



# MANAGING CONFLICT

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- **Conflict:** a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that the first party cares about.
  - If no one is aware of a conflict, then it is generally agreed no conflict exists.
  - Also needed to begin the conflict process are opposition or incompatibility and interaction.



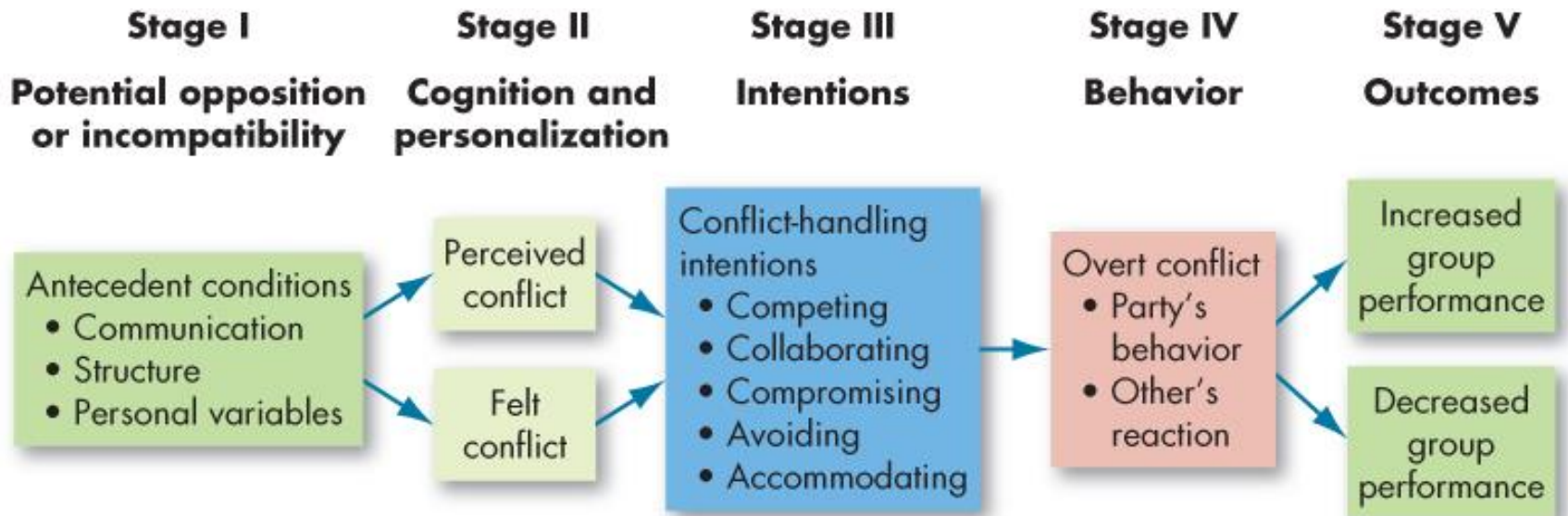
- Contemporary perspectives differentiate types of conflict based on their effects.
  - **Functional conflict** supports the goals of the group and improves its performance.
  - Conflicts that hinder group performance are **dysfunctional** or destructive forms of conflict.



- Types of Conflict
  - Researchers have classified conflicts into three categories:
    - **Task conflict** relates to the content and goals of the work.
    - **Relationship conflict** focuses on interpersonal relationships.
    - **Process conflict** is about how the work gets done.



- Loci of Conflict
  - Another way to understand conflict is to consider its locus, or where the conflict occurs.
  - There are three basic types:
    - **Dyadic conflict** is conflict between two people.
    - **Intragroup conflict** occurs *within* a group or team.
    - **Intergroup conflict** is conflict *between* groups or teams.





- **Intentions:** decisions to act in a given way.
  - **Competing**
  - **Collaborating**
  - **Avoiding**
  - **Accommodating**
  - **Compromising**

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### Conflict-Resolution Techniques

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<i>Problem solving</i>	Meeting face to face for the purpose of identifying the problem and resolving it through open discussion.
<i>Superordinate goals</i>	Creating a shared goal that cannot be attained without the cooperation of each of the conflicting parties.
<i>Expansion of resources</i>	Expanding the supply of a scarce resource (for example, money, promotion, opportunities, office space).
<i>Avoidance</i>	Withdrawing from or suppressing the conflict.
<i>Smoothing</i>	Playing down differences while emphasizing common interests between the conflicting parties.
<i>Compromise</i>	Having each party to the conflict give up something of value.
<i>Authoritative command</i>	Letting management use its formal authority to resolve the conflict and then communicating its desires to the parties involved.
<i>Altering the human variable</i>	Using behavioral change techniques such as human relations training to alter attitudes and behaviors that cause conflict.
<i>Altering the structural variables</i>	Changing the formal organization structure and the interaction patterns of conflicting parties through job redesign, transfers, creation of coordinating positions, and the like.

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## Conflict-Stimulation Techniques

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<i>Communication</i>	Using ambiguous or threatening messages to increase conflict levels.
<i>Bringing in outsiders</i>	Adding employees to a group whose backgrounds, values, attitudes, or managerial styles differ from those of present members.
<i>Restructuring the organization</i>	Realigning work groups, altering rules and regulations, increasing interdependence, and making similar structural changes to disrupt the status quo.
<i>Appointing a devil's advocate</i>	Designating a critic to purposely argue against the majority positions held by the group.

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Source: Based on S. P. Robbins, *Managing Organizational Conflict: A Nontraditional Approach* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974): 59–89.



- **Negotiation** is a process in which two or more parties exchange goods or services and attempt to agree upon the exchange rate for them.
  - We use the terms negotiation and bargaining interchangeably.

## Distributive versus Integrative Bargaining

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<b>Bargaining Characteristic</b>	<b>Distributive Bargaining</b>	<b>Integrative Bargaining</b>
Goal	Get as much of the pie as possible	Expand the pie so that both parties are satisfied
Motivation	Win–lose	Win–win
Focus	Positions (“I can’t go beyond this point on this issue.”)	Interests (“Can you explain why this issue is so important to you?”)
Interests	Opposed	Congruent
Information sharing	Low (Sharing information will only allow other party to take advantage.)	High (Sharing information will allow each party to find ways to satisfy interests of each party.)
Duration of relationship	Short term	Long term

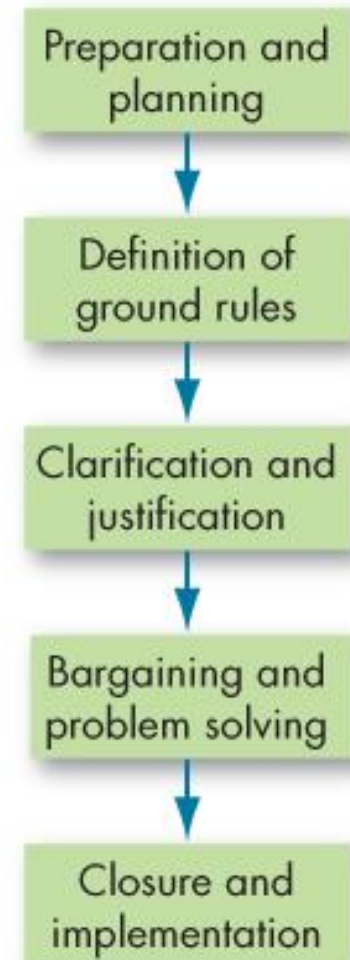
## Integration of Two Bargaining Strategies within One Negotiation Episode





- Compromise might be your worst enemy in negotiating a win-win agreement.
  - The reason is that compromising reduces the pressure to bargain integratively.

## The Negotiation





- Personality Traits in Negotiation
  - Can you predict an opponent's negotiating tactics if you know something about his/her personality?
    - The evidence says "sort of."
- Moods/Emotions in Negotiation
  - Influence negotiation, but the way they do appears to depend on the type of negotiation.



- **Culture in Negotiations**
- Do people from different cultures negotiate differently?

Yes, they do.

- People generally negotiate more effectively within cultures than between them.
- In cross-cultural negotiations, it is especially important that the negotiators be high in openness.
- People are more likely to use certain negotiation strategies depending on what culture they belong to.
- Negotiators need to be especially aware of the emotional dynamics in cross-cultural negotiation.





- Gender Differences in Negotiations
  - Men and women negotiate differently and these differences affect outcomes.
    - There is some merit to the popular stereotype that women are more cooperative, pleasant, and relationship-oriented in negotiations than are men.
  - These gender differences can be lessened at both the organizational and individual level.

# Implications for Managers

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- Choose an authoritarian management style in emergencies, when unpopular actions need to be implemented, and when the issue is vital to the organization's welfare. Be certain to communicate your logic when possible to make certain employees remain engaged and productive.
- Seek integrative solutions when your objective is to learn, when you want to merge insights from people with different perspectives, when you need to gain commitment by incorporating concerns into a consensus, and when you need to work through feelings that have interfered with a relationship.



- You can build trust by accommodating others when you find you're wrong, when you need to demonstrate reasonableness, when other positions need to be heard, when issues are more important to others than to yourself, when you want to satisfy others and maintain cooperation, when you can build social credits for later issues, to minimize loss when you are outmatched and losing, and when employees should learn from their own mistakes.



- Consider compromising when goals are important but not worth potential disruption, when opponents with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals, and when you need temporary settlements to complex issues.
- Distributive bargaining can resolve disputes, but it often reduces the satisfaction of one or more negotiators because it is confrontational and focused on the short term. Integrative bargaining, in contrast, tends to provide outcomes that satisfy all parties and build lasting relationships.

# Thank You

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