

Conflict Competence Framework

Conflict Competence is the ability to develop and use cognitive, attitudinal, emotional, and behavioral skills that enhance beneficial outcomes of disagreement and/or dissent while reducing the likelihood of escalation or harm.

Conflict Intelligence

Recognizes and acknowledges when there is disagreement and/or dissent, and understands the sources and dynamics driving it. Uses interest-based negotiation, facilitation, and alternative dispute resolution concepts and skills that are appropriate for the context and stakeholders to strengthen mission effectiveness. Contributes to organization knowledge and competence in managing difficult situations, disagreement, and dissent.

Composed Presence

Demonstrates emotional intelligence through self-awareness and self-regulation when interacting with internal and external stakeholders. Identifies when and how emotions have been sparked in conflict. Possesses the ability to start, stop and/or adjust actions to manage emotions and use them to connect with and relate to others.

Communication for Influence

Listens actively and asks strategic questions to create opportunities for stakeholders to share their concerns, needs, and desired outcomes. Communicates in a manner appropriate to the context and stakeholders to build shared value. Navigates opposing viewpoints to build mutual understanding. Fosters a collaborative work environment to prevent or manage dissent and disagreement.

Growth Mindset

Demonstrates an authentic desire to include, understand, and learn from others with different viewpoints. Possesses the ability to adjust to changes in, learn from, and move beyond conflict conditions and environments.

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Competency	BASIC <i>Sustained application in individual interactions.</i>	INTERMEDIATE <i>Sustained application in a variety of situations and within teams and small groups.</i>	ADVANCED <i>Sustained application in complex situations across large multicultural groups and the organization.</i>	EXPERT <i>Sustained application in highly complex situations organization and enterprise-wide; able to innovate and formulate strategies; consistently models behaviors for others.</i>
Conflict Intelligence				
	Recognizes and acknowledges when there is disagreement and/or dissent.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Acknowledges when disagreement and/or dissent arises.	Acknowledges and anticipates issues of disagreement and/or dissent in complex interpersonal interactions.	Acknowledges and anticipates issues of disagreement and/or dissent among groups within the organization.	Acknowledges and anticipates issues of disagreement and/or dissent across the organization and with external stakeholders.
	Recognizes when conflict is productive and when it is destructive.	Brings difficult or critical issues within a team into the open at the earliest appropriate moment to prevent escalation.	Works to navigate disagreement and/or dissent that could affect organization goals.	Acts to strategically highlight and address organization or enterprise level disagreement and/or dissent.
	Understands the sources and dynamics driving disagreement and/or dissent.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Recognizes potential causes of conflict.	Identifies how team members communicate and interact together and leverages this knowledge to effectively achieve the team's goals.	Confronts opposition cautiously and observes the conflict with an assessment of the risks and potential damage to the organization.	Conducts strategic analyses of the sources and dynamics of disagreement and/or dissent that could affect mission effectiveness.
	Understands the difference between positions, interests, and needs.	Helps team members remain focused on interests and needs and away from entrenched positions and personal attacks.	Assumes responsibility for one's own actions and the consequences for actions undertaken and decisions made.	Works with multiple stakeholders to identify common ground in interests and needs and agree on mutually-satisfactory solutions.
	Uses interest-based negotiation, facilitation, and alternative dispute resolution concepts and skills that are appropriate for the context and stakeholders to strengthen mission effectiveness.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Recognizes own typical response to conflict situations.	Resolves issues by meeting one-on-one with team members and takes action to address employee grievances.	Understands domestic and international negotiating styles and demonstrates the necessary skills to manage conflict in diverse environments.	Successfully leads negotiations on organization strategy, taking well thought-out, impactful actions to reach an agreement.

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	Knows different approaches to addressing disagreement and dissent.	Facilitates interpersonal and team workplace conflicts effectively using interest-based negotiation, facilitation, and alternative dispute resolution concepts and skills.	Facilitates effectively within and between groups in the organization to advance mission effectiveness using interest-based negotiation and alternative dispute resolution concepts and skills.	Facilitates effectively across the organization and with external stakeholders to advance mission effectiveness using interest-based negotiation and alternative dispute resolution concepts and skills.
	Knows the benefits of coordination, cooperation, and collaboration.	Manages conflict sensitively and fairly while avoiding taking sides.	Proactively collaborates with organizational stakeholders to address disagreement, complaints and/or dissent.	Maintains a broad, strategic perspective while focusing on crucial details in engaging organizational and enterprise-level conflict.
	Identifies where own actions are dependent on the action of others.	Identifies interrelated issues and concerns to address multiple facets of a difficult issue or conflict.	Builds consensus with organizational counterparts by considering input and promoting trust between various parties.	Champions creative solutions and develops partnerships to overcome antagonism and reach mutually beneficial outcomes with operationally value-added results for all stakeholders.
	Knows resources available for assistance in resolving disagreement and dissent.	Identifies and refers peers and subordinates with personal and professional issues to appropriate sources.	Addresses controversial issues based on an understanding of the context and stakeholders to maximize the chances of a favorable outcome.	Sets organization policies and expectations for managing conflict and working towards mutually beneficial outcomes.
	Contributes to organization knowledge and competence in managing difficult situations, disagreement, and dissent.			
	Knows basic concepts of conflict competence.	Provides guidance to others to improve conflict competence in teams.	Contributes to shaping organization practices and policies related to dispute resolution and conflict management.	Develops organization-wide policies and procedures to address underlying issues and conditions that contribute to conflict and risk mission effectiveness.
Composed Presence				
	Demonstrates emotional intelligence through self-awareness and self-regulation when interacting with internal and external stakeholders.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Is aware of own emotions and potential impact on others.	Expresses emotions honestly and respectfully, and manages one's response when emotions are running high.	Consistently acknowledges and validates emotional responses from self and others	Maintains a calm, open demeanor while resolving highly sensitive or controversial issues.
	Identifies when and how emotions have been sparked in conflict.			

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Illustrative Behaviors	Recognizes when emotions have been sparked in others.	Engages and validates the emotions of others.	Responds to others' emotions with empathy and without judgment.	Models the use of stress management techniques to manage high emotions.
	Possesses the ability to start, stop and/or adjust actions to manage emotions and use them to connect with and relate to others.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Selects an appropriate time to engage with others.	Takes initiative in making amends by reaching out to the other person when experiencing conflict.	Acts to restore calm in stressful situations through stress management tools and techniques.	Influences others and supports their capacity to manage their responses in difficult and high-emotion situations.
	Resists engaging in inappropriate interactions or impulsive behavior.	Displays emotions in a constructive manner.	Manages strong emotions or other stressors and takes action to respond constructively to the source of the problems.	Champions civility during conflict situations, promoting courteous behavior and confronting incivility.
	Knows how different expressions of emotion can escalate or deescalate conflict.	Recognizes and responds to the emotions that are fueling a conflict.	Maintains focus on operational needs and strategic objectives in stressful situations.	Maintains objectivity when one's own positions or opinions are challenged.
Communication for Influence				
	Listens actively and asks strategic questions to create opportunities for stakeholders to share their concerns, needs, and desired outcomes.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Listens attentively and patiently to others to demonstrate they have been heard.	Builds rapport by asking open-ended questions and accurately reflecting concerns or feelings expressed by others.	Encourages others to contribute their input and leaves people feeling their ideas have been heard, understood, and valued even when there is dissent or disagreement.	Asks strategic questions designed to elicit understanding when interacting with internal and external stakeholders.
	Checks own understanding of others' communication by restating what was heard and asking if understanding is accurate.	Actively listens and responds respectfully to all team members involved in disagreements and demonstrates understanding of opportunities, challenges, and desired outcomes.	Gives and receives feedback on how to more constructively engage with others to prevent, manage, or resolve conflict.	Creates opportunities to invite stakeholders to share concerns, needs, desired outcomes, and future agendas.

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	Refrains from immediate judgment and criticism of others' ideas, opinions, and perspectives.	Promotes mutual understanding and problem solving among team members to prevent escalation of issues.	Facilitates communication among groups within the organization to promote mutual understanding and achievement of shared goals.	Synthesizes multiple stakeholder perspectives to inspire and motivate all around a shared mission.
	Communicates in a manner appropriate to the context and stakeholders to build shared value.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Shares thoughts and opinions in a constructive manner even when difficult.	Presents difficult information with sensitivity to the feelings of others and focuses on the issue, situation, or behavior rather than the person.	Obtains buy-in from teams by communicating complex issues clearly and credibly and by carefully listening to all ideas.	Expresses one's perspective tactfully and influences others towards mutually beneficial outcomes when addressing organization-level controversial issues.
	Expresses genuine concern for the welfare of others.	Considers the views of others and responds to opposing views in a non-defensive manner.	Communicates effectively up the chain of command for organization-level actions and policies based on concerns and critical feedback from teams.	Models communication that improves understanding using active listening, responding, and asking strategic questions.
	Voices and listens to differing opinions while managing one's own defensive responses.	Communicates with sensitivity to others' needs, concerns and interests.	Understands others' complex interests or needs and underlying motivation, tests assumptions, and adjusts communication effectively.	Mentors others on approaches to improve communications during conflict within and among their teams.
	Understands that others may not share their perspective.	Considers cultural and identity differences of intended recipients of communications to increase likelihood of communication being received well.	Communicates effectively among multiple parties with differing needs, cultural norms, and personalities to develop mutual understanding.	Mentors others to respond effectively and respectfully to situations in which cultural miscommunication and/or barriers arise.
	Navigates opposing viewpoints to build mutual understanding.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Articulates own viewpoint to others clearly.	Maintains positive, productive working relationships despite differing perspectives and personalities.	Considers how various stakeholders experience the organization and evaluates issues and potential solutions from those different perspectives.	Reconciles conflicting perspectives and opinions to gain new insight into difficult situations.

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	Articulates own viewpoint to others courteously.	Demonstrates equal treatment of all parties with appreciation for their individual experiences.	Understands and respects different cultural backgrounds and perspectives and applies that knowledge to reducing conflicts based on cultural differences.	Manages conflicts arising at the strategic level due to competing objectives, limited resources, or differing perspectives.
	Fosters a collaborative work environment to prevent or manage dissent and disagreement.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Engages in a cooperative rather than a competitive manner when seeking to resolve differences.	Fosters a cooperative, rather than a competitive, work environment.	Influences contentious or strained group situations by promoting positive, cohesive group dynamics.	Assesses stressors and challenges to strategic-level actions or policies and engages dissent through collaborative methods.
	Contributes actively during deliberative processes.	Creates a working environment where conflict leads to positive change.	Fosters a workplace culture based on equitable treatment, trust, and recognition of value at all levels.	Leverages enterprise-level problems and leads change by engaging appropriate stakeholders and building consensus on organization-wide plans.
	Expresses concerns clearly and concisely.	Addresses employee concerns by providing accurate information to reduce conflict within the workplace.	Mitigates staff concerns regarding organization-wide issues by investigating allegations and taking appropriate action.	Leads managers through a consensus process on organization's response to controversial issues.
Growth Mindset				
	Demonstrates an authentic desire to include, understand, and learn from others with different viewpoints.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Expresses genuine curiosity to hear other ideas, perspectives, and experiences.	Demonstrates a passion for learning in areas that challenge established viewpoints.	Pursues opportunities for additional information that may be useful in the future for leveraging disagreement.	Models comfort with discomfort in high stakes, emotion-filled conflicts.
	Acknowledges that other viewpoints and experiences exist.	Assumes good faith participation of others until they recognize signs that good faith is not present.	Invites constructive criticism.	Mentors and guides others to appreciate continuous learning in order to appreciate differing viewpoints.
	Asks questions to clarify information.	Asks probing questions to better understand the perspectives and experiences of others.	Challenges the status quo and demonstrates creative thinking	Offers sustainable ideas and solutions that are inclusive of other viewpoints.

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			when evaluating and deciding on a course of action.	
	Possesses the ability to adjust to changes in, learn from, and move beyond conflict conditions and environments.			
Illustrative Behaviors	Avoids assigning blame.	Learns and moves on from challenges, mistakes, and setbacks.	Responds effectively to threats/deception/force tactics while maintaining curiosity regarding motivations.	Helps others regain motivation and commitment to long-term goals after major difficulties and setbacks.
	Acknowledges the possibility that one's own perspective is not the only valid perspective.	Engages team in after action learning to identify areas for improvement and build on areas of strength.	Uses learning from engaging in conflict to adapt responses to subsequent situations and conflict events.	Makes strategic connections between attitudes towards conflict engagement and group/organizational success.