

Negotiating Conflict



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HELLO!

I am **Karen Maher**

I am an experienced HR consultant and workforce development specialist originally from the North East of England.

I specialise in coaching, mentoring, mediation and training delivery. I deliver QQI accredited courses including People Management, Supervisory Management and Medical Secretaries

I am qualified to administer and deliver psychometric tests including EQi2 (Emotional Intelligence) and MBTI (Personality Types).



OVERVIEW

- Understanding Conflict
- Key negotiation skills when managing conflict
- Managing Conflict style
- Resolution

What is conflict?

Write down **four words** that
come to mind when you hear
the word

CONFLICT



Conflict is inevitable



- Where ever you have people there is potential for conflict. Conflict is inevitable.
- It is created by the differences that arise in any situation where people are required to interact with one another
- Many people go to great lengths to avoid it and sometimes even deny its existence to create an easier life.

What are the signs?



A LACK OF MOTIVATION



BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES



A DROP IN PRODUCTIVITY



INCREASED ABSENCE



What are the causes?

- Changes in the workplace
- Poor people management
- Inadequate training
- Poor working environment
- High stress levels
- Lack of communication
- Equality based issues
- Unresolved problems from the past
- Increased workload



Natural responses to conflict

When things are going well people express themselves confidently using their natural skills & abilities.

In conflict situations rational thinking usually disappears and people react in emotional ways. It can escalate from feeling uncomfortable with the situation to feeling pressured and ultimately stressed.

Sometime this can “ignite” and prepare people for a fight, flight or freeze response.

Fight Flight and Freeze

How do you respond to conflict?

FIGHT

You react in a challenging way. This might mean shouting or losing your temper

FLIGHT

You turn your back on what is going on and usually walk away or find something else to do to distance yourself from the situation. This is a common reaction – ignoring a problem hoping it will go away on its own accord.

FREEZE

You are not sure how to react and become very passive. You might begin to deal with the issues but things drift and become drawn out because of indecision



Types of Conflict

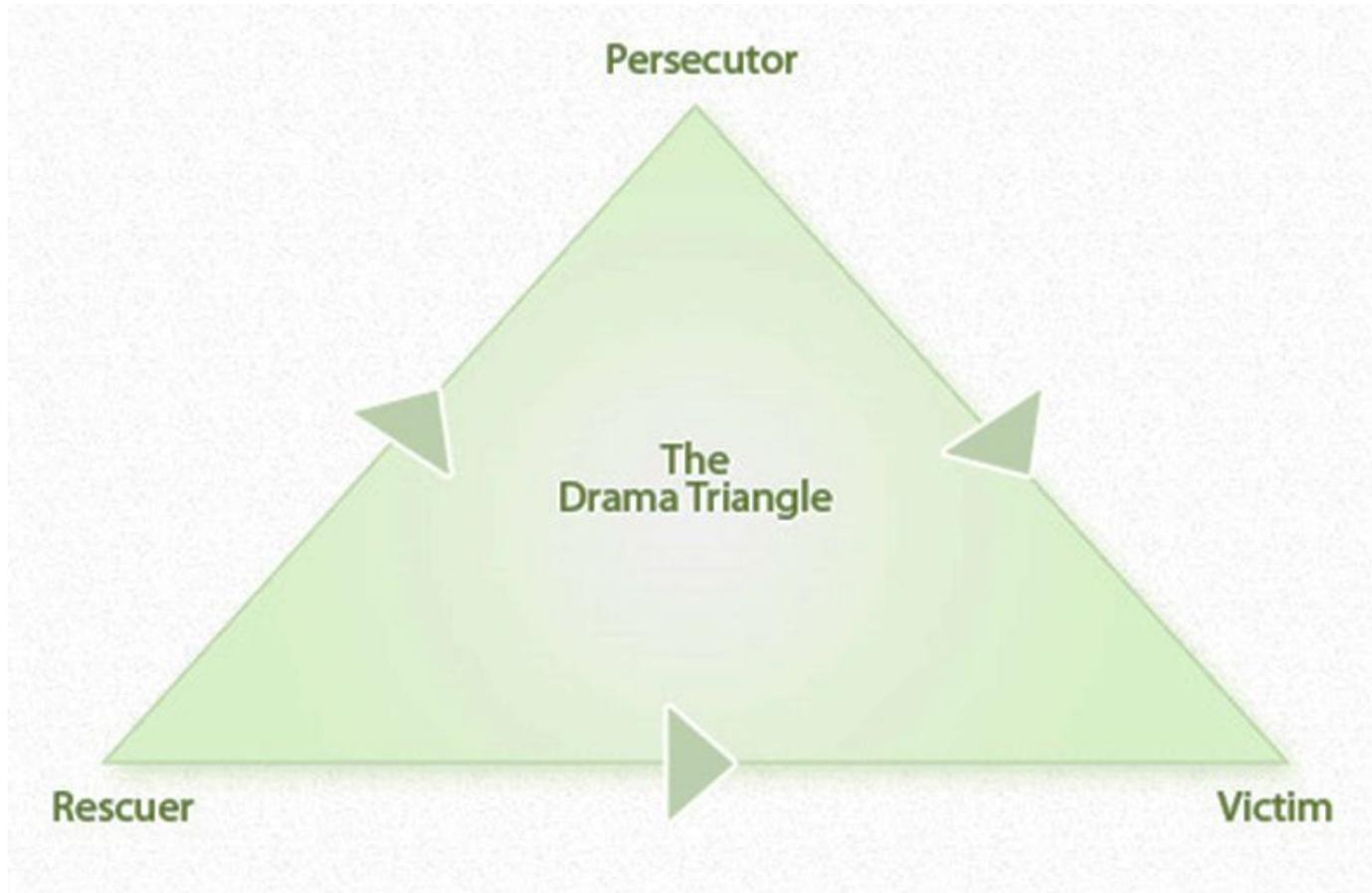
- **Intrapersonal**
thoughts, emotions
- **Interpersonal**
manager v staff, husband v wife, partner v partner
- **Intragroup**
teams, families, committees
- **Intergroup**
union v management, communities v government agencies

Negotiation Skills and Attributes

- Self control
- Fair and balanced
- Considering other people's point of view
- Patient
- Empathy
- Active Listening
- Incisive Questions
- Maintaining relationships
- Planning your approach



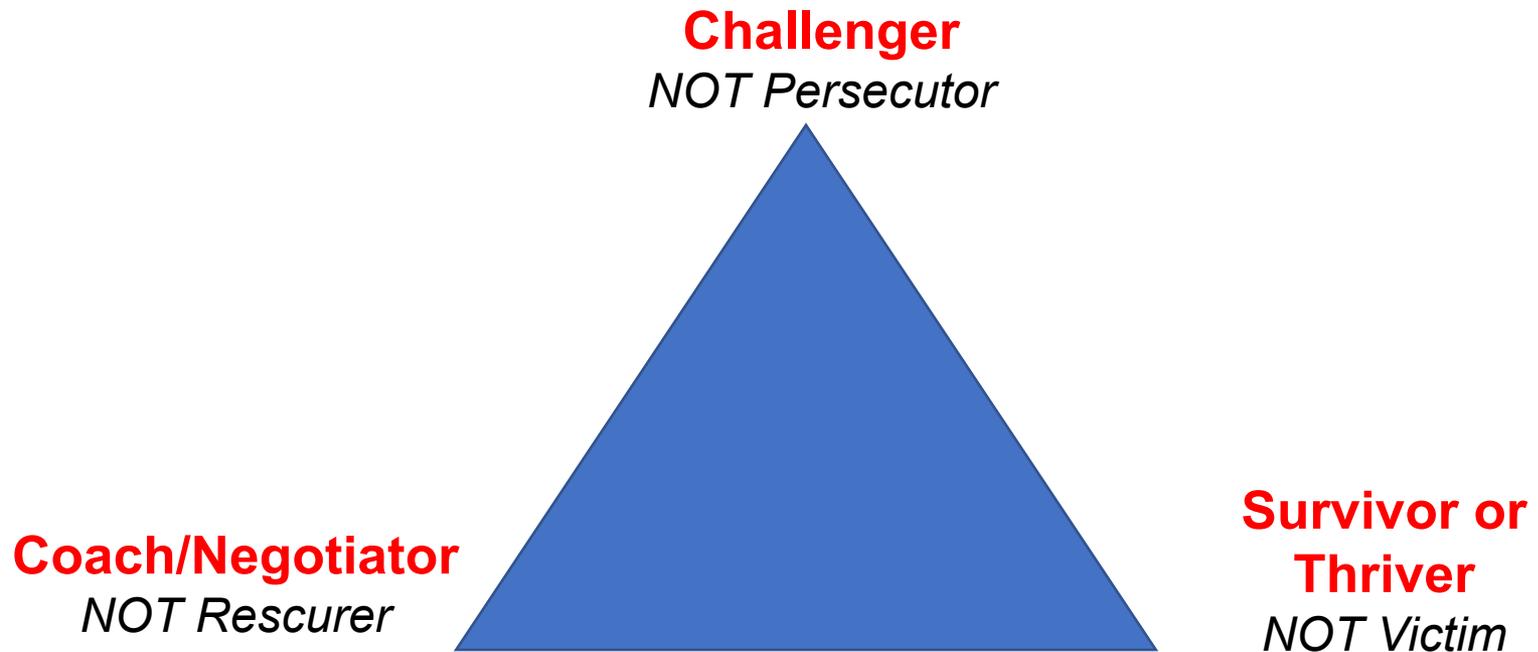
A Common Situation - The Drama Triangle



What's happening here?

- (John) I am so unhappy at work. I had another argument with Bob today. I just feel that it's never going to work out.
- (Mary) Why don't you speak to your supervisor? He could help.
- Yeah, but it's not his problem, is it?
- OK, well you could try.
- Yeah, you can see me doing that...he's one of the problems.
- How about writing to the MD? I'm sure he'd like to know what's going on in the workplace.
- You don't get it, do you? If I did that, my supervisor would make my life a misery.
- Well, why the hell are you talking to me about it then? You're obviously not in the slightest bit interested in actually solving the issue. You just want me to make all the concessions. You're always moaning.
- You just don't pull your weight around here. You've never worked in all our years together. I don't know why I even bother talking to you about my problems.
- That's not my fault. You know how difficult things have been for me since my mother died.
- Sorry, I didn't mean to upset you... let's...
- Oh go to hell. I cannot stand the way you always criticise me.

How to avoid the drama triangle





Using Your Negotiation Skills

What skills would be of use in such a situation?

What's your Style?

How do **you** manage differences?



Understanding Conflict

HIGH

ASSERTIVENESS

LOW



LOW

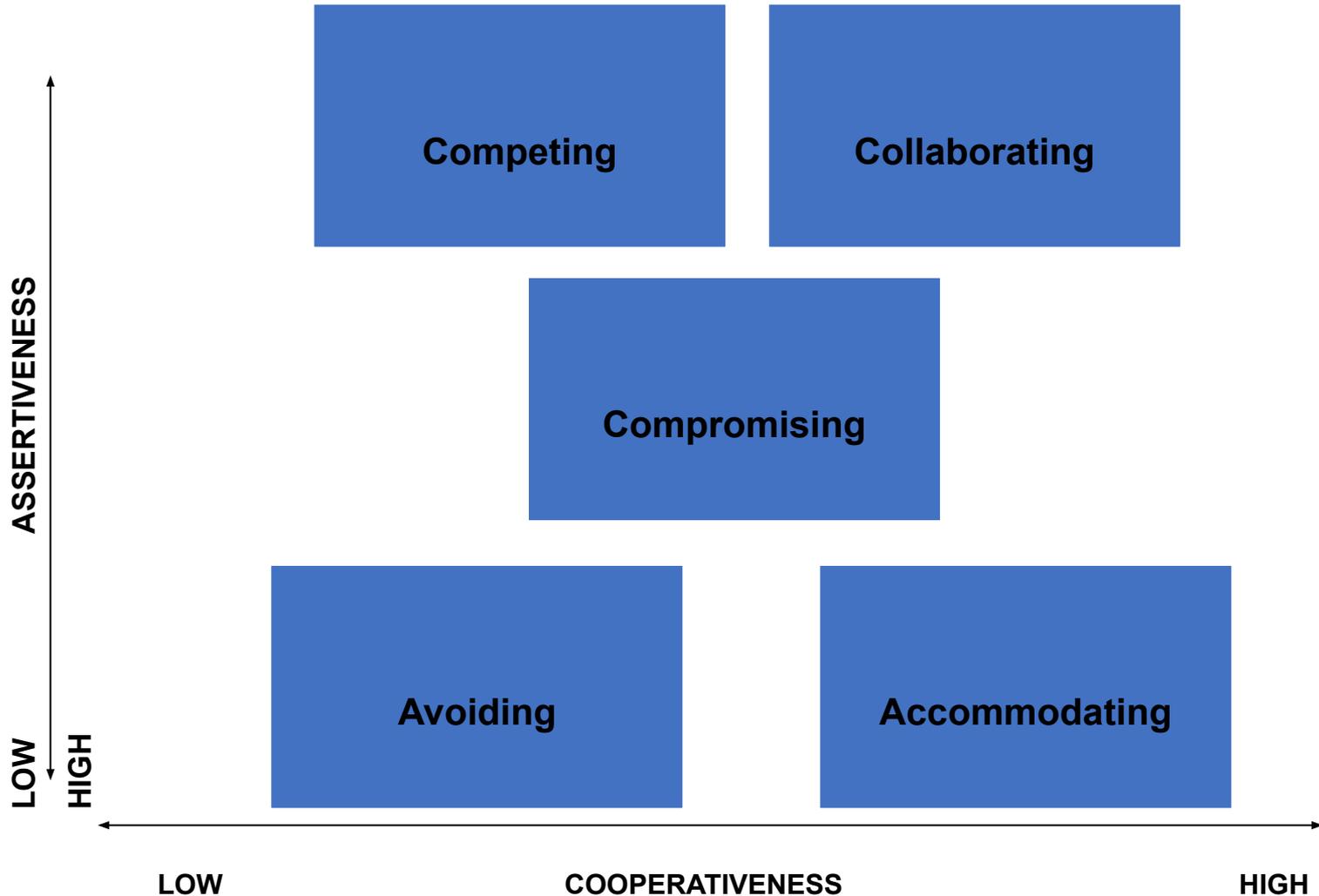
COOPERATIVENESS

HIGH

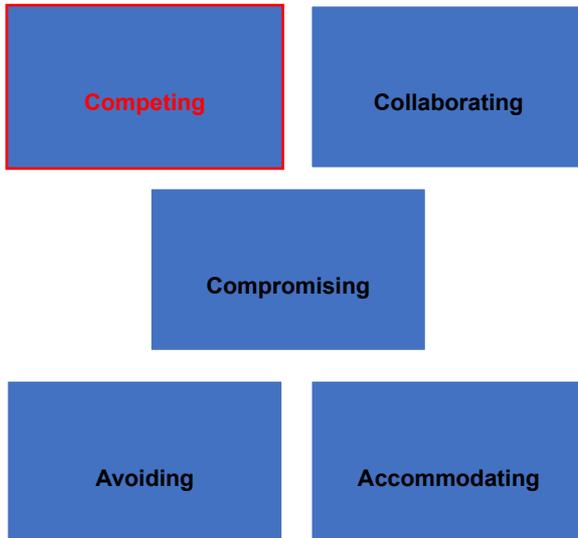
Two basic aspects of ALL conflict handling styles

Your conflict style = SKILL + SITUATION

Thomas/Kilman Conflict Modes



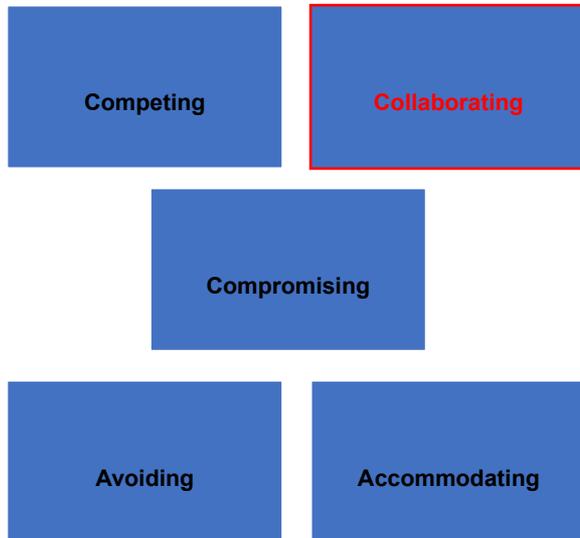
Competing – *'My way or the highway'*



Proceed with caution

- When quick, decisive action is required
- When unpopular decisions are needed
- When you are under attack
- When consensus fails
- When people are too considerate
- When you know you're right

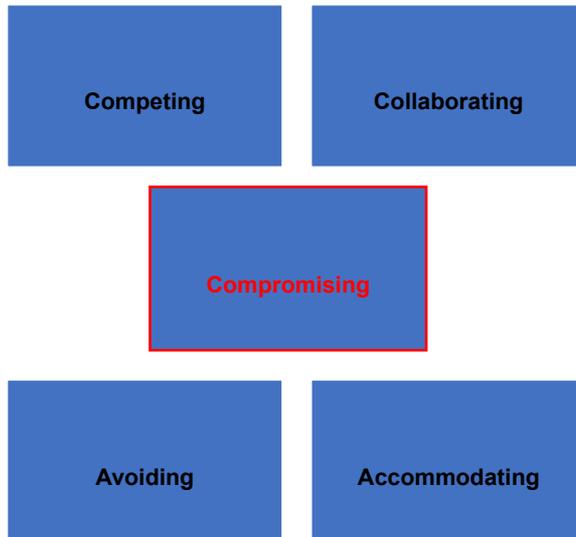
Collaborating – *‘Two heads are better than one’*



For important issues

- Reconciling interests through win-win solutions
- Learning and merging insights for richer understanding
- When organisation needs commitment to a decision

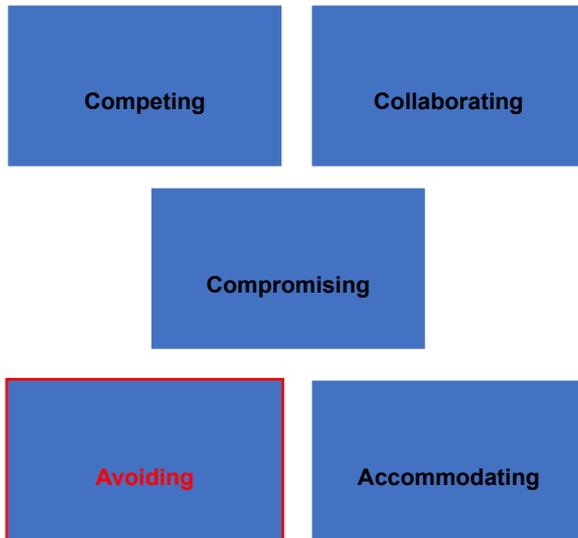
Compromise – *‘Let’s meet half way’*



Pragmatic

- Resolve issues less important, but not vital
- Taking turns bearing small costs
- Back-up when competing or collaborating are not practical

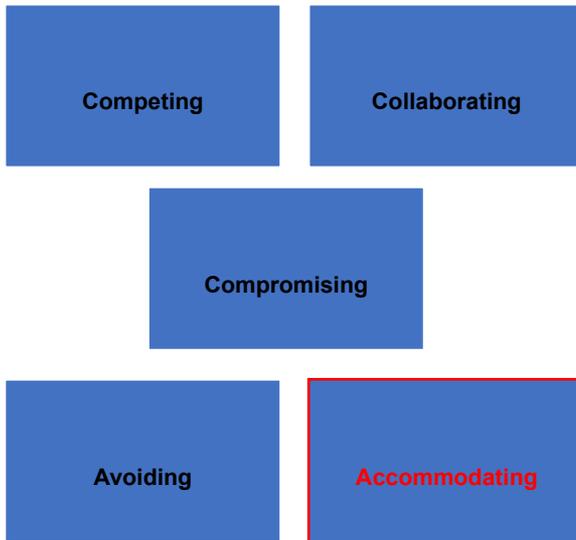
Avoiding – *'I'll think about it later'*



Try not to avoid people

- Avoid issues where little can be gained
- Know when to postpone an issue
- Avoid emotional conflicts
- Know your limitations
- Allow others ownership

Accommodating – *'It will be my pleasure'*



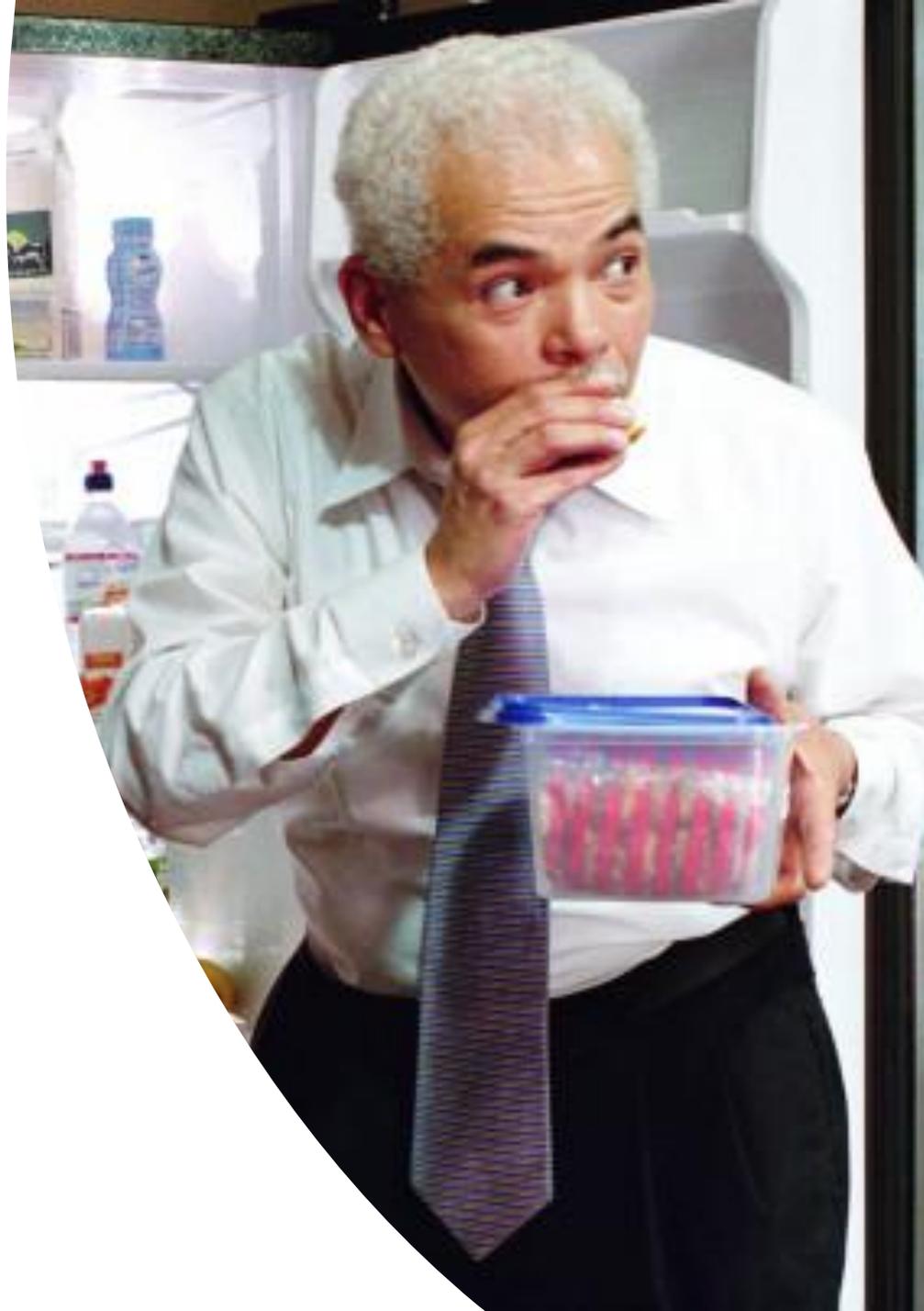
Don't be a serial appeaser

- Yield to a better position
- Concede when you are overruled or losing
- Make a small sacrifice when it's important to others
- Accommodate to clean up hard feelings

Case Study

A co-worker takes your lunch from the workplace refrigerator and finishes eating it just as you come into the break area.

What style might you adopt in this situation?

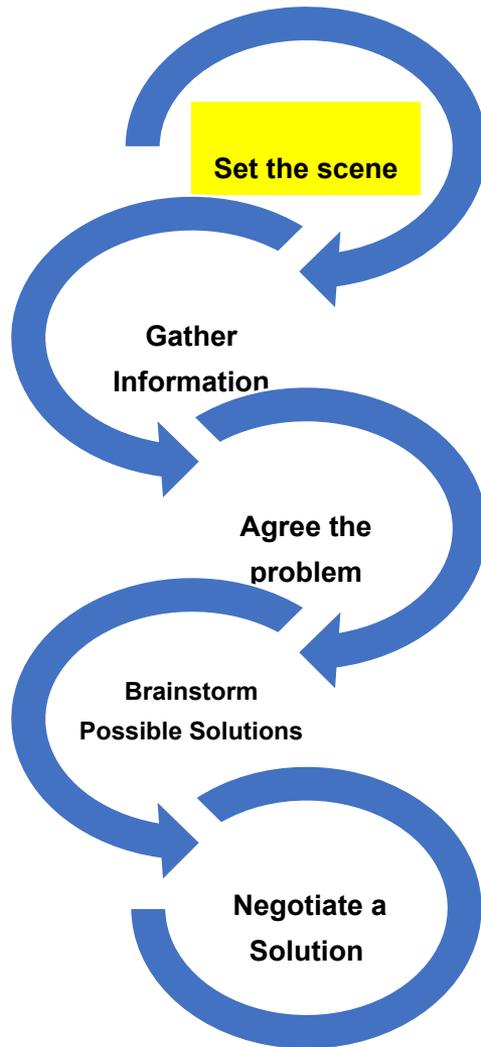




Problem solving approach

- Acknowledge a difficult situation exists
- Let individuals express their feelings
- Define the problem
- Determine the underlying need
- Find common areas of agreement – no matter how small
- Find solutions to satisfy needs
- Follow up activities to monitor agreed actions
- What happens next if conflict goes unresolved

Resolving Conflict

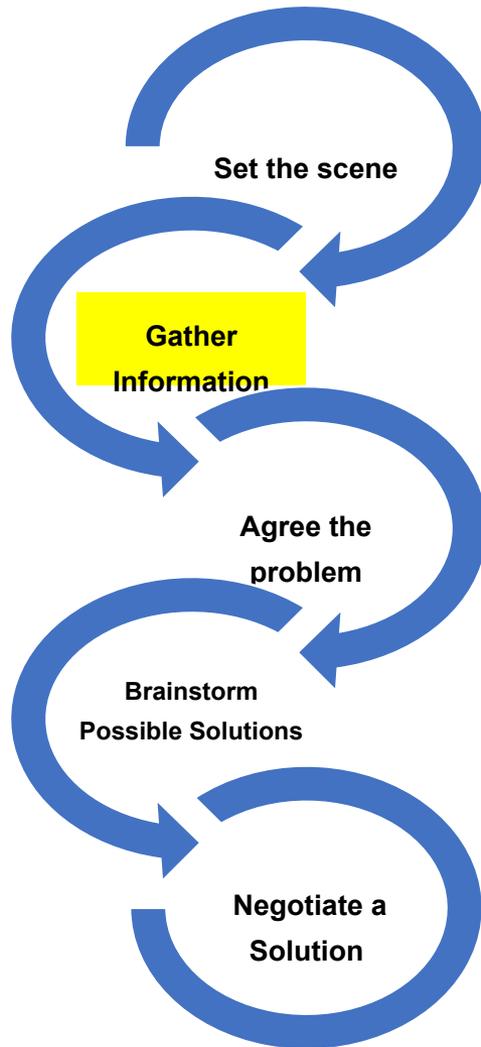


Make sure that those involved understand that the conflict may be a mutual problem and it is best resolved through discussion and negotiation rather than arguments and aggression. **Good relationships should be the first priority.**

Emphasise the fact that you are presenting **your perception of the problem**

Use **active listening skills** to hear and understand the position and perceptions of others

Resolving Conflict



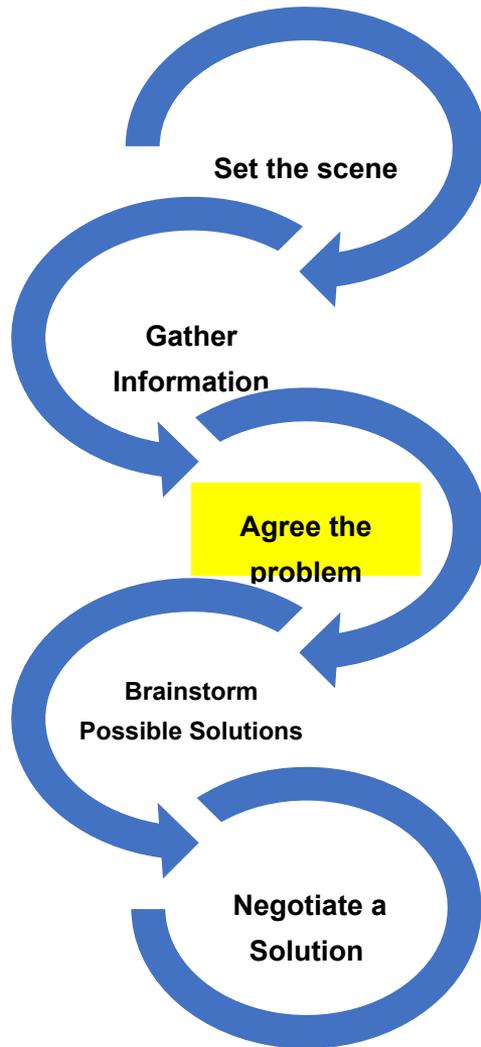
In this stage you are trying to **discover the underlying interests needs and concerns** of those involved. Ask the other person for their views and confirm that **you respect their opinion** and need their cooperation to solve the problem

Pay attention to the interests that are being presented

Listen with **empathy**

Identify issues clearly and concisely

Resolving Conflict

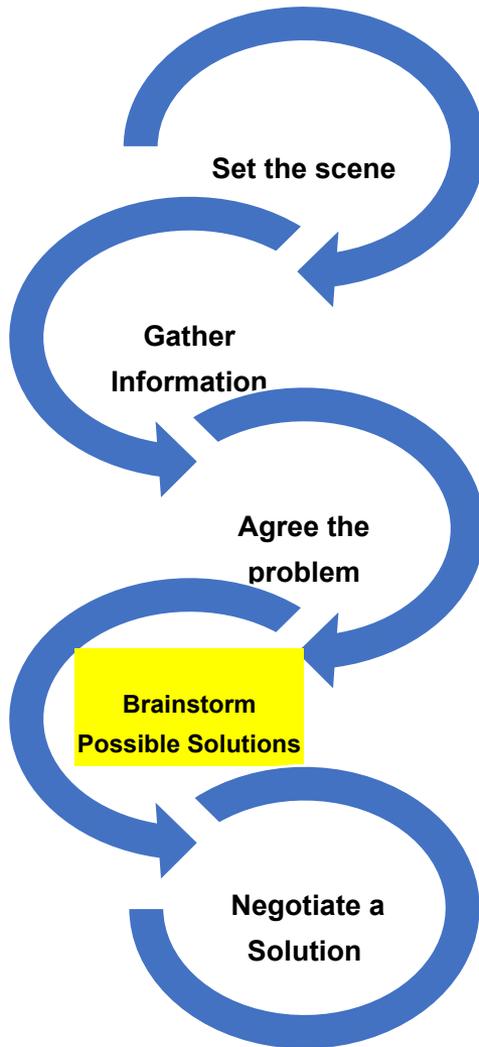


Sounds obvious but often different underlying needs and interests can cause people to perceive problems very differently

You need to agree what the problem is before a mutually agreed solution can be reached

Try to understand what the other person sees as the problem

Resolving Conflict

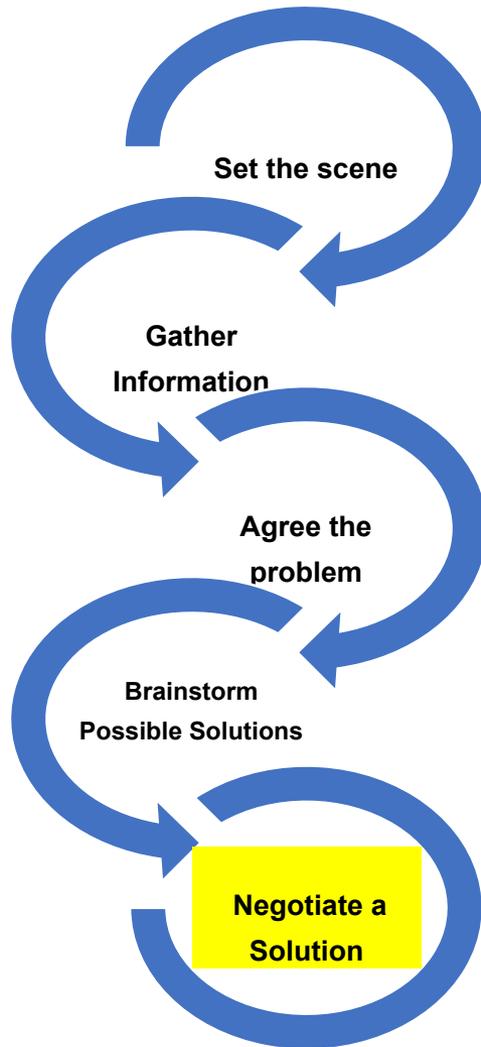


In order for everyone involved to feel satisfied with the resolution **everyone needs to have had a fair input** into helping to generate the solution

Be open to the idea **that a third position may exist** and you can arrive at this conclusion jointly

Be open to ideas

Resolving Conflict



By this stage you may find that the conflict may have been resolved

Find common areas of agreement no matter how small

Find solutions to satisfy needs

Compromise involves **an element of trading**

Compromising behaviours usually leads to

workable if not ideal solutions

Compromise is the best outcome when the needs of the parties concerned are very different

Cooperation leads to **greater insight into issues**



Guiding Principles

BE CALM

BE PATIENT

BE RESPECTFUL

Take a **positive approach** to conflict resolution. As long as people listen carefully and explore facts, issues and possible solutions, conflict can often be resolved effectively.

Case Study

Arthur & Bernadette are members of the finance committee. At a meeting to determine each department's allocation disagreement begins. "My department needs this amount in order to achieve our goals".

Arthur presents his data and puts forward his case convincingly. Then he cites the inefficiencies of other departments, including Bernadette's and goes on to say that they would not use the funds efficiently. Bernadette becomes very defensive.

"My department can't survive without that allocation!" she protests but she can see that the committee members are beginning to favour Arthur's request.

She finally withdraws into a stubborn silence and doesn't even raise her hand when the committee vote on the decision. Throughout the rest of the meeting she glares at Arthur and spends the remaining time in the meeting trying to decide how she can get her revenge!





Dealing with Conflict

- The best way to avoid conflicts is to be **prepared** and take all factors into consideration.
- If anger and conflict arise, **move back to your agenda** by questioning people to determine the cause of the conflict.
- **Develop questions to get people to clearly state their problems and issues.** By doing this, you'll guide people back to rational thinking, focus group energy, and encourage learning and problem solving.

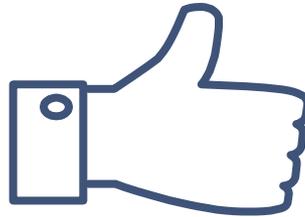
Summary & Recap

Q&A



**GOOD BYE &
GOOD LUCK!**





THANKS!

Any questions?

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LEARNING
EXPERTS