Conflict Resolution: Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Please circle the statement which applies most to yourself from the following pairs of statements.

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

2. A) I try to meet the other person half way when attempting to bring about a solution.
   B) I attempt to deal with all of the other person’s problems plus my own.

3. A) I am usually firm when trying to achieve my goals.
   B) I might try to soothe the other person’s feelings to preserve our relationship.

4. A) I try to meet the other person half way to bring forth a solution.
   B) I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.

5. A) I frequently seek other people’s help when working out a solution.
   B) I try to do what it’s necessary to avoid useless tensions.

6. A) I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
   B) I try to win my position or have my way.

7. A) I try to delay 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 seeking my goals.
   B) I attempt to get all concerns and issues out in the open.

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

10. A) I am firm in seeking my goals.
    B) I try to meet the other person half way to bring forth a solution.
11. A) I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
    B) I tend to try and soothe the other’s feelings to preserve our relationship.

12. A) I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create conflict.
    B) I will let the other person have their way, if they let me have mine.

13. A) I tend toward a middle ground approach.
    B) I press to make my point.

14. A) I tell the other person my ideas and ask them for theirs.
    B) I try to show other people the logic and benefits of my views/position.

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

16. A) I try not to hurt other people’s feelings.
    B) I try to convince the other person of the positives of my view.

17. A) I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
    B) I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

18. A) If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.
    B) I will let the other person have some of their beliefs/views if they let 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 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 both parties.
21. A) In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of other people’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 the other person’s views and my own.  
   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 positions seems very important to them, I would try and meet their wishes.  
   B) I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.  

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

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

27. A) I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create conflict.  
   B) If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.  

28. A) I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.  
   B) I usually seek other people’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.
**Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument: Scoring Key**

Circle the letter below which you circled on each item in the above questionnaire. The higher the total score for each conflict strategy, the more frequently you tend to use said strategy. The lower the score for each conflict strategy the less frequently you will use that strategy.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Competing (forcing)</th>
<th>Collaborating (problem solving)</th>
<th>Compromising (sharing)</th>
<th>Avoiding (withdrawal)</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>OWL</td>
<td>FOX</td>
<td>TURTLE</td>
<td>TEDDY BEARS</td>
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The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument: Understanding Your Style

Accommodating/Smoothing: TEDDY BEARS
This style places great value on the relationship as opposed to what is at stake in the conflict. The teddy bears believe conflict damages relationships. The teddy bear is a smoother, someone who calms people down to keep the peace. Individuals who use this approach use it because they do not want to make waves.

- **Advantage:** Accommodating maintains relationships
- **Disadvantage:** Giving in may not be productive; teddy bears may be taken advantage
- **Appropriate times to use a Teddy Bear style:**
  - When maintaining the relationship outweighs other considerations
  - When suggestions/changes are not important to the accommodator
  - When minimizing losses in situations where outmatched or losing
  - When time is limited or when harmony and stability are valued

Competitive/Forcing: SHARK
This style tends to “take the bull by the horns.” The shark is willing to pursue the goal at all costs assuming that conflict is settled by a win/lose outcome. The shark may have strong need to control situations and/or people. Those who use this style in a conflict situation usually exhibit a judgmental attitude and have a need to be directive.

- **Advantage:** If the shark’s decision is correct, a better decision without compromise can result
- **Disadvantage:** May breed hostility and resentment toward the person using it
- **Appropriate times to use a Shark style:**
  - When conflict involves personal differences that are difficult to change
  - When fostering intimate or supportive relationships is not critical
  - When others are likely to take advantage of noncompetitive behavior
  - When conflict resolution is urgent; when a decision is vital in crisis
  - When unpopular decisions need to be implemented

Avoidance/Withdrawing: TURTLE
Those using this style have a tendency to withdraw from conflict situations because of a gut dislike for confrontation on any level, or the desire to avoid the conflict simply because it is not worth the risks. Individuals who use the turtle approach in a conflict suppress their own goals and may jeopardize the relationship simply for the sake of avoiding conflict.

- **Advantage:** This style may help to maintain relationships that would be hurt by conflict resolution
- **Disadvantage:** Conflicts remain unsolved, overuse will lead to others walking over individuals who identify as Turtles
- **Appropriate time to use a Turtle style:**
  - When the stakes are not high or issue at stake is trivial
  - When confrontation will hurt a working relationship
  - When there is little chance of satisfying your wants
o When disruption outweighs the benefits of conflict resolution
o When gathering information is more important than an immediate decision
o When others can more effectively resolve the conflict

**Compromising: FOX**
The fox believes that half is better than none. Although usually a good negotiator, the fox focuses on compromise, sometimes even a quick fix; you get a little of what you want; I get a little of what I want. The fox sees conflict as costing something to get something.

- **Advantage:** Relationships are maintained and conflicts are removed
- **Disadvantage:** Compromise may create less than an ideal outcome and game playing can result from using this style
- **Appropriate time to use a Fox style:**
  o When important/complex issues leave no clear or simple solutions
  o When all conflicting people are equal in power and have strong interests in different solutions
  o When there are no time constraints

**Collaborative: OWL**
Those who use this style have a tendency toward proactive problem solving and collaboration when confronted with a conflict situation. The owl views conflict in a problem solving win/win way for the parties involved. The owl is not satisfied until all the loose ends are tied up and the conflict is managed successfully.

- **Advantage:** Both sides get what they want and negative feelings are eliminated
- **Disadvantage:** This style takes a great deal of time and effort
- **Appropriate time to use an Owl style:**
  o When maintaining relationships is important
  o When time is not a concern
  o When peer conflict is involved
  o When trying to gain commitment through consensus building, when learning and trying to merge differing perspectives.