

Conflict Management

Styles of Conflict Management

Competing: Individual pursues his or her interests at another's expense

Forms of Competition: Standing up for one's rights, defending one's position or belief, or trying to win

Accommodating: Individual neglects his/her own interests to satisfy another

Forms of Accommodation: selfless generosity or charity, obeying another when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Avoiding: Individual does not deal with conflict

Forms of Avoidance: sidestepping the issue or conflict, postponing the issue until another or better time, or withdrawing from situation

Compromising: Individual seeks to find expedient, mutually acceptable solution which somewhat satisfies both parties' needs

Forms of Compromise: splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking middle ground

Collaboration: Individual seeks to find solution which fully satisfies both parties

Collaboration is the style most recommended for student organizations because it allows both parties to be fully satisfied, it allows for creativity in developing resolution, and it gives participants a sense of accomplishment that they have together resolved the issue without losing anything. Here are the steps for collaboration:

1. Determine the *nature of the conflict* - Is it a philosophical issue (decisions that affect the whole group should be voted upon by all membership) or a difference of expectations (group members thought a certain event would count towards required service hours and it didn't)?
2. State the *real effect the conflict has on you* If all members get to vote on every decision, it will take the organization a much longer time to make decisions and some things may not be accomplished since the organization only meets once per month.
3. *Listen carefully to the other person* Ask why they feel the way they feel? Why is their stance so important to them? What is the real effect of this issue on them? What do they see as the conflict?
4. Initiate the *problem-solving process*:
 - Clarify the issue - What is the real problem/issue at hand?
 - Discuss each person's wants and needs.

- Generate a list of all possible solutions - Be creative.
- Decide together on the solution most acceptable to both parties.
- Discuss how solution will be implemented.
- Develop process to evaluate solution after specified time.
- Discuss how discrepancies/problems with the solution will be handled.