

**CONFLICT MATTERS: POWER TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

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**FIND YOUR STYLE UNDER STRESS**

Before we start:

- Take the online assessment
- Google: "Conflict Styles Assessment united states institute of peace"
- <https://www.usip.org/public-education/students/conflict-styles-assessment>
- Save a screenshot of your result

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**WAKE UP YOUR BRAIN**

Conflict makes me think of...

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**WHAT IS CONFLICT?**

- To come into collision or disagreement; be contradictory, at variance, or in opposition; clash:
- A fight, battle, or struggle
- A strife, controversy or quarrel
- A clash between individuals
- A heated argument, physical abuses and loss of peace and harmony.
- A serious disagreement or argument
- A mental struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or demands
- Antagonistic state or action

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**WHAT IS CRUCIAL CONVERSATION?**

A discussion between two or more people where

- (1) opinions vary
- (2) stakes are high
- (3) emotions run strong

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**SIGNS OF CONVERSATION KILLERS**

- What is your sign?
- Physiological explanation
- What happens in your body when you work out?

**Anger and Our Bodies**

When we get angry, our bodies have a reaction too! What happens to your body when you start to get angry?

2.8

8

**HOW TO STAY IN DIALOGUE WHEN ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS SCREAM (OR RUN AWAY)?**

2.9

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**THE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET OF EVERY GOOD NEGOTIATION**

*Tangible factors:* the price or the terms of agreement

*Intangible factors:* The underlying psychological motivations that may directly or indirectly influence the parties during a negotiation.

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**THE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET OF EVERY GOOD NEGOTIATION**

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# THE INTANGIBLES...

- Unconscious bias
- Expectation for give-and-take (multiple rounds of concession)
- Our nonverbals
- Emotions

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# LOW POWER POSES

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# LOW POWER POSES

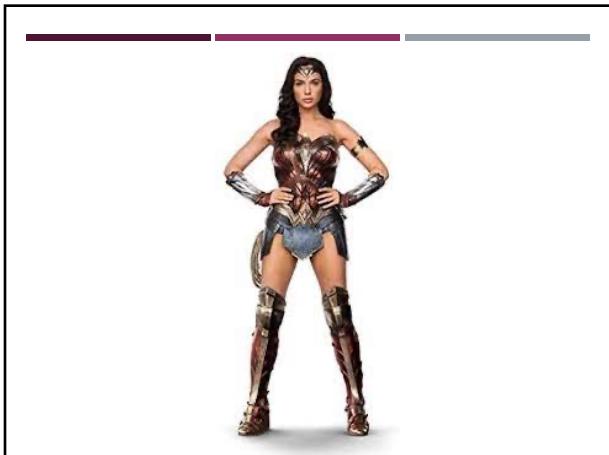
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# HIGH POWER POSES

2-18

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# LEARN TO IDENTIFY YOUR CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

- The Dual Concerns Model:
- Different profiles/st strategies to dealing with conflict

2-20

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### IS IT A COMPETITION?

You and your co-worker are both putting in for a promotion for the same position

Is it a competition?

2-23

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- ### WHEN SHOULD WE COMPETE?
1. One time transaction = no relationship
  2. The other side has no way to retaliate
  3. You have strong alternatives\*
- Alternatives are a game changer!
    - BATNA (acronym for Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement).
    - Alternatives can alter any rational decision making.
- 2-24

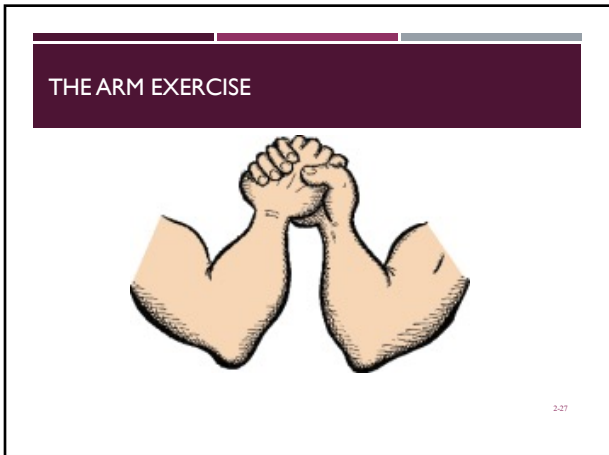
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### IS IT A COMPETITION?

- No relationship?
- No way to retaliate?
- Strong alternatives?

2-26

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### LEARN TO IDENTIFY YOUR CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

2-28

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**FIST FIGHT**

2-29

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- ❑ Hardball tactics
- ❑ Forcing your view
- ❑ Subtle manipulations
- ❑ Intimidation
- ❑ Ultimatums
- ❑ Verbal attacks
- ❑ Discredit others
- ❑ Make hurtful comments
- ❑ Borrow power from the boss

*“When we unleash the dogs of war, we must go where they take us.”*



2-30

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**WHEN SHOULD WE CHOOSE THE COMPETING APPROACH AT WORK?**

- When 'it is important' (what's important?)
- When it is urgent and quick decision need to be made
- When unpopular decisions are at hand
- When there is too much consideration
- When you are certain you are right
- When you are under attack

2-31

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**WHEN A DOG SINKS ITS TEETH INTO YOUR HAND...**




- If you treat the 'know it all' like they are nuts, they will just bite down deeper on their thinking.
- You need to lean into their irrationality to change the dynamic.
  1. Let them do their "know it all" talk...pause
  2. Lead a conversation about behavior change with them by first leading with a genuine compliment about their talents
  3. Once that is established, describe how their actions are self-defeating in a way that reinforces the strength you've highlighted.
- The world roots much more for the person who wasn't nice and became nice than for a person that was always nice.

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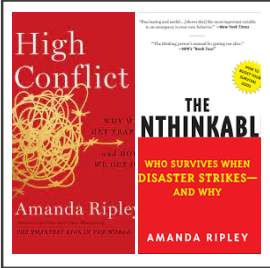
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**WHAT ARE HIGH CONFLICT FIRE STARTERS?**



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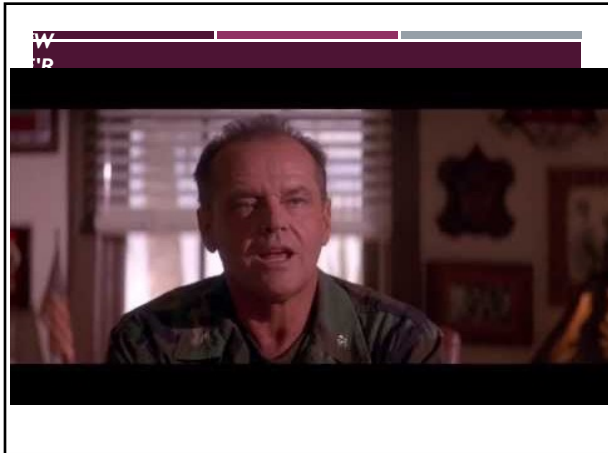
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- The magnetism of high conflict
- Everyone falls victim
- We are certain of our own righteousness
- Conflict changes the way our brain works

2-35


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### HIGH CONFLICT FIRE STARTERS

- Humiliation is the most underestimated force driving conflict
- When people act out of sheer outrage, humiliation, and bruised ego, they are making the most irrational and catastrophic decisions.
- Our brain processes humiliation like it processes physical pain



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### HOW TO PERFECTLY HUMILIATE YOUR OPPONENT (AKA "HOW TO CREATE YOUR MOST DANGEROUS ENEMY")



- Attack someone in a professions/rank where status and credibility matters
- Attack them in a public forum...the more witnesses the better the humiliation
- Attack things they value and hold dear: Especially things attached to their identity
- Attack their **identity** in a **public forum**
  - Congratulations! You just willingly handed your gun to your most dangerous enemy**
  - Humiliation is the nuclear bomb of the emotions
  - When you humiliate people - you basically just handed them your gun
  - Also – avoid asking people why they are angry**

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### THE MONSTERLY POWERFUL "HOW" QUESTION

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### RESIST BINARIES AND US VS. THEM LANGUAGE.

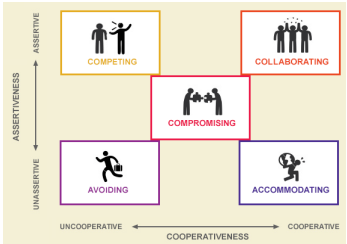
- When people get sorted into two groups it can lay the foundation for high conflict.
- Create multiple groups and keep mixing them up
- Makes it harder to "villainize" the other group
- Help people get out of their comfort zone teams



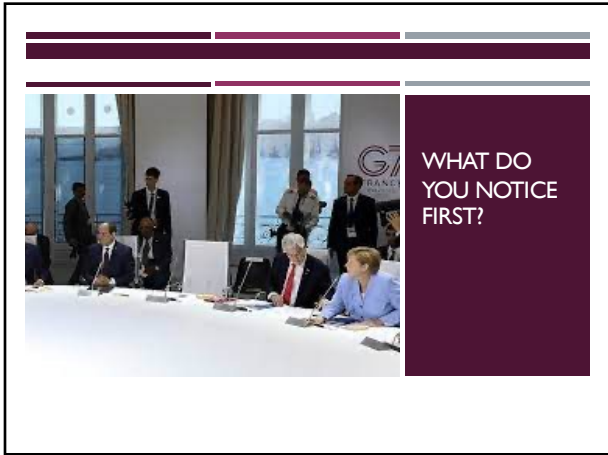
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### MORE WAYS TO HANDLE CONFLICT

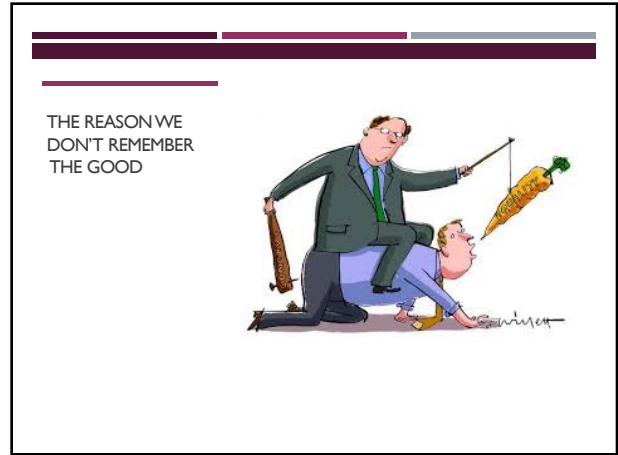
- Conflict has bad reputation
- We remember only the bad conflict – the one that breaks relationships
- What is the one thing that differentiates bad conflict from conflict?



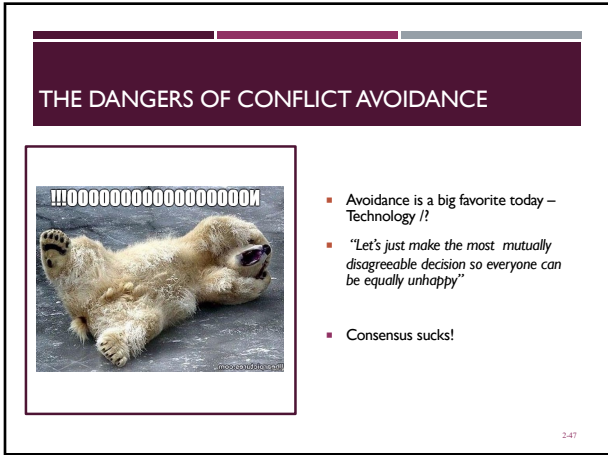
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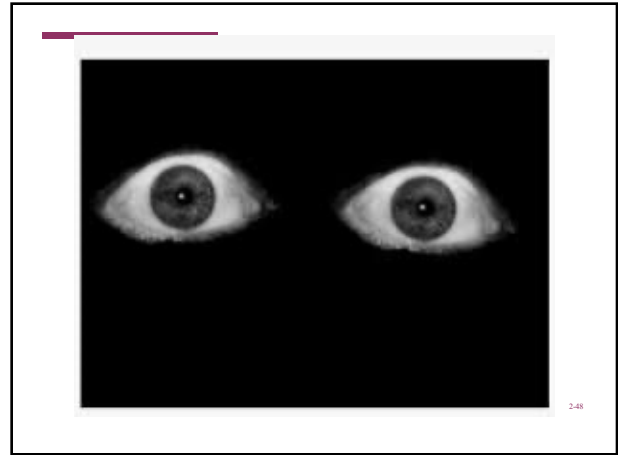
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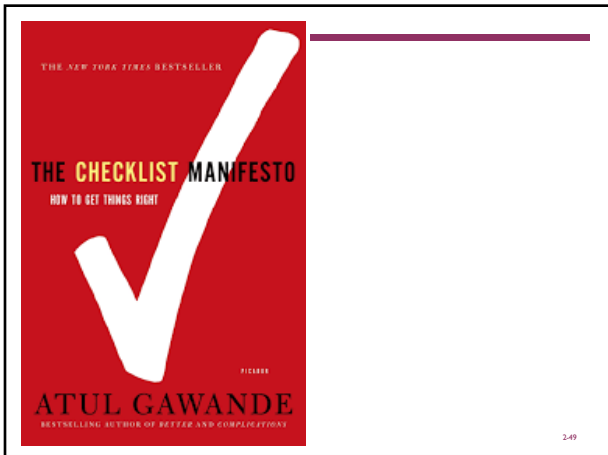
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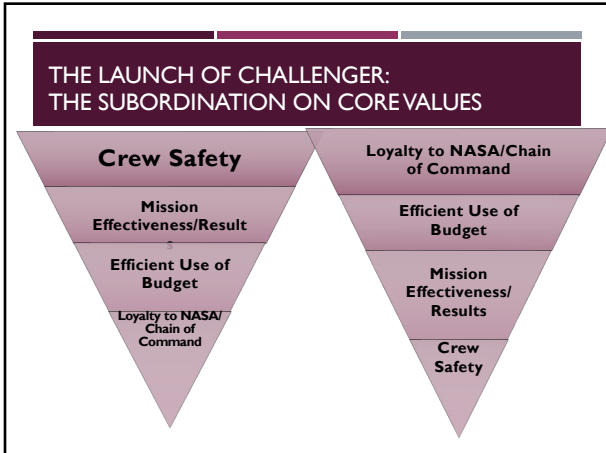
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### THE 2007–2008 FINANCIAL CRISIS

- Lack of openness for descent that results in catastrophic outcomes
- The low level investors warned about the risky dive into the business of subprime mortgages

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- The fourth-largest investment bank in the United States
- Low level investors KNEW that the deep dive of the company into the business of subprime mortgages is too risky and can cause a market collapse.
- Dick Fuld, The Gorilla of Wall Street
- Most kept quite, those who spoke up suffered severe consequences
- One of the primary contributor to the financial collapse.

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### THE DANGERS OF AVOIDING CONFLICT

You could never arrive to the right decision (groupthink, culture of deference)

You will only move the conflict from a controlled healthy environment to a poisonous environment

You will center the conflict around a person instead of an issue

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### PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE – A SPECIAL CATEGORY OF AVOIDANCE

- Hard to call out and confront
- Difficult to point at directly without sometimes sounding "over-sensitive," or "dramatic"

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### EMOTIONAL TERRORISTS' TORTURE TECHNIQUES:

- Salute and stay mute
- Freeze your lower (aka "The Cold Shoulder")
- Hints/ Innuendos
- Sarcasm
- Withdrawing comments ("I'm not going to argue about it")
- Play the martyr
- Looks of disgust/scoff
- Deflection
- Projection

(Whatever the technique is, the overall method is the same, we go to silence)

### Things that Passive Aggressive People Say...

1. \_
2. \_ \_ \_ \_
3. \_ \_ \_ \_
4. \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
5. \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
6. I'm not \_ \_ \_

### BONUS ROUND

1. ?
2. ?


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**EMOTIONAL TERRORISTS' TORTURE TECHNIQUES:**

- ❑ Salute and stay mute
- ❑ Freeze your lover (aka "The Cold Shoulder")
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- ❑ Play the martyr
- ❑ Looks of disgust/coff
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- ❑ Projection

(Whatever the technique is, the overall method is the same, we go to silence)



**What is your "favorite" Passive Aggressive Quote?**

2-58

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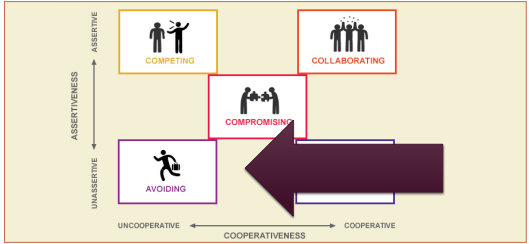
**gaslighting**

- What did I do to you? / I wouldn't have done that to you
- Everyone around you isn't the problem, the problem is YOU
- I am sorry you feel that way
- I don't remember saying that/ you're imagining things
- It's your behavior that makes me do the things I do
- You need help (you realize how crazy you sound right now?)
- It's your fault (whatever happens, it's always your fault)
- You're being too emotional/ you're overreacting (why are you so sensitive?! don't take it personally! clam down, you're bring so dramatic
- It's not a big deal (why are you making such a big deal out of it?)
- Why are you being so defensive? You are attacking me all the time

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**AVOID (I LOSE - YOU LOSE)**



1-60

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**WHEN SHOULD WE AVOID?**

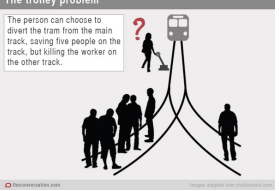
- When you have nothing to gain – you have everything to lose
- When emotions are high - "Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret" (Ambrose Bierce)
- When you do not have time
- When you are not prepared
- When you deal with people that will never EVER change
- Remember: avoiding is not forever!

2-61

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**The trolley problem**

The person can choose to divert the trolley from the main track, saving five people on the track, but killing the worker on the other track.



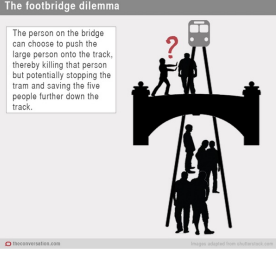
**THE IRRATIONALITY OF RATIONAL DECISION MAKING**

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**The footbridge dilemma**

The person on the bridge can choose to push the large person onto the track, thereby killing that person but potentially stopping the train and saving the five people further down the track.



**THE IRRATIONALITY OF RATIONAL DECISION MAKING**

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THE IRRATIONALITY OF RATIONAL DECISION MAKING

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THE IRRATIONALITY OF RATIONAL DECISION MAKING

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- Study Findings:
  - In "push scenario" emotions take control and decision making is longer
- A dual process brain:
  - "Automatic mode" - driven by our emotions
  - "Manual mode" - designed for the application of reason
  - Reason may confirm or override the emotional response
- Rationalization:
  - The action of attempting to explain or justify behavior or an attitude with logical reasons, even if these are not appropriate.

The trolley dilemma  
The person in the image has been asked to choose between the two options. The person who chose to switch the trolley to the side track with the baby was more likely to choose that option.

The trolley problem  
The person can choose to push the large person off the track, but killing the worker on the other track.

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### WHEN SHOULD WE AVOID?

- When you have nothing to gain – you have everything to lose
- When emotions are high - "Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret" (Ambrose Bierce)
- When you do not have time
- When you are not prepared
- When you deal with people that will never EVER change
- Remember: avoiding is not forever!

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### PLAN B: ACTIVATE WHEN YOU ARE ABOUT TO LOSE YOUR S#!@&!

- Aggression (+) principle = conviction
- Aggression (-) principle = hostility
- Stand up on a principle that emboldens you to create conviction

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### THE "1/6 2/3 1/6" CONCEPT BY HOWARD TEIBEL (TEIBEL EDUCATION CONSULTING)

WILL NEVER CHANGE - EVER! 1/6

IF YOU GIVE US THE ANSWERS WE'LL GO WITH YOU 2/3

WE'LL TAKE YOU DEAD FORWARD 1/6

CHANGE AGENTS: CHAMPIONS

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### THE "1/6 2/3 1/6" CONCEPT BY HOWARD TIBEL (TIBEL EDUCATION CONSULTING)

- People with difficult style ask tough questions - not wrong question, not unimportant questions. You might want to listen!
- People who see the world differently in you will have solutions to problems that you could never come up with.
- By listening you get buy-in- they might cross over to the 2/3 group.

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### HOW TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE THAT WILL NEVER (EVER) CHANGE?

71

### LET THE HATERS HATE...

#### HOW TO DEAL WITH "OFFICER 1/12"?

1. Respect
  - How do you show respect to people you don't respect? (or trust?)
  - Lord, help me forgive those who are different than me
  - Basic humanity
2. Listen
  - Listen empathetically
  - DO NOT TRY TO FIX THEN... just listen!

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### HOW TO DEAL WITH "OFFICER 1/12"?

3. IGNORE!

- Do not try to appease them...
- Do not try to convince them...
- Do not let them emotionally hijack you ...
- Do not focus your energy on them... do not... Do not... Do not... (Psst...they will NEVER change!)
- Gallup says that the best leaders spend a majority of their time with their best people
- Don't give oxygen to the haters, focus on your acers!

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### "OFFICER 1/12 NO LONGER HAS THE POWER"

Finally, I have already implemented some of your teachings in my work life. I gave the officer his sticky note this morning and reiterated how much I enjoy working with him. He folded it up and put it in the notebook in his pocket. We shared a great conversation afterward. I also decided that my "1/12 person" was no longer dictating my time and energy. I said "good morning" to him this morning and when he responded with a grumble, I did not get emotionally hijacked. Instead, I found two other officers to share my time with who were eager to catch up, tell stories, and even help me accomplish a couple of extra tasks. "Officer 1/12" no longer has the power! In an exercise taught by Jim Horner on Wednesday, I answered a question in specific relation to a 1/12 personality. Turns out it was the right answer, albeit not one that I would have given just 24 hours prior.


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### WORK ON YOU FIRST AND OTHERS SECOND – THE ONLY PERSON YOU CAN CHANGE IS YOU!

- Dale Carnegie says, "Decide just how much anxiety a thing may be worth and refuse to give it more."
- This too shall pass.
- Cuss?

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### WHEN A DOG SINKS ITS TEETH INTO YOUR HAND...



- If you treat the 'know it all' like they are nuts, they will just bite down deeper on their thinking.
- You need to lean into their irrationality to change the dynamic.
  1. Let them do their "know it all" talk...pause
  2. Lead a conversation about behavior change with them by first leading with a genuine compliment about their talents.
  3. Once that is established, describe how their actions are self-defeating in a way that reinforces the strength you've highlighted.
- The world roots much more for the person who wasn't nice and became nice than for a person that was always nice.

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### PLAN B: ACTIVATE WHEN YOU ARE ABOUT TO LOSE YOUR S#!@&!



- Look into their left eye (connected to their right emotional brain) and imagine you are looking into the eye of a hurricane
- Know the people who push your buttons and be prepared so you're not blindsided by their response
- Do no avoid the conflict - your people are watching
- Great leaders can be confronted by anyone and in anyway and deal with it instead of avoiding it.


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### A Cultural Misfit?



## CULTURE BEATS TALENT AGAIN... AND AGAIN... AND AGAIN...

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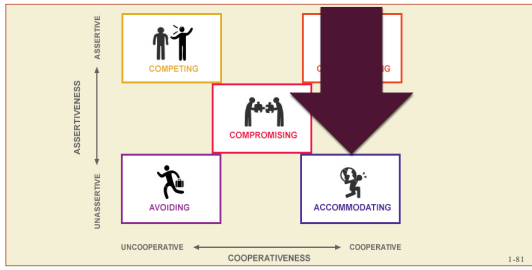
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### ACCOMMODATE (I LOSE - YOU WIN)




The diagram is a 2x2 matrix with 'ASSERTIVENESS' on the vertical axis (ranging from UNASSERTIVE at the bottom to ASSERTIVE at the top) and 'COOPERATIVENESS' on the horizontal axis (ranging from UNCOOPERATIVE on the left to COOPERATIVE on the right). A large downward-pointing arrow is positioned over the 'COMPROMISING' box. The four quadrants are:
 

- Top-Left (Competing): High assertiveness, low cooperativeness.
- Top-Right (Collaborating): High assertiveness, high cooperativeness.
- Bottom-Left (Avoiding): Low assertiveness, low cooperativeness.
- Bottom-Right (Accommodating): Low assertiveness, high cooperativeness.

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### WHEN SHOULD WE ACCOMMODATE? GIVE THE "GIFT" OF ACCOMMODATION WHEN:

- Repairing the relationship is more important than the issue
- You could lose something you cannot afford losing
- You are at fault
- They know they can crush you, you know they can crush you and they know you know they crush you - **bring your straw and suck it up!**



2.83

83

### gaslighting

- What did I do to you? / I wouldn't have done that to you
- Everyone around you isn't the problem, the problem is YOU
- I am sorry you feel that way
- I don't remember saying that/ you're imagining things
- It's your behavior that makes me do the things I do
- You need help (you realize how crazy you sound right now?)
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- You're being too emotional/ you're overreacting /why are you so sensitive?! don't take it personally/ clam down, you're bring so dramatic
- It's not a big deal (why are you making such a big deal out of it?)
- Why are you being so defensive? You are attacking me all the time

2.84

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off the mark.com by Mark Parisi



### WHEN SOMEONE IS OFFERING YOU A GREEK GIFT

2.85

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### WHAT IF THE PROBLEM IS MY BOSS? MANAGING UP WITHOUT SUCKING UP

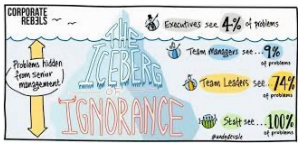
- Leadership is hard - don't assume that your boss is leading in the way he/she wants to lead
- Have the courage to have a real conversation and deliver a kind truth - most managers want to hear the truth
- Don't blow it up, don't suck up - humility is the keyword!
- Be vulnerable - Invite the people around you to coach you

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### GIVING YOUR BOSS UPWARD FEEDBACK THE LEARNING CONVERSATION MODEL

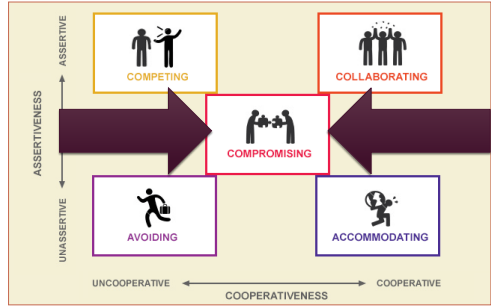
- Everyone needs feedback...including the boss
- Go into the conversation with the goal of learning something. Not teaching, not fixing, Learning!
- You need to plan a learning conversation
  - Identify the what: what this learning conversation is about?
  - Take responsibility: don't bring your boss a problem without bringing a solution!
  - Ask a learning question: a) what do you not know? b) What do you genuinely want to know?



1.87

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### COMPROMISE (I LOSE/WIN SOME - YOU LOSE/WIN SOME)



1.88

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## COLLABORATE (I WIN - YOU WIN)

**Key Steps in the collaborative Process:**

1. Identify and define the problem
2. Move from positions to interests
3. Generate alternative solutions
4. Evaluate and select among alternatives

3-89

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## WHEN SHOULD WE COLLABORATE?

- When you want to hear everybody's opinion (or, when you don't want to, but you know you should).
  - Should managers always hear everybody's opinion?

**Remember -**

- Over collaboration can be just as harmful to productivity as other types of conflict management strategies
- Die-hard collaborator are just as annoying as die-hard competitors

3-90

90

**“Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others.”**

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## SOMETIMES DEMOCRACY SUCKS

- Everyone's opinion should *not* be weighed equally.
- Tapping into everyone's opinions equally is sometimes a waste of time.
- An organization should run like a (good) monarchy.
- At the end of the day, if things do not go well, it is the king's @\$ that is on fire!
- When you are discerning into people's opinions, make sure you get input from the right ones.
- We let people weigh in so they can buy in *not* so they can get their way.

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## COALITIONS

|     | ROUND #1 | ROUND#2 |
|-----|----------|---------|
| AXB | 5 MIN    | 4 MIN   |
| AXC | 5 MIN    | 4 MIN   |
| BXC | 5 MIN    | 4 MIN   |

AXB 100% \$ 150  
 AXC 90% \$ 135  
 BXC 80% \$ 120

2-93

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## HOW TO “MAKE” GOOD CONFLICT?

- Build Trust
  - Get to know each other – personally.
- Mine for Conflict
  - Give real-time permission – allow people to debate and argue
  - Do not let people withdraw
  - Identify and define the problem
  - Move from positions to interests
- Learn to give an apology and learn to forgive (and teach your employees to do the same)

2-96

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## HOW CAN YOU WORK WITH PEOPLE YOU DO NOT TRUST?

**The failed trust dilemma**

- We can't walk away from the person – so we need to change the way we perceive trust
- Do not use 'mistrust' as a club to punish people
- Try to deal with trust around issues, not around a person.
- Try to separate motive from ability

2-98

98

## WHAT IF THE PROBLEM IS MY BOSS? MANAGING UP WITHOUT SUCKING UP

- Leadership is hard - don't assume that your boss is leading in the way he/she wants to lead
- Have the courage to have a real conversation and deliver a kind truth - most managers want to hear the truth
- Don't blow it up, don't suck up – humility is the keyword!
- Be vulnerable - Invite the people around you to coach you

2-99

99

## GIVING YOUR BOSS UPWARD FEEDBACK THE LEARNING CONVERSATION MODEL

- Everyone needs feedback...including the boss
- Go into the conversation with the goal of learning something. Not teaching, not fixing, Learning!
- You need to plan a learning conversation

1. **Identify the what:** what this learning conversation is about?
2. **Take responsibility:** don't bring your boss a problem without bringing a solution!
3. **Ask a learning question:** a) what do you **not** know? b) What do you **genuinely** want to know?

2-100

100

## SOCIAL CPR: ESSENTIAL STEPS TO SAVING A CONVERSATION

1. Self Awareness
  - Identify the conflict type and the appropriate approach
2. Look for signs of conversation killers
  - Physiological, violence, withdrawal
3. Tell yourself a different story – he/she does not feel safe
4. Refocus your brain on what you really want.
  - Ask :“What do I really want here?” “What do I really **don't** want here?”
5. Work on **you** first and **others** second – the only person you can change is you!
6. Not every conflict can be resolved – let. It. Go.
7. What if I can't remember any of this?
  - Trying something is better than doing nothing
  - Aim for progression not for perfection

2-101

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## TELL YOURSELF A DIFFERENT STORY

- Change the story you tell yourself - change the narrative
- It doesn't have to be true - anything to unhook yourself from your perspective
- Avoid scripting out a conversation, but have clarity on how you will start and the 2-3 points you need to convey.

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## SO WHAT IS THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF CONFLICT?

- Managing a conflict does **not** mean reaching consensus
- Analysis paralysis is a real thing
- People have an amazing capacity to support decisions they do not agree with as long as they know they have been heard
- *He that complies against his will - is of his own opinion still* (Samuel butler)

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## THE PROBLEM WITH PIGS AND CHICKENS...




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## What will do different tomorrow?

Connect with me on LinkedIn ("Galia Cohen, Ph.D. Tarleton")  
 Keep in touch [cohen@tarleton.edu](mailto:cohen@tarleton.edu)  
 Interested in an MPA?

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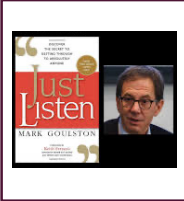
## 2. GIVE PEOPLE TIME AND A VENUE TO COMPLAIN 3. SET TIME LIMITS AND STICK TO THEM



- People don't always want a solution to their problems, they want the attention that comes with listening to their problems.
- Limit this time
- Let people know in advance how much time you have
- If you need to, book something else after the meeting
- Know how to end meetings on time

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## HOW TO LISTEN WHEN SOMEONE IS VENTING ?



- "Disclaimer: It's probably not a good idea to read this before you eat"
- Most people don't know how to listen to someone venting
  - Option 1: jump in and give advice
  - Option 2: sit there silently without saying a word
- People who are venting have an emotional absciss
- The **FAW** Model
  1. What are you most **frustrated** about?
    - Identify emotionally charged words ("never" "screwed up")
    - Use conversation deepeners ("say more about it", "really?")
  2. What are you most **angry** about?
  3. What are you really **worried** about?
- Wrap it up "what can we do about it?"

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