Conflict and Negotiation

Conflict

Conflict is 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 values

Conflict

Functional conflict is constructive and cooperative, it is characterized by consultative interaction, a focus on the issues, mutual respect, and useful give-and-take; it may involve challenging ideas, standards, or processes that are ineffective

Dysfunctional conflict places the focus on the conflict, rather than the interests of the organization; it is often personal, involving aggression or threats directed at specific people

When conflict gets personal – directed at people not ideas

Conflict

Outcomes of functional and dysfunctional conflict:

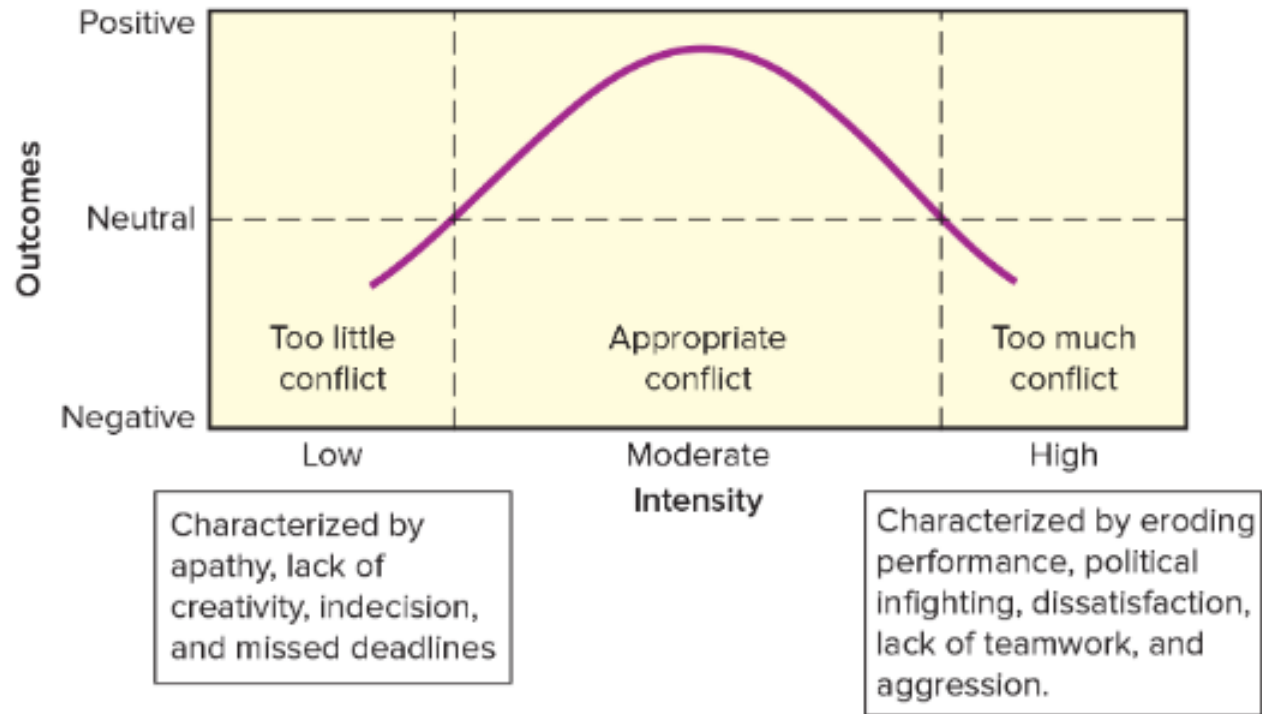| POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES	NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
• Leads to new ideas • Stimulates creativity • Motivates change • Promotes organizational vitality • Helps individuals and groups establish identities • Serves as a safety valve to indicate problems	• Diverts energy from work • Threatens psychological well-being • Wastes resources • Creates a negative climate • Breaks down group cohesion • Can increase hostility and aggressive behaviors

Functional conflict doesn't just resolve the issue, it builds the capacity to keep future conflicts functional **Key point**
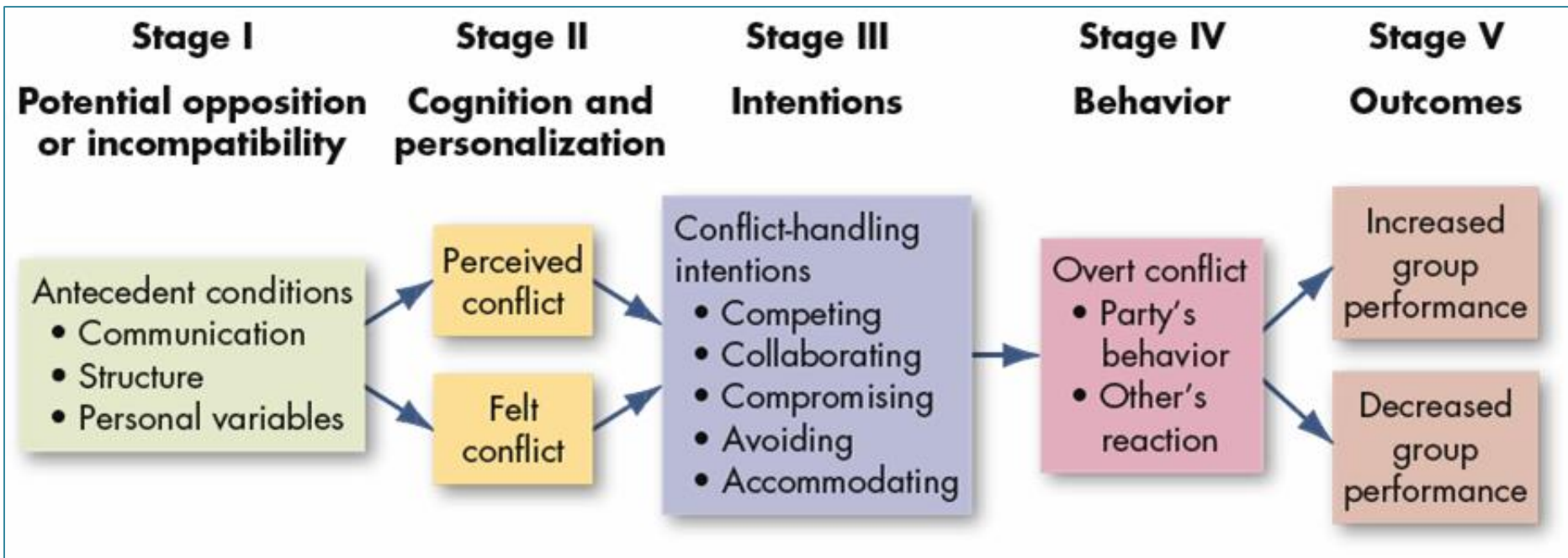
Conflict

Conflict

Conflict is a process:

Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	Stage IV	Stage V
Potential opposition or incompatibility	**Cognition and personalization**	**Intentions**	**Behavior**	**Outcomes**

Antecedent conditions
- Communication
- Structure
- Personal variables

Perceived conflict

Felt conflict

Conflict-handling intentions
- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Overt conflict
- Party's behavior
- Other's reaction

Increased group performance

Decreased group performance

Causes of Conflict

Structural factors: (situation of role things put on you due to the structure around you)

Specialization (of tasks or rules)

Interdependence (requires cooperation)

Common resources (major issue)

Goal differences

Authority relationships (leader style matters)

Status inconsistencies

Jurisdictional ambiguities

Role conflict

Causes of Conflict

A common structural source is **role conflict**, in which expectations for how to act in one's role come from many sources that conflict with one another:

➤ *Interrole:* Conflict between multiple roles

➤ *Intrarole:* Conflict from multiple senders to one role (two people telling you how to do one role)

➤ Person-role: Conflict from one's personal values (cognitive disonance)

Causes of Conflict

Personal factors:

Skills and abilities

Differences in personality

Perception of situational variables

Values and ethics

Emotional "flare-ups"

Communication barriers

Cultural differences

Causes of Conflict

FOR THE EMPLOYEE	FOR THIRD-PARTY OBSERVERS	FOR THE EMPLOYEE'S MANAGER
1. Be familiar with and *follow* company policies on diversity, discrimination, and sexual harassment.		
2. Communicate directly with the other person to resolve the perceived conflict (emphasize problem solving and common objectives, not personalities).	Do not take sides in someone else's personality conflict.	Investigate and document the conflict; if appropriate, take corrective action (feedback or behavior modification).
3. Avoid dragging coworkers into the conflict.	Suggest the parties work things out for themselves in a constructive and positive way.	If necessary, attempt informal dispute resolution.
4. If dysfunctional conflict persists, seek help from direct supervisors or human resource specialists.	If dysfunctional conflict persists, refer the problem to the parties' direct supervisors.	Refer difficult conflicts to human resource specialists or hired counselors for formal resolution efforts and other interventions.

Causes of Conflict

While conflict can often begin in a functional way, it can escalate and turn dysfunctional

Escalation is indicated by:

- ✓ Use of threatening tactics or "power plays"
- ✓ More issues are brought into the conflict
- ✓ Issues move from specific to general
- ✓ More people and groups get involved
- ✓ Goals shift from 'resolution' to 'winning' or even just harming the other party

Experienced Conflict

Perceived and ***felt conflict*** define the actual conflict that the parties then attempt to resolve; this definition can be affected by many things:

- ✓ The importance of what is affected by the structural or personal factor
- ✓ The motives that parties attribute for the others' actions, the assumptions they're making
- ✓ The existing relationship between the parties (e.g., trusting, critical, power inequalities, etc.)

Experienced Conflict

When in a group, members develop shared perceptions of conflict (i.e., ***conflict states***)

Conflict states often reinforce group cognitions and escalate conflict through "in-group" biases:

- ✓ In-group members view themselves as unique individuals, yet stereotypes members of other groups
- ✓ In-group members see themselves as morally correct, and outsiders as immoral
- ✓ Outsiders are viewed as threats
- ✓ Differences between other groups are distorted

Conflict Management

The nature of the perceived/felt conflict, along with a person's or group's traits, determine the strategies that emerge in their *conflict process*:
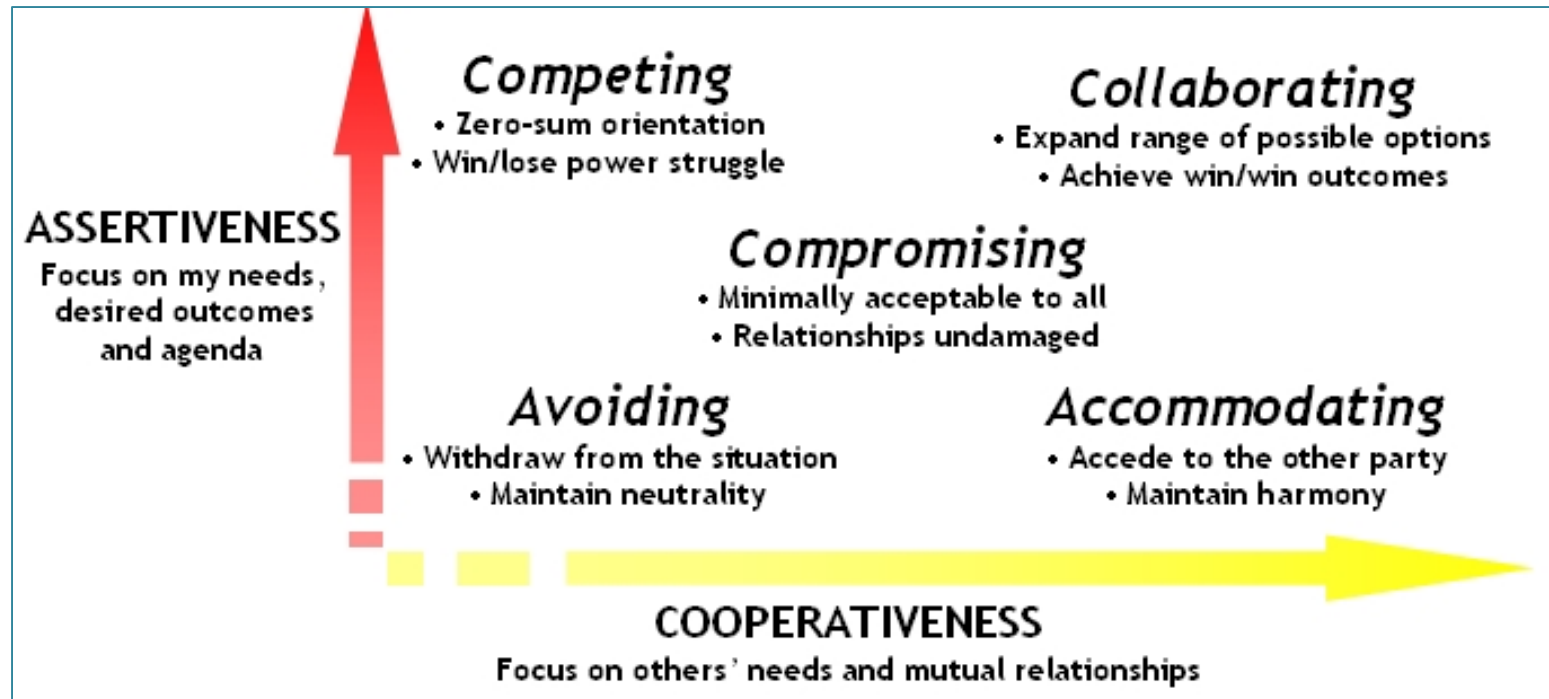
Cooperative strategies

assume win-win is possible, engage in honest communication, trust, and openness to risk/vulnerability

Assertive/Competitive strategies

assume win-lose will happen, dishonest communication, rigid positions

Conflict Management

The two strategies combine and give rise to unique conflict management styles:

Conflict Management

CONFLICT-HANDLING STYLE	APPROPRIATE SITUATION
Competing	1. When quick, decisive action is vital (e.g., emergencies). 2. On important issues where unpopular actions need implementing (e.g., cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline). 3. On issues vital to company welfare when you know you are right. 4. Against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.
Collaborating	1. To find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised. 2. When your objective is to learn. 3. To merge insights from people with different perspectives. 4. To gain commitment by incorporating concerns into a consensus. 5. To work through feelings that have interfered with a relationship.
Compromising	1. When goals are important but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes. 2. When opponents with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals. 3. To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues. 4. To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure. 5. As a backup when collaboration or competition is unsuccessful.

Conflict Management

CONFLICT-HANDLING STYLE	APPROPRIATE SITUATION
Avoiding	1. When an issue is trivial or more important issues are pressing. 2. When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns. 3. When potential disruption outweighs the benefits of resolution. 4. To let people cool down and regain perspective. 5. When gathering information supersedes immediate decision. 6. When others can resolve the conflict more effectively. 7. When issues seem tangential or symptomatic of other issues.
Accommodating	1. When you find you are wrong—to allow a better position to be heard, to learn, and to show your reasonableness. 2. When issues are more important to others than to yourself—to satisfy others and maintain cooperation. 3. To build social credits for later issues. 4. To minimize loss when you are outmatched and losing. 5. When harmony and stability are especially important. 6. To allow employees to develop by learning from mistakes.

Conflict Management

Ineffective techniques among the styles include:

Nonaction, secrecy, administrative orbiting (delays), due process nonaction (system is too costly), character assassination

Effective techniques include:

Superordinate goals(a common goal), bring in new resources to solve the problem, change personnel, re-structure, finding common ground, allowing parties to safely express frustrations, letting people take the lead in solving problems with which they're familiar

Conflict Management

Simply having people from conflicting groups interact more often isn't enough to reduce conflict or in-group bias (i.e., the *contact hypothesis*), specific negative relationships and negative attitudes need to be addressed

Dysfunctional conflict can be prevented by building ***psychological safety***, a shared belief that it is safe to engage in risky behavior, such as questioning practices or ideas, without retribution

Conflict Management

Well managed conflict can heighten rational decision-making and reduce groupthink, in contrast, dysfunctional conflict can impair communication, resource-sharing, collaborative input, and performance
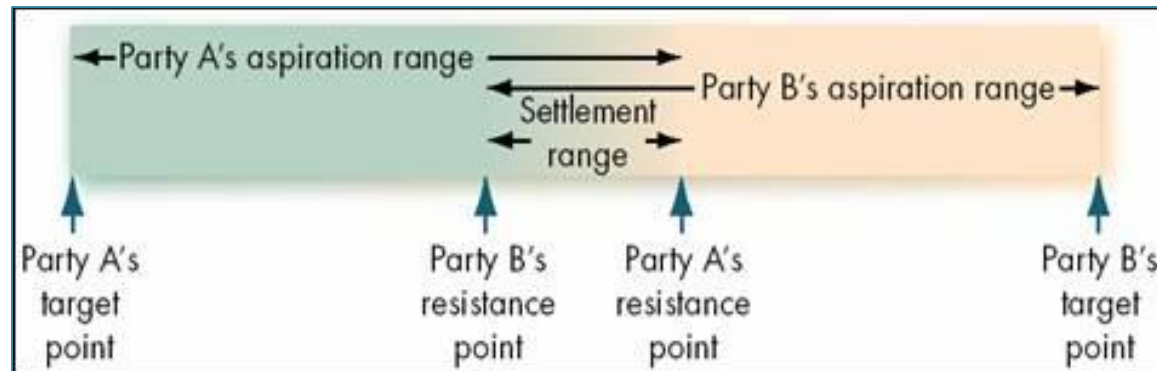
Negotiation

Negotiations are a specific type of conflict management wherein two or more parties exchange goods or services and attempts to agree on an exchange rate for them

There are two general negotiation strategies:

➢ ***Distributive bargaining:*** Zero-sum conditions, any gain one party makes is a loss to the other, low information sharing, opposed interests

➢ ***Integrative bargaining:*** Broadens goods/services to ensure win-win, high info sharing, congruent interests collaborative

Negotiation

In distributive bargaining, parties compete for power, leveraging offers, deadlines, and politics:

In integrative bargaining, parties focus on long-term relationships, through being open, focusing on underlying goals, and considering alternatives

Negotiation Process
is a formal process

There are five steps in negotiation:

1. *Preparation and planning:* Define own goals, anticipate partner's goals, gather data on similar negotiations, develop strategy, identify least acceptable outcomes (for all parties)

2. *Definition of ground rules:* Set people, issues to cover, place, time allotted – who where when...

3. *Clarification and justification:* Elaborate on positions

4. *Bargaining and problem-solving:* Make concessions

5. *Closure and implementation:* Contract, if needed

Negotiation Process

If an impasse is reached, third-parties are used:

Conciliator*:* Only mediates communication

Arbitrator: Dictates an agreement

Mediator: Rationally facilitates an agreement

➢

➢