THOMAS KILMAN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

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INSTRUCTIONS

Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person. How do you usually respond to such situations?

On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is mot characteristic of your own behavior.

In many cases, neither the "A" nor the "B" statement may be very typical of your behavior, but please select the response which you would be more likely to use.

1. A There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
   B Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress the things upon which we both agree.

2. A I try to find a compromise situation.
   B I attempt to deal with all of his and my concerns.

3. A I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.

4. A I try to find a compromise solution.
   B I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.

5. A I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
   B I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

6. A I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
   B I try to win my position.

7. A I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
   B I give up some points in exchange for others.

8. A I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
   B I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out I the open.

9. A I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
   B I make some effort to get my way.

10. A I am firm in pursuing my goals.
    B I try to find a compromise solution.

11. A I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
    B I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.

12. A I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.
    B I will let him have some of his positions if he lets me have some of mine.

13. A I propose a middle ground.
    B I press to get my points made.

14. A I tell him my ideas and ask him for his.
    B I try to show him the logic and benefits of my position.

15. A I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
    B I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.

16. A I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
    B I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.

17. A I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B I will let him have some of his positions if he lets me have some of mine.

18. A If it makes the other person happy, I might let him maintain his views.
B I will let him have some of his positions if he lets me have some of mine.

19. A I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
B I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.

20. A I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
B I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for

21 A In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
B I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.

22. A I try to find a position that is intermediate between his and mine.
B I assert my wishes.

23. A I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
B There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.

24. A If the other's position seems very important to him, I would try to meet his wishes.
B I try to get him to settle for a compromise.

25. A I try to show him the logic and benefits of my position.
B In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.

26. A I propose a middle ground.
B I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.

27. A I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.
B If it makes the other person happy, I might let him maintain his views.

28. A I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
B I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.

29. A I propose a middle ground.
B I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.

30. A I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
B I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

SCORING

Circle the letters below which correspond to the letter your circled on each item of the questionnaire and then total the number of items circled in each column.

	Competing (forcing)	Collaborating (problem solving)	Compromising (sharing)	Avoiding (withdrawal)	Accommodating (soothing)
1.	-	-	-	A	B
2.	-	B	A	-	-
3.	A	-	-	-	B
4.	-	-	A	-	B
5.	-	A	-	B	-
6.	B	-	-	A	-
7.	-	-	B	A	-
8.	A	B	-	-	-
9.	B	-	-	A	-
10.	A	-	B	-	-
11.	-	A	-	-	B
12.	-	-	B	A	-
13.	B	-	A	-	-
14.	B	A	-	-	-
15.	-	-	-	B	A
16.	B	-	-	-	A
17.	A	-	-	B	-
18.	-	-	B	-	A
19.	-	A	-	B	-
20.	-	A	B	-	-
21.	-	B	-	-	A
22.	B	-	A	B	-
23.	-	A	-	B	-
24.	-	-	B	-	A
25.	A	-	-	-	B
26.	-	B	A	-	-
27.	-	-	-	A	B
28.	A	B	-	-	-
29.	-	-	A	B	-
30.	-	B	-	-	A
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating

GRAPHING YOUR PROFILE SCORES

Your profile of scores indicates the repertoire of conflict handling skills which you, as an individual, use in the kinds of conflict situations you face. Your score profile can be graphed on the next page entitled, "Your Scores on the Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument."

The five modes are represented by the five columns labeled "competing," "collaborating," and so on. In the column under each model label is the range of possible scores on that mode - - - from 0 (for every low use) to 12 (for very high use). Circle your own scores on each of the five modes.

Each possible score is graphed in relation to the scores of managers who have already taken the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument. The horizontal lines represent percentiles – the percentage of people who have scored at or below a given number. If you had scored some number above the "80%" line on competing, for example, that would mean that you had scored higher than 80% of the people who have taken the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument – that you were in the top 20% in competition.

The double lines (at the 25^{th} and 75^{th} percentiles) separate the middle 50% of the scores on each mode from the top 25% and the bottom 25%. In general, if your score falls somewhere within the middle 50% on a given mode, you are close to the average in your use of that mode. If your score falls outside that range, then your use of that mode is somewhat higher or lower than most of the people who have taken the instrument. Remember that extreme scores are not necessarily bad, however, since your situation may require high or low use of a given conflict-handling mode.

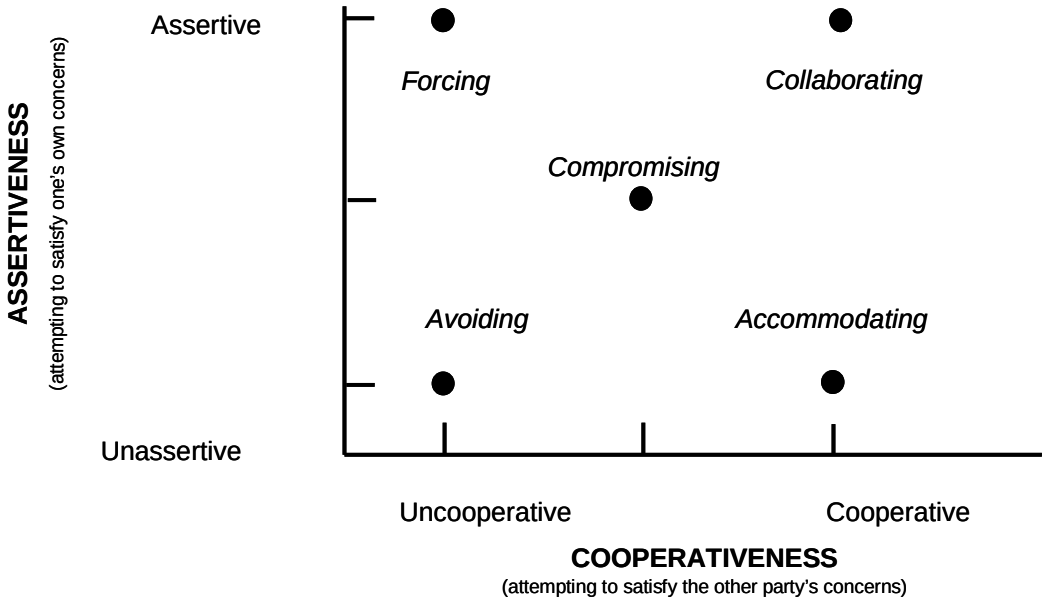
YOUR SCORES ON THE THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

		Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating	
	100% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 100%
		12		12	12	12	
					11	11	
		11	12	11	10	10	
High 25%	90% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 90%
		9	10		8	7	
	80%	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 80%
=====	=====	========	= 9 =	========	======	= 6 =	=====
	70% -	- - 7 - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 70%
	60% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 60%
		6					
			8			5	
				7	6		
Middle 50%	50% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 50%
		5	7				
	40%	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 40%
				6		4	
		4			5		
	30%	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 30%
			6	5			
=====	=====	========	========	========	======	========	=====
		3			4	3	
	20% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 20%
			5	4			
		2			3		
Low 25%	10% -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 10%
			4				
			3	3	2	2	
		1	2	2	1	1	
			1	1	0	0	
		0	0	0			
	0%	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- - - - - -	- - - - - - - -	- 0%

Scores are graphed in relation to the scores of the practicing managers at middle and upper levels in business and government organizations.

FIVE CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument is designed to assess an individual's behavior in conflict situations. "Conflict Situations" are the situations in which the concerns of two people appear to be incompatible. In such situation, we can describe a person's behavior along two basic dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy his own concerns, and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the individual attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns. These two basic dimensions of behavior can be used to define five specific methods of dealing with conflicts. These five "conflict-handling modes" are shown below:



Competing is assertive and uncooperative—an individual pursues his or her own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one's own position: ability to argue, rank, economic sanctions, etc. Competing might mean "standing up for your rights," defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of competing. When accommodating, an individual neglects his/her own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative—the individual does not immediately pursue his or her own concerns or those of the other person. He or she does not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative—the opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of

the two individuals and to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring the disagreement to learn from each other's insights, attempting to resolve some condition that would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution for an interpersonal problem.

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing, but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but doesn't explore it in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging, making concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

INTERPRETING YOUR SCORES ON THE THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT

Usually, after getting back the results of any test, people first want to know: "What are the right answers?" In the case of conflict-handling behavior, there are no universal right answers. All five modes are useful in some situations: each represents a set of useful social skills. Our conventional wisdom recognizes, for example, that often "two heads are better than one" (Collaborating). But it also says, "Kill your enemies with kindness" (Accommodating), "Split the difference" (Compromising) "Leave well enough alone" (Avoiding), "Might makes right" (Competing). The effectiveness of a given conflict-handling mode depends upon the requirements of the specific conflict situation and the skill with which the mode is used.

Your profile of scores indicates the repertoire of conflict-handling skills which you, as an individual, use in the kind of conflict situations you face. The following ranges indicate the percentile scores based on others who have taken the test. Remember that extreme scores are not necessarily bad, since your situation may require high or low use of a given conflict handling style.

Competing: High scores: 8-12; Middle scores: 4-7; Low scores: 0-3
Collaborating: High scores: 9-12; Middle scores: 6-8; Low scores: 0-5
Compromising: High scores: 9-12; Middle scores: 5-8; Low scores: 0-4
Avoiding: High scores: 8-12; Middle scores: 5-7; Low scores: 0-4
Accommodating: High scores: 7-12; Middle scores: 4-6; Low scores: 0-3

Each of us is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes; none of us can be characterized as having a single, rigid style of dealing with conflict. However, any given individual uses some modes better than others and therefore tends to rely upon these modes more heavily than others, whether because of temperament or practice.

The conflict behaviors which an individual uses are therefore a result of both his personal predispositions and the requirements of the situation in which he finds himself. The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument is designed to assess this mix of conflict-handling modes.

To help you judge how appropriate your utilization of the five modes is for your situation. We have listed a number of uses for each mode—based upon lists generated by company presidents. Your score, high or low, indicates its usefulness in your situation. However, there is the possibility that your social skills lead you to rely upon some conflict behaviors more or less than necessary. To help you determine this, we have also listed some diagnostic questions concerning warning signals for the overuse or underuse of each mode.

Competing

Uses:

- When quick, decisive action is vital.
- On important issues where unpopular courses of action need implementing.
- On issues vital to company welfare when you know you are right.
- To protect yourself against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.

If you scored High:

- Are you surrounded by "yes" men?
- Are others usually in agreement with you? Is it because they have learned that it is unwise to disagree with you, or have given up trying to influence you? This closes you off from information.

If you scored Low:

- Do you often feel powerless in situations?
- Do you have trouble taking a firm stand, even when you see the need? (Sometimes concerns for others' feelings or anxieties about the use of power cause us to vacillate, which may mean postponing the decision and possibly adding to the suffering and/or resentment of others.)

Collaborating

Uses:

- To find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised.
- When your objective is to learn.
- To merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem.
- To gain commitment by incorporating others' concerns into a consensual decision.
- To work through hard feelings that have been interfering with an interpersonal relationship.

If you scored High:

- Do you spend time discussing issues in depth that do not seem to deserve it? (Trivial problems do not require optimal solutions and not all personal differences need to be hashed out. The overuse of collaboration and consensual decision-making sometimes represents a desire to minimize risk by diffusing responsibility for a decision or by postponing action.)
- Does your collaborative behavior fail to elicit collaborative responses from others? (You may be projecting something that would indicate the presence of defensiveness, strong feelings, impatience, competitiveness, or conflicting interests.)

If you scored Low:

- Is it hard for you to see differences as an opportunity for joint gain or as an opportunity to learn or solve problems?

Compromising

Uses:

- When goals are moderately important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of a more assertive mode.
- When two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals, e.g., labor management bargaining.
- To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure.
- To achieve temporary settlement to complex issues.
- As a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails to be successful

If you scored High:

- Do you concentrate so heavily upon the practicalities and tactics of compromise that you sometimes lose sight of large issues, e.g., principles, values, long-term objectives?
- Does an emphasis on bargaining and trading create a cynical climate of gamesmanship?

If you scored Low:

- Do you find yourself too sensitive or embarrassed to be effective in bargaining situations?
- Do you find it hard to make concessions?

Avoiding

Uses:

- When an issue is trivial, of only passing importance, or when other more important issues are pressing.
- When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns.
- When the potential damage of confronting a conflict outweighs the benefits of its resolution.
- To let people cool down, to reduce tension to a productive level, and to regain perspective and composure.
- When gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision.
- When others can resolve the conflict more effectively.
- When the issue seems tangential or symptomatic of another, more basic issue.

If you scored High:

- Do people have trouble getting your input on issues?
- Sometimes an unnecessary amount of energy can be devoted to caution and the avoiding of issues, indicating that issues need to be faced and resolved.
- Are decisions on important issues made by default?

If you scored Low:

- Do you find yourself hurting people's feelings or stirring up hostilities? (You may need to exercise more discretion in confronting issues or more tact in framing issues in non-threatening ways.)
- Do you often feel harried or overwhelmed by a number of issues? (You may need to devote more time to setting priorities, deciding which issues are relatively unimportant, and perhaps delegating them to others.)
-

Accommodating

Uses:

- When you realize that you are wrong, to allow a better position to be heard, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable.
- When the issue is much more important to the other person than to you, to satisfy the needs of others, and as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship.
- To build up a social credit for later issues that are important to you.
- When continued competition would only damage your cause, when you are outmatched and losing.
- When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important.
- To aid the managerial development of subordinates by allowing them to experiment and learn from their own mistakes.

If you scored High:

- Do you feel that your own ideas and concerns are not getting the attention they deserve? (Deferring too much to the concerns of others can deprive you from influence, respect, and recognition. It also deprives others of your potential contributions.)
- Is discipline lax? (Although discipline for its own sake may be of little value, there are often rules, procedures, and assignments where implementation is crucial for you or the organization.)

If you scored Low:

- Do you have trouble building goodwill with others?
- Do others often seem to regard you as unreasonable?
- Do you have trouble admitting when you are wrong?
- Do you know when to give up?

CONFLICT STYLE: WHEN TO USE WHICH STYLE

Competing

Often appropriate when:

* An emergency looms.
* You are not sure you are right and being right is more important than preserving relationships.
* The issue is trivial and others do not really care what happens.

Often inappropriate when:

* When Collaboration or cooperation have not yet been attempted.
* Cooperation from others is important.
* Used routinely for most issues.
* Self-respect of others is diminished needlessly.

Collaborating

Often appropriate when:

* The issues and relationships are both significant.
* Cooperation is important.
* A creative end is important.
* Reasonable hope exists to meet all concerns.

Often inappropriate when:

* Time is short.
* The issue is unimportant.
* You are overloaded with "processing."
* The goals of the other person are certainly wrong.

Compromising

Often appropriate when:

* Cooperation is important but time or resources are limited.
* Finding some solution, even less than the best, is better than a complete stalemate.
* Efforts to collaborate will be misunderstood as forcing.

Often inappropriate when:

* Finding the most creative solution possible is essential.
* You can't live with the consequences.

Avoiding

Often appropriate when:

* The issue is trivial.
* The relationship is insignificant.
* Time is short and a decision not necessary.
* You have little power but still wish to block the other person.

Often inappropriate when:

* You care about both the relationship and the issues involved.
* Used habitually for most issues.
* Negative feelings may linger.

Others would benefit from hearing information.

Accommodating

Often appropriate when:

* You really don't care about the issue.
* You are powerless and have no wish to block the other.

Often inappropriate when:

* You are likely to harbor resentment.
* Used habitually in order to gain acceptance (outcome: depression and lack of self-respect).
* Others wish to collaborate and will feel like enforcers if you accommodate.

MATCHING THE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT APPROACH WITH THE SITUATION

Situational Considerations	**Competing (Forcing)**	**Collaborating**	**Compromising**	**Avoiding**	**Accommodating**
Issue Importance	High	High	Med	Low	Low
Relationship Importance	Low	High	Med	Low	High
Relative Power	High	Low-High	Equal-High	Equal-High	Low
Time Constraints	Med- High	Low	Low	Med-High	Med-High