

HANDLING CONFLICT AND MASTERING STICKY CONVERSATIONS

Presented by:

Sharon Justice



Rephrase the following statements into an "I" Message

"You" Message	"I" Message
Your office/truck is really messy.	
You smell.	
You didn't do that right even after I've told you 3 times	
You didn't do your part.	
You tracked in dirt	
That report you wrote was terrible.	

HANDLING RESISTANCE

Resistance: A reaction to an emotional process taking place within a person. It is a predictable, natural response. Being aware and identifying methods to diffuse resistance can be a key to building stronger relationships

SIGNS



- Asking repeated or excessive questions
- Asking for more detail or flooding you with detail
- Needing more time
- "I live in the real world, that's just not practical"
- Attack
- Confusion
- Body language
- Compliance, Agreeing too quickly
- Ignoring requests or statements
- "Checking out", or Silence
- Miraculously being better—the problem just goes away

7

Notes:

3 STEP PROCESS

To Manage Resistance

3 STEPS

Identify

- Identify in your own mind what forms the resistance is taking

State

- State in a neutral nonjudgmental way. "Name the resistance"

Silence

- Be Quiet

When the Resistance takes this form	Name it by making this statement
The participant is avoiding responsibility for the situation	I notice you don't see yourself as part of the problem
Flooding you with detail	I understand your concern but you are giving me more detail than I need. How would you describe it in a short statement?
One-word answers	I don't know what you are thinking when you give me one word answers. . Could you say more?
Changing the subject	The subject keeps shifting. Could we stay focused on one area at a time?
Compliance	I can't tell what your real feelings are because you are willing to do anything, I suggest
Silence	I don't know how to read your silence
Press for Solutions	I hear you but it's too early for solutions. We still need to spend some time trying to figure things out.
Attack	I can sense your frustration. You are really questioning a lot. You seem angry about something. Can you explain?

PRACTICE EXERCISE

In groups of 3

Teams of 3 will take turns working through the scenario. Identify what type of resistance is being displayed. Determine an appropriate response, then role play your conversation. Discuss how the speaker handled the resistance. Give praise and constructive tips for any suggested improvements.

Roles:

Supervisor: Use the scenario to practice dealing with resistance

Employee: Use the scenario and the named resistance to play the part of a resistor.

Observer: Observe the role play. Provide feedback at the end. Did the supervisor identify and name the resistance? How did they try to diffuse it and get the conversation back on track? Did they use silence to give the employee time to respond?

Supervisor

There are some processes that need to be changed in order to help your unit to achieve better quality and service. Last week the management team identified 3 new procedures that would be added to the end of shift routine. You have identified that one employee has not completed the new routine and checklist any of his/her last 5 shifts

You have called the employee into your office to discuss the situation

Employee

Your supervisor has called you into the office to discuss the new end of shift procedure. You have enough to do already in your job and you don't intend to add anything else. You are doing fine and your part of the department hasn't had any issues with the quality or the process. There aren't any issues with your work so you should not have to do anything extra because of your other co-workers' issues

Tone it down

It's Ann. She is efficient, organized, and knowledgeable and certainly passionate! You have no complaints at all about the quality of her work and her enthusiasm for getting things done. It is her interactions with others that concern you.

When Ann needs something or is focused on completing a task, she can be loud and demanding. Her tone and direct approach can alienate others, causing them to delay meeting her demands; she then gets more demanding and sometimes even rude.

If things don't change you are fearful Ann's interactions with others will alienate not just her, but your operation.

Pulling your weight

A couple of your employees were finally working well together on the farm. It took a while to iron out "who was responsible for what". You thought things were fixed and the guys were each handling their own responsibilities.

Lately, it seems that James isn't putting in the same effort and things are going undone. Ben hasn't said anything, but a few times you've noticed that he is picking up the slack, and doing things that James agreed to. Ben certainly seems more tense when he is around James and is shorter tempered than normal.

You don't want to upset the balance they seemed to find, but you know there's something brewing. You need to talk to both of them.

Dad Won't Let go

Kent has been in charge of this operation for so many years, he is having a hard time letting others in. He has been trying to let you "own" a few things, and he insists he is delegating those things to you, but in reality he isn't letting go.

Just last week he asked you handle the labor contracts for this year. You've been working through the process, but every time you see him, he asks for an update. Just this morning, you gave him an update on an issue, and not 30 minutes later, he asked if you have resolved it yet. His need to know every detail, every step of the way is exhausting and frustrating.

Not only do you feel his lack of trust in you, you could work so much more efficiently if it weren't for his constant follow up.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Participant Instructions

1. Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person. How do you usually respond to such situations?
2. Below are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic of your own behavior. Note that in many cases, neither "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. **Then write "A" or "B" next to the appropriate number.**

Item	A or B	Choice A	Choice B
1		There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.	Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.
2		I try to find a compromise solution.	I attempt to deal with all of his/her and my concerns.
3		I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.	I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
4		I try to find a compromise solution.	I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
5		I consistently seek others' help in working out a solution.	I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
6		I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.	I try to win my position.
7		I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.	I give up some points in exchange for others.
8		I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.	I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
9		I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.	I make some effort to get my way.
10		I am firm in pursuing my goals.	I try to find a compromise solution.
11		I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.	I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship
12		I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.	I will let the other person have some of his/her positions if he/she lets me have some of mine.
13		I propose the middle ground.	I press to get my points made.
14		I tell the other person my ideas and ask for his/hers.	I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position
15		I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.	I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.
16		I try not to hurt the other's feelings.	I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
17		I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.	I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
18		If it makes others happy, I might let them maintain their views.	I will let other people have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
19		I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.	I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
20		I attempt to work through differences with others immediately.	I try to find fair combinations of gains and losses for both of us.
21		In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.	I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.
22		I try to find a position that is intermediate between his/hers and mine.	I assert my wishes.
23		I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.	There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
24		If the other's position seems very important to him/her, I would try to meet his/her wishes.	I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.
25		I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.	In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
26		I propose the middle ground.	I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
27		I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.	If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
28		I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.	I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.
29		I propose a middle ground.	I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
30		I try not to hurt the other's feelings.	I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

3. When you've completed the questionnaire, use the following guide to determine your dominant (preferred) and secondary conflict handling modes. For each of the 30 items below, circle the letter "A" or "B" you selected on the above list.
4. Total the number of "A" and "B" selections in each of the five columns below.

	Competing	Collaborating	Compromising	Avoiding	Accommodating
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		
23		A		B	
24			B		A
25	A				B
26		B	A		
27				A	B
28	A	B			
29			A	B	
30		B			A

CONFLICT STYLES

WHEREVER TWO OR MORE PEOPLE COME TOGETHER,
THERE IS THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT.



Small Group Breakout Discussion

In Breakout you are assigned a Conflict Style (check the name of your breakout room for the style). Discuss and prepare to share with the large group:

- When is it most appropriate to use this style?
- When is it least appropriate to use this style?

YOUR STYLE PERSONAL REFLECTION

My Style Is:

Using your Style

How do you find that you use your style most often?

Are there difficulties?

Are there times when this style has caused you problems?.

To Develop:

Which style might be one to develop or to try?

Comfort?

Which style is most uncomfortable for you?

MORE THAN STICKY

Planning for the Most Difficult Conversation

1. Stay away from the Fool's Choice. Tell Truth Or Keep Relationship.

Try AND: Tell Truth AND Keep the Relationship

2. Master Your Story
3. Start with Heart
4. Neutralize your Emotions
5. Identify Your Needs and Wants and the other person's Needs and Wants
6. Plan and Practice your conversation

Start With Heart

What do I really want?

- For myself
- For the other person
- For the Relationship
- For the Organization



Master Your Story

- **Victim:** What am I not noticing about my own role in the problem
- **Villain:** Why would a reasonable person do this
- **Helpless:** What should I do right now instead of staying stuck
-



Situation 1

John and Ann need to talk to Kent and Vicky about making some changes at Brown Family Farm. They are gathering data to make a business case for their ideas, but know that Kent hasn't been particularly open to change in the past. Robert, the one John calls on to help mediate difficult conversations hasn't been able to be involved this fall and has made it clear that John needs to take the lead on this discussion and not to count on him to be there. He is supportive of John's ideas and has offered his finance knowledge, but his own work and family demands have removed him from many of the discussions recently.

Situation 2

John knows that Ann can be passionate in her ideas and spouts off without thinking, in her enthusiastic way. This usually causes Kent to react with "you don't have enough experience to know what you are talking about" look which pushes Anne's buttons and causes Vicky to retreat in her shell. She usually ends up leaving the room when the conversations get a little "spirited".

Situation 3

The last thing John wants to happen is for his dad to get frustrated, Ann to throw her hands up in frustration and have his mom to leave the room yet again. Yet John has a hard time holding his emotions in check when the family starts to disagree. In the past he has deferred to his dad's demands and things settle back down emotionally, although the health of the farm isn't addressed. He doesn't want to be disrespectful to his parents, yet he knows that things can't continue without some change. He just doesn't know how to even think about approaching this conversation.

Brown Family DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

What conversations do the Browns need to have:

What is making it “difficult”?

What communication Styles might be present. What do they need to keep in mind about these styles?

Write “I” statements regarding what you think, feel, believe and want from this person and/or situation:

What forms of resistance do you anticipate with the Browns? What should they keep in mind to handle it?

What “heart” items do they each need to keep in mind?

What “stories” (Victim, Villain or Helpless) do they need to be aware of and wrestle under control?

PLANNING YOUR DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

Details regarding the difficult conversation you need to have:

What is making it “difficult”?

Address the Heart:

- What do you want for the other person involved?
- What do you want for yourself?
- What do you want for this relationship?

What stories do you need to master before you have the conversation? Are you playing a victim, villain or helpless?

Write “I” statements regarding what you think, feel, believe and want from this person and/or situation:

- What is the best possible outcome?
- What is the worst possible outcome?
- What are you willing to compromise?

What forms of resistance do you anticipate? How will you plan to handle it?

When and where should you have this difficult conversation?

COURSE NOTES

Use this space to record notes from the session

What you plan to do:

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

Follow up Ideas
