

Managing Conflict in Multidisciplinary Teams

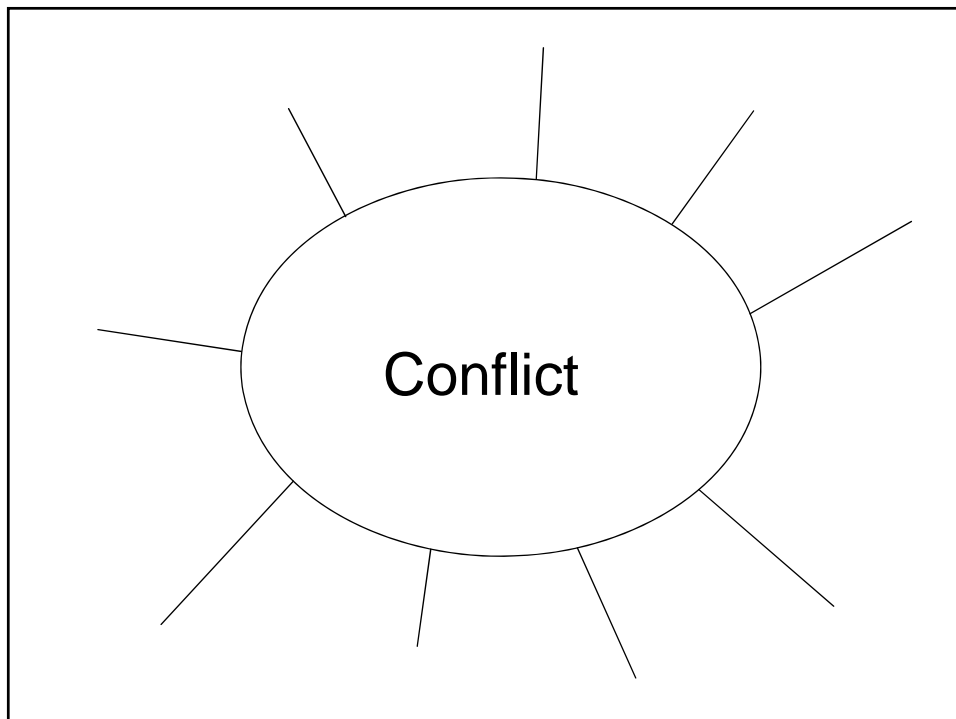
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Categorize and record the number of associations that fit in each of the following categories:

Positive

Negative

Neutral

Calculate the portion of associations that are positive
(positive/(positive + negative + neutral))

3

Types of Conflict

Conflicts of Interest: Incompatible activities are based on needs differences, scarcities of resources, and competition for rewards.

Controversy: One person's ideas, information, conclusions, theories, and opinions are incompatible with those of another.

Developmental Conflicts: Incompatible activities are based on the opposing forces of stability and change within a person.

Conceptual Conflicts: Incompatible ideas exist simultaneously in a person's mind.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

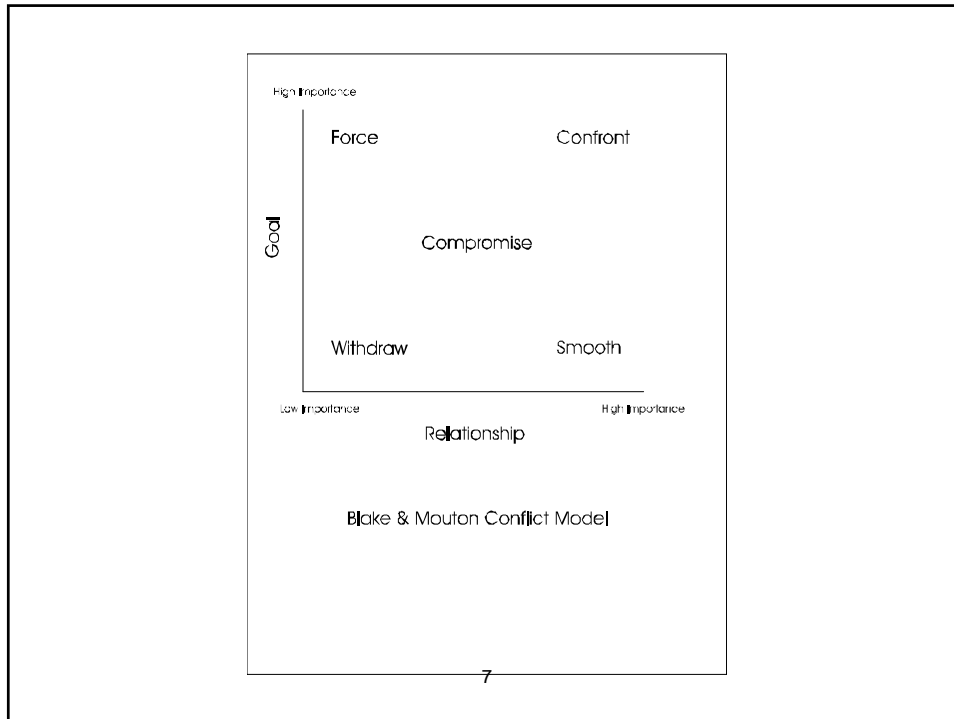
A **conflict of interest** exists when the actions of one person attempting to maximize his or her needs and benefits prevent, block, interfere with, injure, or in some way make less effective the actions of another person attempting to maximize his or her needs and benefits.

Deutsch, M. 1973. **The resolution of conflict.**
New Haven: Yale.

Blake & Mouton Conflict Model

Importance of the Goal

Importance of the Relationship



Conflict Strategies

Withdrawing -Neither the goal nor the relationship are important -you withdraw from the interaction.

Forcing -The task is important but not the relationship - use all your energy to get the task done.

Smoothing -The relationship is more important than the task. You want to be liked and accepted.

Compromising - Both task and relationship are important but there is a lack of time - you both gain and lose something.

Confronting -Task and relationship are equally important. You define the conflict as a problem-solving situation and resolve through negotiation.

Which strategies do effective team members use? Ineffective team members?

Under what conditions are each of these conflict strategies important?

What words and phrases are needed to set up each strategy?

The work life of a project manager is a life of conflict. Although conflict is not necessarily bad, it is an issue that has to be resolved by the project manager. Without excellent negotiation skills, the project manager has little chance for success

Taylor, J. 1998. *A survival guide for project managers*. AMACON.

Escalation of Conflicts – Strategies for Resolving

Informal Negotiation
Formal Negotiation
Mediation
Third-Party Mediation
Arbitration
Binding Arbitration
Litigation

11

Confrontation and Negotiation

A **confrontation** is the direct expression of one's view of the conflict and one's feelings about it while inviting the opposition to do the same. Suggested guidelines for confrontation are:

1. Do not "hit-and-run": confront only when there is time to jointly define the conflict and schedule a negotiating session.
2. Openly communicate one's feelings about and perceptions of the issues involved in the conflict, and try to do so in minimally threatening ways.
3. Accurately and fully comprehend opponent's views of the feelings about the conflict.

A successful confrontation sets up an opportunity to negotiate.

Negotiating Guidelines

Fisher & Ury - *Getting to Yes*

Four Steps in Principled Negotiation

1. Separate the people from the problem
2. Focus on interests, not positions
3. Create options,
4. Insist on standards

Negotiation is a conflict resolution process by which people who want to come to an agreement, but disagree about the way to resolve, try to work out a settlement.

Recommended steps in negotiating a conflict:

1. Confront the opposition.
2. Define the conflict mutually.
3. Communicate feelings and positions.
4. Communicate cooperative intentions.
5. Take the other person's perspective.
6. Coordinate the motivation to negotiate.
7. Reach an agreement that is satisfactory to both sides.

Heuristics for dealing with **conflicts**:

1. Do not withdraw from or ignore the conflict.
2. Do not engage in "win-lose" negotiations.
3. Assess for smoothing.
4. Compromise when time is short.
5. Confront to begin problem-solving negotiations.
6. Use your sense of humor.

Groupthink

Groups without conflict where there is a strong norm of "Concurrence Seeking"

Groupthink Video – CRM Films
<http://www.groupthinkfilm.com/>

Symptoms of Groupthink

Overestimation of the Group

Illusion of invulnerability
Belief in group morality

Closed Mindedness

Rationalization
Stereotyping Outgroups

Pressures Toward Uniformity

Self-censorship
Direct pressure
Mindguards
Illusion of unanimity

Strategies for Avoiding Groupthink

- Promote an open climate
- Avoid the isolation of the team
- Appoint critical evaluators
- Avoid being too directive