```
████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
█   ■              T H E   T A C I T U S                      ■
█   ■                  P R O T O C O L                        ■
████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
```

Engineering Common Ground in the Age of Entropy

```
███████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
[01] EXECUTIVE SUMMARY — THE RESOLUTION DEFICIT
███████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
```

We are living through a crisis of coherence. Digital communication has scaled exponentially;
our collective capacity to synthesize meaning has not. Boards, founders, public institutions,
and multilateral systems are all experiencing the same structural failure: a Resolution
Deficit—the widening gap between the rate at which conflict-relevant information is generated
(emails, Slack threads, transcripts, attachments) and the rate at which humans can parse,
model, and act on it in a disciplined way.

Most existing tooling is built for the wrong game:

- Administrative systems (HR ticketing, case management) track disputes but do not understand
them.
- Adversarial AI tools (litigation AI, negotiation bots) optimize for winning, not for
sustainable settlements.
- Shallow AI overlays (generic sentiment analysis) classify tone but ignore structure,
incentives, and power.

Senior decision-makers do not need more messaging platforms or dashboards. They need a way to
see what is really going on—to separate fact from narrative, surface grievance from deep value
conflict, and noise from actionable common ground.

Tacitus.me is designed as that missing layer: the world's first Common Ground Search Engine.

Instead of treating conflict primarily as a psychological or interpersonal failure, Tacitus
treats it as a problem of information and narrative asymmetry:

- Information asymmetry: who knows what, and where assumptions are being made in place of
facts.
- Narrative asymmetry: who gets to tell the story, and what the conflict means for status,
identity, and recognition.

Tacitus is email-native and multi-agent. It ingests messy communication streams, deconstructs
them into a structured Conflict Ontology, and projects the result into a Conflict Graph that
can be queried like an index and navigated like a map. It does not simply summarize arguments;
it structures reality so that peace becomes discoverable.

```
███████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
[02] THE PROBLEM — THE ENTROPY SURFACE
███████████████████████████████████████████████████████████
```

Modern conflict rarely stems from lack of information. It stems from too much unstructured
information in the wrong shape.

We call this chaotic environment the Entropy Surface.

In high-stakes environments—founder disputes, M&A integrations, strategic HR crises, civic
mediation, diplomatic stalemates—communication fragments across channels and formats (email,
chat, docs, recorded calls). The result is a Tangle with three characteristic pathologies:

1. Context Decay
   The origin of a dispute is buried under reply-all storms, nested forwards, and parallel
side threads. Timeline, causality, and intent blur.

2. Asymmetry Growth
   Parties operate on different subsets of facts and documents. Mismatched information sets harden into conflicting "realities," each internally coherent but mutually incompatible.

3. Cognitive Overload
   No human team can hold thousands of emails, dozens of attachments, and months of chat history in working memory. Pattern recognition breaks down; decisions are made on fragments and hunches.

The core thesis is simple: we cannot solve human conflict until we solve the data topology that fuels it. As long as conflict lives as unstructured text in email clients, no amount of good will can compensate for the structural disadvantage human cognition faces.

■■■
[03] THE SOLUTION — THE TACITUS ONTOLOGY
■■■

To resolve conflict, one must first map it.

Tacitus moves beyond sentiment analysis or generic LLM summarization into a rigorous, proprietary Conflict Ontology grounded in Computational Argumentation Theory and Graph Theory.

Under the hood, Tacitus adapts:

- Walton's Argumentation Schemes (e.g., argument from expert opinion, causal reasoning) to classify the type of move being made in an exchange.
- The IBIS model (Issue-Based Information System) to distinguish Issues, Positions, and Arguments in complex disputes.
- Standard graph-theoretic tools (force-directed layouts, centrality measures, cut sets) to make disagreement calculable and navigable.

3.1 Node Hierarchy — The "Parts of Speech" of Conflict

Tacitus parses raw text into four primary classes of nodes. This enforces a common semantic shape across actors and emails, reducing "talking past one another."

Class I: Signal Nodes (Information Layer)
These capture what is true in the world.

- Fact Node
  A verifiable datum.
  Example: "The contract was signed on 4 October."

- Actor Node
  A specific entity in the dispute (person, team, institution) with attributes (role, authority, affiliation).

- Resource Node
  The asset in contention.
  Examples: "Founders' Equity Pool," "Compliance Budget," "Office Lease," "Security Guarantees."

Class II: Dialectic Nodes (Argument Layer)
These capture what is being claimed about the world.

- Claim Node
  An assertion made by an Actor.
  Example: "Legal did not review the term sheet before signature."

- Rebuttal Node
  A direct negation or challenge to a Claim.
  Example: "Legal reviewed and approved the term sheet on 30 September; see attached memo."

- Concession Node

An explicit acceptance of a previous Claim, often from another actor's ontology.
   Example: "You're right that the process was unclear; we should have documented the sign-off."
   Concessions are high-value signals for resolution, indicating openings for reframing and trust repair.

Class III: Latent Nodes (Deep Structure)
These capture the hidden drivers of the conflict.

- Axiom Node
  An unstated worldview, norm, or value system.
  Example: An argument over "office hours" often rests on an Axiom such as "Presence equals commitment" or "Output, not hours, defines contribution."

- Fear Node
  A predictive state representing an actor's anxiety about the future.
  Examples: "Dilution risk," "Loss of control," "Career damage," "Public scandal."

These latent nodes explain why parties keep returning to the same themes even after facts are clarified.

3.2 Edge Logic — The Grammar of Conflict

Tacitus does not just map statements; it maps the logic between statements.

Edges are typed relationships that encode how nodes interact:

- SUPPORTS (Green Edge)
  Node A → Node B where evidence, precedent, or narrative coherence increases the plausibility of B.

- ATTACKS (Red Edge)
  Node A → Node B where evidence or logic undermines B. This captures rebuttals, contradictions, and counterexamples.

- BRIDGES (Gold Edge)
  High-value edges linking previously separated ontologies—for example, connecting two actors' different vocabularies for the same underlying concern ("burnout" vs "operational risk"). These are discovered via both semantic similarity and structural alignment in the graph.

The result is a Conflict Graph that reveals not only who said what, but how the argument actually works.

3.3 Theoretical Foundations

The Tacitus ontology is designed to be grounded in well-established literatures (argumentation theory, decision analysis, social choice), computable via graph algorithms and multi-agent LLM pipelines, and auditable: each node and edge is traceable back to specific text spans and documents.

In practice:

- Argument schemes inspired by Douglas Walton's work help classify arguments and detect fallacies or missing premises.
- IBIS-inspired structuring helps distinguish when a debate is stuck because the issue is mis-specified versus when positions are incompatible.
- Graph metrics (betweenness centrality, modularity, cut edges) highlight potential bridging statements and single points of failure in the negotiation space.

██
[04] VISUALIZATION — THE PHYSICS OF DISAGREEMENT
██

Text is linear. Conflict is not.

Tacitus translates the Resolution Deficit into a visual map using force-directed graphing. We treat the conflict graph as a small physics simulation:

- Semantically aligned nodes attract (Hooke's Law-style springs).
- Contradictory or ATTACKING nodes repel (Coulomb-style forces).
- Node mass increases with structural importance (centrality, number of incident edges, and role as an Axiom or Fear node).

The user experiences four distinct phases.

Phase 1: The Cloud (Entropy State)

Initially, Tacitus renders the dispute as a chaotic cloud.

- Nodes are clustered by time, not logic.
- Visual density signals the intensity of the Entropy Surface: long threads, multiple topics, little structure.
- For leaders, this makes the problem visceral: "This is what our conflict feels like."

Phase 2: The Polarization (Fission State)

As the Conflict Ontology is applied, the simulation begins to pull the graph apart.

- Arguments and nodes associated with Party A drift left; those associated with Party B drift right.
- Supporting subgraphs coagulate around each side's core narratives and axioms.

The Gap—the empty space between clusters—is a quantitative and visual representation of Narrative Asymmetry. The wider the gap, the deeper the ideological or normative divide.

Phase 3: The Gravity (Latent State)

Within each polarized cluster, Tacitus computes node centrality and mass.

- Axiom Nodes and high-weight Fear Nodes sink into the center-depth of each cluster.
- Hundreds of small surface-level argument nodes orbit these heavy cores.

Visual insight: 80% of the visible noise is orbiting one or two unstated axioms. This makes the real work of mediation explicit: addressing axioms, not just trading claims.

Phase 4: The Bridge (Resolution State)

Tacitus then searches for and highlights Golden Threads:

- These are BRIDGE edges with high betweenness centrality—paths that cross the divide and sit on many of the shortest routes between the two polarized clusters.
- Often, these are modest statements: a shared definition, a narrow procedural concession, a joint recognition of risk.

User Action: "Scroll to Crystallize."

By scrolling or filtering, users can progressively filter out low-weight nodes (rhetorical flourishes, duplicated complaints). What remains is a skeleton of Golden Threads: the minimum articulation of potential common ground.

■■
[05] ARCHITECTURE — THE "HABERMAS MACHINE"
■■

Tacitus is not a chatbot. It is a Deep Research Engine for conflict.

Conceptually, Tacitus functions as a computational "Habermas Machine"—an idealized, internal communication environment that forces clarity, tests claims against evidence, and foregrounds mutual justification instead of raw power.

5.1 Email-Native Ingest

Tacitus is designed to sit where conflict already lives: in email and adjacent channels.

- Connectors to GSuite, O365/Exchange, and IMAP/SMTP pull in selected threads and attachments.
- Slack/Teams connectors ingest channel history and direct messages as needed.
- Access control follows existing enterprise identity and encryption; no parallel user management layer.

5.2 Multi-Agent Analysis

Once ingested, the corpus is processed by a council of AI agents, each with a specialized role. Example roles include:

- Forensic Agent
  Reconstructs timelines, traces document versions, and checks internal consistency and gaps (who knew what, when).

- Argument & Narrative Miner
  Segments conversations into turns; extracts Claims, Rebuttals, Concessions, narrative frames, and policy references; populates the Conflict Ontology.

- Policy & Precedent Agent
  Uses Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) to link claims to internal policies, contracts, and historical decisions.

- Psychological Agent
  Infers plausible Fear and Axiom Nodes, carefully flagged as hypotheses requiring human review.

- Game-Theoretic Agent
  Identifies zero-sum incentive structures, commitment problems, and possible win–win zones.

Agents critique each other's outputs. No single agent's view propagates without cross-examination.

5.3 Graph Synthesis & RAG

The outputs of the agents are fused into a Conflict Graph:

- Nodes and edges are created, typed, and cross-linked.
- Every graph element maintains provenance: it points back to the exact text span and document from which it was inferred.

On top of this graph, a RAG layer:

- Pulls in relevant internal documents (policies, past settlements, board minutes) and trusted external references (standards, regulations).
- Allows Tacitus to answer not just "what is claimed?" but "how this claim interacts with clause 4.3 of your code of conduct" or "what you did in a similar case in 2022."

5.4 The Common Ground Search Engine

The primary user interface is a queryable conflict map with explorable visualizations.

Example queries:

- "Show me all instances where both parties implicitly agreed on the definition of safety."
- "Highlight concessions made by Party A that were not reciprocated within 30 days."
- "Identify axioms that both parties share about customer trust."

Results are rendered as Golden Threads on the visualization and exportable as structured briefs for HR, founders, mediators, or political envoys.

Tacitus does not propose a single solution. It surfaces the space of viable settlements and

the information needed to discuss them.

■■
[06] STAKEHOLDERS & USE CASES
■■

Tacitus targets environments where the cost of failure is unacceptable and where communication already exists in written form.

Venture & Founders
Typical conflicts: co-founder breakups, equity splits, pivot disagreements, board-founder mistrust.
Tacitus value: decouples emotional burnout from cap-table logic. Maps "fear of dilution" separately from salary and control arguments; surfaces past agreements and concessions.

M&A Integration
Typical conflicts: culture clash, acquired team resistance, "us vs them" narratives post-closing.
Tacitus value: translates "laziness" versus "micromanagement" into structured axes like speed versus safety; identifies shared priorities around customers, compliance, and retention.

Strategic HR / Ethics
Typical conflicts: harassment, retaliation, promotion disputes, whistleblower cases.
Tacitus value: constructs timelines; links behaviors to policies and past cases; highlights power asymmetries and unresolved questions instead of burying them.

Civic & Government
Typical conflicts: urban planning disputes, community resistance, infrastructure projects.
Tacitus value: ingests thousands of citizen emails and comments; shows how "traffic" or "noise" complaints mask deeper fears about identity, displacement, or trust in officials.

Diplomacy & PeaceTech
Typical conflicts: negotiation deadlocks, peace process bottlenecks, narrative wars in public rhetoric.
Tacitus value: separates symbolic language from operative demands; maps red lines versus negotiable edges; retrieves analogous treaty language and compromise formulas.

In each domain, Tacitus allows leadership to see the structure of disagreement rather than drown in the transcript, test hypothetical settlements against both facts and axioms, and communicate with stakeholders using shared maps, not opaque internal memos.

■■
[07] GOVERNANCE, ETHICS, AND HUMAN-IN-THE-LOOP
■■

Tacitus is deliberately built for augmentation, not automation.

Core principles:

- Humans own judgment and responsibility.
  Tacitus provides structure, evidence, and options. Final decisions remain with accountable humans.

- Explainability by construction.
  Every recommendation is backed by a path through the Conflict Graph and by retrieved documents. There are no opaque scores.

- Email-native security.
  Data stays within enterprise-grade ecosystems; tenant isolation and role-based access match existing identity systems.

- Pluralism and power awareness.
  Tacitus is explicitly designed to surface narrative asymmetries and power imbalances, not wash them out in the name of synthetic neutrality.

- Operator control.
  Human operators can override, correct, or delete nodes and edges. The system learns from these interventions rather than treating them as anomalies.

The goal is not a mechanized mediator, but an analytic exoskeleton for people whose job is to navigate complex, emotionally loaded disputes.

■■
[08] CONCLUSION — CONCORDIA DISCORS
■■

The world does not need more ways to talk. It needs Resolution Technologies that make our existing communication intelligible.

Tacitus starts from a simple conviction:

Conflict is information and narrative asymmetry. Handle information with care, and it can become a path to peace.

By converting unstructured communication into a structured, navigable Conflict Graph, Tacitus turns the Tangle of modern disputes into a map where common ground is a search result, not a miracle.

For investors, this is a new category: Conflict Intelligence & Resolution Technologies—enterprise-grade, email-native, and grounded in rigorous argumentation theory and graph science.

For practitioners—founders, general counsels, HR leaders, mediators, diplomats—it is something quieter and more radical: a way to see clearly enough to act justly.

Tacitus.me
Signal Extraction. Conflict Resolution. Common Ground.