



THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE INSTRUMENT By: Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann

Instructions

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

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

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

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

- **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 those things upon which we both agree.
- **2.** A I try to find a compromise solution.
 - B I attempt to deal with all of his/her 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 in 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 the other person have some of his/her positions if s/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 the other person my ideas and ask for his/hers.
 - B I try to show the other person 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 try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.

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- **18.** A If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
 - B I will let other people have some of their positions 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 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 both of us.
- **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/hers 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/her, I would try to meet his/her 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 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 other people happy, I might let them maintain their 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.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Scoring and Interpreting the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

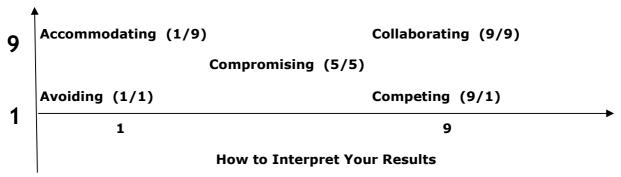
	(9/1)	(9/9)	(5/5)	(1/1)	(1/9)
1.				Α	В
2.		В	Α		
2. 3.	Α				В
4.			Α		В
5.		Α		В	
6.	В			Α	
7.			В	Α	
8.	Α	В			
9.	В			Α	
10.	Α		В		
11.		Α			В
12.			В	Α	
13.	В		Α		
14.	В	Α			
15 .				В	Α
16.	В				Α
17.	Α			В	
18.			В		Α
19.		Α		В	
20.		Α	В		
21.		В			Α
21. 22.	В		Α		
23.		Α		В	
24.			В		Α
25.	Α				В
26.		В	Α		
27.				Α	В
28.	Α	В			
29.			Α	В	
30.		В			Α

Total the number of items circled in each column:										
	(9/1)	(9/9)	(5/5)	(1/1)	(1/9)					

Thomas-Kilmann Test Results

9/1 =Competing 9/9 =Collaborating 5/5 =Compromising 1/1 =Avoiding 1/9 =Accommodating

Record the results of the Test in the graph below by *circling* the style with the *highest score* and then *drawing an arrow to the style with the next highest score*, and so on until you finish all five styles. Next, subtract the difference of scores between succeeding styles and mark the difference close to the arrow separating the two styles.



Your "dominant" conflict management style is predicted by the style with the highest score. The "strength" of your preference (that is, your willingness to stay or move from one style to the next) is predicted by the difference between the scores of the styles. If the difference is high, resistance is high. If the difference is low, you may move from one style to the other with ease.

Accommodating (1/9) – Win/Lose Assumption

If your dominant style is accommodating, you dislike the impact that differences between people may have on their relationships and believe that self-sacrifice and placing the importance of continued relationship above one's own goals is necessary for solving conflict. From this point of view, it is better to ignore differences than to risk open combat by being over-sensitive. If your accommodating score is HIGH compared with other styles, it reflects a need for affiliation and acceptance, interest in appeasing others. Since personal objectives are set aside by the user, the cost of this style lends itself to exploitation and can become incredibly burdensome in the long term. If accommodation is followed or follows avoidance as your two top scores, you should consider your dominant style one of avoidance-accommodation (see avoidance).

Competing (9/1) - Win/Lose Assumption

If your dominant style is competing, you see differences among people as reflecting their skills: some people have skills, others have none, and some are right and some are wrong. Ultimately, right prevails and this is the central issue in conflict. We owe it to ourselves and those who rely on our judgment to prevail in conflicts with others whose opinions and goals are in doubt. If your competing score is HIGH compared with others, you believe that persuasion, power and force are acceptable tools for achieving conflict resolution and most people expect them to be employed. You believe that conflict is a competition for status that will be won by the person demonstrating more competence. This style places prime importance on personal goals to the exclusion of any concerns for the relationship.

Avoiding (1/1) - Win/Lose Assumption

If your dominant style is avoidance, it is likely that you had bad experiences with either accommodation or competing or you see conflict as the results of people's preferences and aspirations and as such, beyond anybody's influence. So, conflict is seen as a necessary

Thomas-Kilmann Test Results

evil that we must either accept or withdraw from human contact. If your avoidance score is HIGH, it shows a sense of hopelessness and withdrawal since conflict is perceived as a nowin alternative, leaving open the option of leaving it either psychologically and physically.

Compromising (5/5) - Win/Lose Assumption

If your dominant style is compromising, you believe that differences between people should be treated in light of the common good and that party's need to "win a little, lose a little". This style tries to soften and make more tolerable the effects of losing by limiting the gains. Both ends are played against the middle in an attempt to serve the "common good". If your accommodating score is HIGH, you believe that, although everyone should have an opportunity to air personal views and feelings, these should not be allowed to block progress. It is never realistic for everyone to be satisfied and those who insist in such unrealistic goals should be shown their error.

Collaborating (9/9) - Win/Win Assumption

If your dominant style is collaborating, you believe that conflict itself is neither good nor bad, but usually a symptom of tensions in relationships and should be treated accordingly. When properly interpreted, differences may be resolved and serve to strengthen relationships rather than divide. Conflict cannot be ignored and requires problem-solving often of the type that goes beyond the superficial issues. Trust is the result of solving conflicts successfully and to the satisfaction of people. In this respect, past successes in finding creative solutions to conflict serve to promote future successes, creating a win-win cycle. A HIGH collaboration score shows implicit faith in the process of conflict resolution and the assumption that working through differences will lead to creative and effective solutions that everyone will support.

Order of Styles

All five styles and their variations are equally available responses to conflict. The fact that a person prefers a given style does not mean he or she will not use other styles. Indeed, this model assumes that we use each style at one point or another. Nevertheless, our "dominant" style reflects our particular beliefs about conflict, our preferences and "comfort zone". Secondary choices constitute backups preferences when we find it necessary to abandon our preference, creating a "response hierarchy".

It is important to emphasize that we have the ability to change our dominant style and our response hierarchy. If a person genuinely desires to have a more constructive approach to conflict management, change is entirely possible and it is a personal option. To change our style, we must become aware of the available options and then undertake a conscious program of building skills where we need them. With some discipline and commitment, it is possible to change or improve our skills and to provide a response that is appropriate to each individual conflict, either as a party to, or as a third-party (mediator or facilitator).