balance all four approaches.

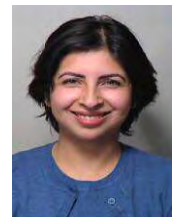
As you watch the video segment, use the questions below to note how **Emil** and **Aditi** work toward a resolution.



Emil

What did you see that showed the Direct Approach?

What did you see that showed the Empathic Approach?



Aditi

What did you see that showed the Diplomatic Approach?

What did you see that showed the Analytical Approach?

Action Plan

Create an action plan for improving your ability in one of your challenge areas.

My challenge area: _____

- Use the Conflict Resolution Guide, your individualized feedback, and your insights from today's session to guide you.
- Consider the questions below to help you create your plan.

What will you do to improve your skill in this area?

Who or what are your resources?

How and when can you practice?

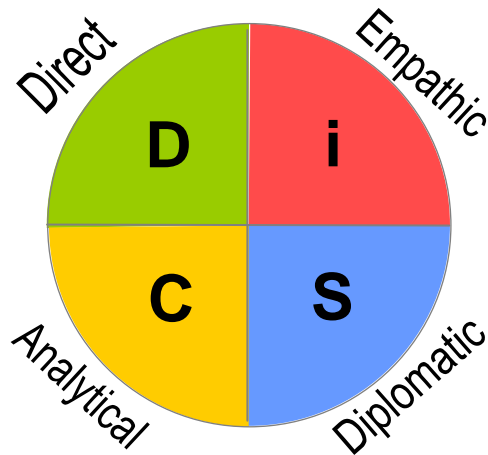
Who can support or mentor you?

What will be the timing for implementing this plan?

Review

Program Goal:

Learn how to move productively through conflict so that everyone can spend more energy on things that really matter.



- There are **four unique approaches** to conflict:
 - **Direct Approach:** candid, acknowledges tough issues, up front and asks others to be the same.
 - **Empathic Approach:** Reassures, acknowledges emotions, expresses feelings, shows empathy.
 - **Diplomatic Approach:** finds compromises, looks out for feelings, tactful and flexible.
 - **Analytical Approach:** Gives people enough space, fact-focused, determines the root of the problem, thorough.
- Our DiSC® styles influence which approaches seem most natural.
- We are capable of **using all four conflict approaches**.

DiSC-Based Conflict Management

Identify common goals

Stepping back to identify common goals provides a solid starting point for resolving conflict.

Share perspectives

Acknowledging all sides of the issue helps to prevent misunderstandings and buried resentments.

Generate potential solutions

Being solution focused allows for brainstorming that is not limited by current ways of thinking.

Balance all conflict approaches when seeking resolutions

All approaches have value in the conflict-resolution process. Our natural approach affects our ability to successfully move through these conflict-management stages.

Our Challenge:

Recognize when other approaches are needed.

Stretch ourselves to adapt to these needs.