Module 3 Conflict Solving

Modules

1. Awareness

2. Critical Thinking

3. Conflict Solving

4. Enabling dialogue

5. Ethics

6. Reflective skills

7. Digital skills

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Coping Strategies Against Information Disorder

Objectives

✓ To raise awareness on the liaison between information disorder and conflicts

✓ To foster comprehension on the essence and causes of conflicts

✓ To explain the methods and techniques for conflict resolution

✓ To build skills on conflict resolution and living together

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Living Together and Conflict Solving

- Living Together in communities and groups involves the creation of create an environment where individuals can express themselves, understand each other, maintain respect, prevent major disputes, collaborate effectively, and, ultimately, live together in harmony. This is achieved via cultivation of open communication, respect of diversity, empathy, collective problem-solving, shared responsibilities, efficient management of conflicts and so on.

- **Conflict-solving skills are the cornerstone of harmonious co-existence and successful living together.**

- By mastering these skills, people can navigate the complexities of shared spaces (in living, education, work) and build positive, supportive relationships with their peers, family, co-workers, etc.

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Information Disorder and Conflicts

- Information disorder by definition obstructs harmonious co-existence in communities and groups.

- *Information disorder triggers conflicts* among individuals and groups. It attacks the bottom line of co-existence by creating and reinforcing feelings of mistrust, fear, exclusion and hostility toward perceived external and internal opponents.

- **Managing and solving conflicts caused by information disorder is main task for modern societies in all areas of life.**

- Promoting accurate information, fostering strong conflict resolution skills, and cultivating a sense of empathy and understanding are vital components of living together harmoniously. Addressing information disorder is crucial for promoting constructive dialogue and understanding, which, in turn, can contribute to more effective conflict resolution and harmonious living.
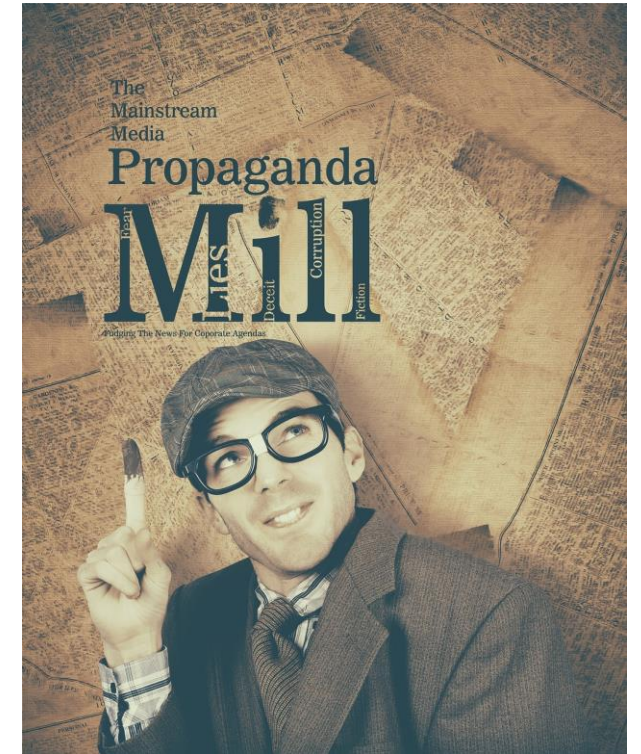
- However, when information disorder is in place, proper understudying and managing conflicts can outweigh the negative effects and bring back balance in group dynamics

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What is a Conflict?

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Conflict

is a serious disagreement about something important for an individual or a group of individuals.

The term comes from the Latin word *conflictus* meaning *"clash" or "collision"*

Whenever two or more people have different interests, values, goals, and understanding conflict arises.

A conflict

- Refers to all kinds of opposition or antagonistic interaction between or among individuals and groups

- Arises from differences in perceptions, interpretations, and judgments about a situation

- Results from a person's perception that there are incompatibilities or differences between one's own goals, values, or beliefs and those of others

- Exists whenever one party perceives that another party has hampered or is about to hamper, the accomplishment of goals
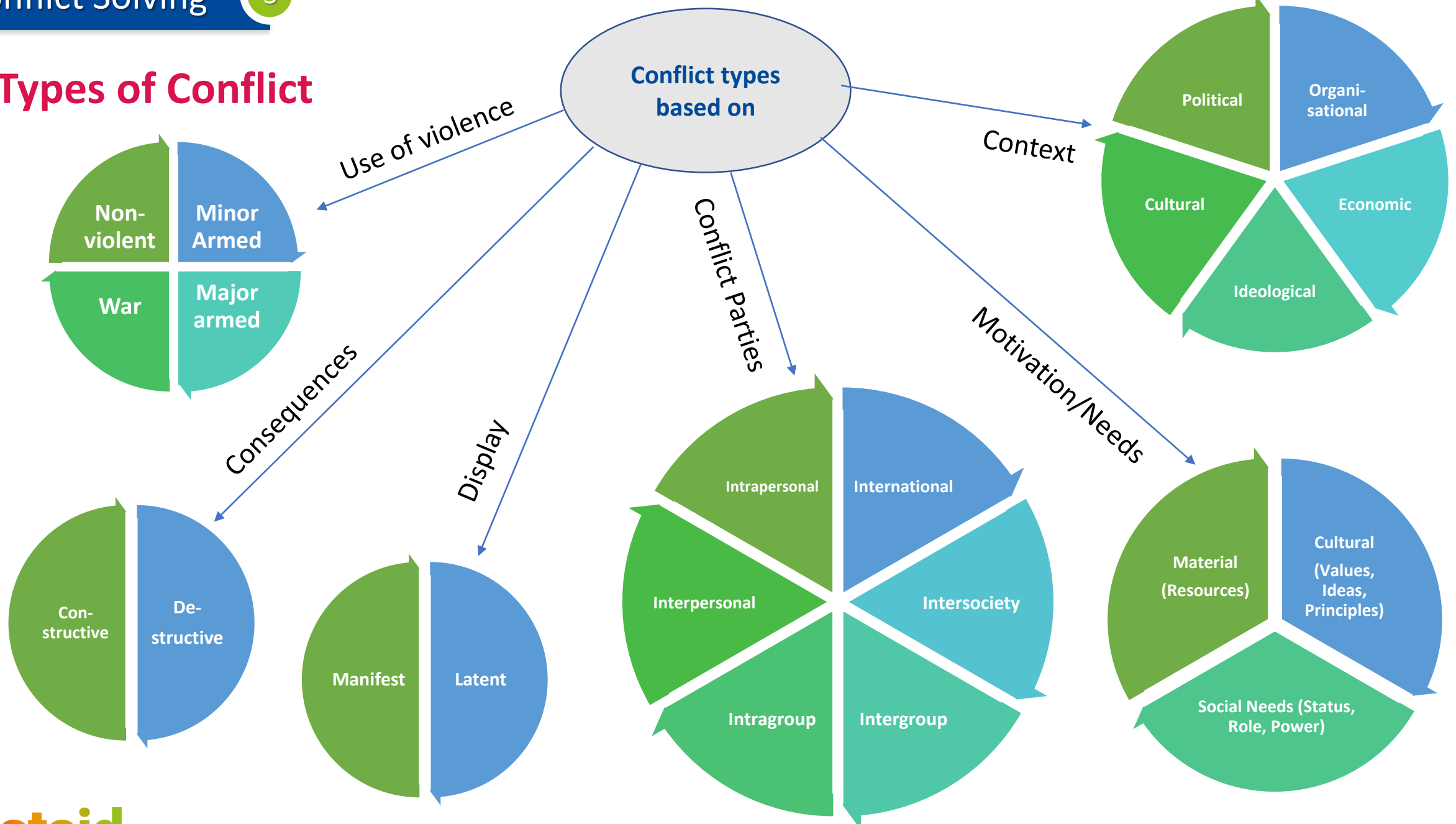
Types of Conflict

Conflict types based on

Use of violence

Non-violent | Minor Armed
War | Major armed

Context

Political | Organi-sational
Cultural | Economic
Ideological

Consequences

Con-structive | De-structive

Display

Manifest | Latent

Conflict Parties

Intrapersonal | International
Interpersonal | Intersociety
Intragroup | Intergroup

Motivation/Needs

Material (Resources) | Cultural (Values, Ideas, Principles)
Social Needs (Status, Role, Power)

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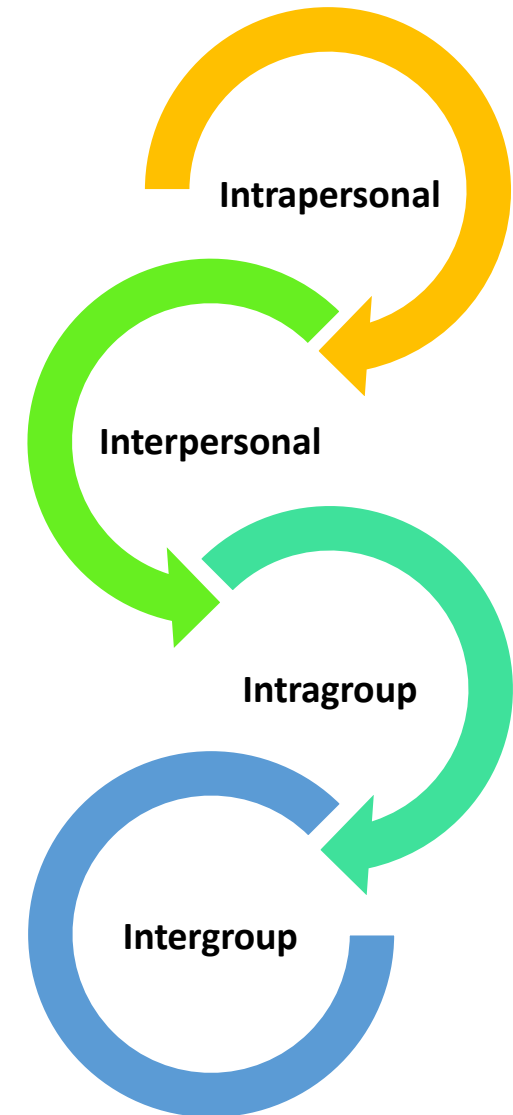
Actors in Conflict

- **Intrapersonal Conflict:** Conflict *within an individual's own thoughts* and emotions. This might involve inner struggles over decisions, values, or conflicting goals.

- **Interpersonal Conflict:** Conflict *between individuals* due to differences in personalities, communication styles, interests, or values. These conflicts often arise from misunderstandings or clashes in personal relationships.

- **Intragroup Conflict:** Conflict that occurs *within a single group or team*, such as among members of a family, classmates in school, colleagues in a workplace, or members of a community organisation.

- **Intergroup Conflict:** Conflict that arises *between different groups or teams*, often stemming from competition for resources, power, or status. This could include conflicts between ethnic, religious, or social groups.

Intrapersonal

Interpersonal

Intragroup

Intergroup

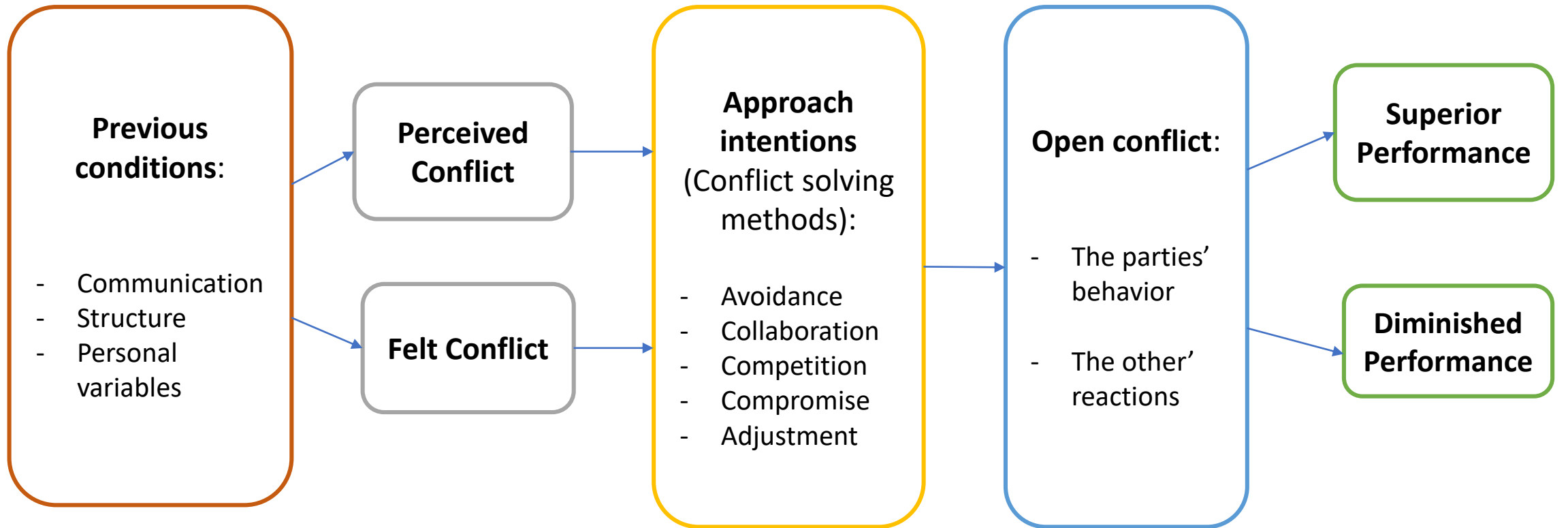costaid

Causes of conflicts

Conflicts in a group can arise from a variety of sources, often due to differences in opinions, interests, values, and other factors. Here are some common causes of conflicts in a group setting:

- **Personal Differences** – personal traits and emotions are common sources of conflict
- **Misunderstanding** - when group members do not understand their tasks, roles, rights and responsibilities within a group or do not interpret information objectively
- **Information Deficiency** – is very much linked with misunderstanding. Inadequate information sharing or unclear messages can create confusion and frustration.

- **Poor Communication** – Ambiguity, vagueness of statement, omission of critical points may result in confusion and formation of twisted opinions that lead to conflict
- **Goal Differences** - when group members have varying ideas about what the group should achieve or how goals should be prioritised, conflicts can arise over which direction to take

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How to approach conflicts in a group?

Traditional Approach	Modern Approach
Conflict is bad for the group	Conflict may have a positive effect on the group
Conflict is avoidable	Conflict is unavoidable
Conflict is caused by poor communication, lack of openness and trust within the group and failure to respond to the needs of the group members	Conflict is a natural occurrence in groups as individuals come with different values, beliefs, goals, perceptions. They could also arise from group structure, internal authority levels and so on.
Group leaders must avoid or suppress conflicts by eliminating the causes	Group leaders must manage conflicts: either solve it by considering all parties' interests or even stimulate functional conflicts to keep the group viable, self-critical and creative
Optimal group performance does not allow for conflict	Moderate level of conflict enhance group performance
The best way to deal with conflicts is to avoid them.	The best way to deal with conflicts is to manage and/or solve them.

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Conflict process

| Stage 1 Potential Opposition, Incompatibility | → | Stage 2 Recognition | → | Stage 3 Intention/Goals | → | Stage 4 Behaviour | → | Stage 5 Consequences |

Previous conditions:

- Communication
- Structure
- Personal variables

Perceived Conflict

Felt Conflict

Approach intentions (Conflict solving methods):

- Avoidance
- Collaboration
- Competition
- Compromise
- Adjustment

Open conflict:

- The parties' behavior

- The other' reactions

Superior Performance

Diminished Performance

Conflict solving vs Conflict management

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▪ **Conflict Solving**

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individuals, groups, or organisations in a
constructive and peaceful manner. It involves
finding solutions that satisfy the interests and
needs of all parties involved, while minimising
negative emotions and potential damage to
relationships.

Effective conflict solving aims to prevent escalation of the conflict and instead seeks to find common ground and mutually agreeable solutions

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problem-solving.

Unlike conflict solving, which aims to find a complete and final solution to a conflict, *conflict management focuses on the ongoing management of conflicts, recognising that some conflicts may not be fully resolved but can still be managed in a productive manner.*
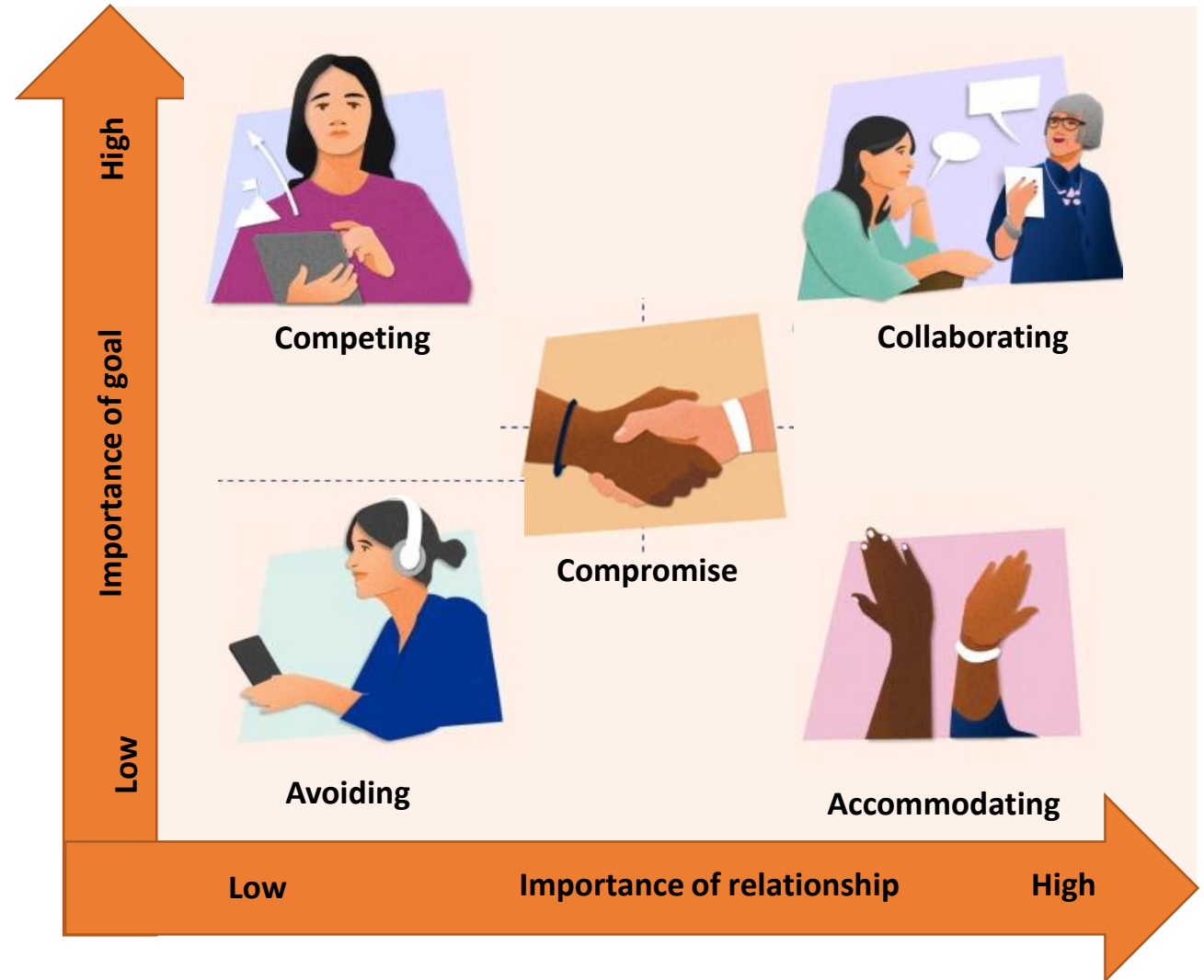
Methods for Solving Conflicts

From *the perspective of the actors in conflicts*, individuals have two primary motivations in conflict: the desire to obtain their own goals versus the desire to retain interpersonal relationships.

Based on this 5 methods for conflict-solving are devised:

Methods for Solving Conflicts

Competition (Win-Lose)

Used when

- Decisional fastness is of vital importance

- Problems can be solved only by unpopular means that are likely to be opposed by the majority of group members

- Vital group issues are at stake and the group leaders are convinced that their view is correct

- Against those taking a lenient attitude

Collaboration (Win-Win)

Used when it is necessary

- To find integrative solutions for interests of majour importance

- To combine opposing opinions

- To stimulate mutual learning

- To win everybody's adherence by considering multiple interests and by achieving general consensus

Methods for Solving Conflicts

Compromise

Used when

- Goals are important but the risk of triggering a conflict is too high

- Opponents have equal power and are determined to implement ideas that mutually exclusive

- A balance needs to be achieved

- An opportunity for honourable withdrawal needs to be provided when both competition and collaboration cannot entail a positive outcome

Avoidance

Used when

- The problem is unimportant or negligible when compared to other more pressing issues

- There is no change of satisfying your needs

- The timing or circumstances are not conducive to resolution

- Triggering a conflict is more plausible than solving the problem

- It is necessary to provide a cooling-off period and allow for further reflection before addressing the conflict

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Methods for Solving Conflicts

Adjustment (Accommodation)

Used

- When one reaches the conclusion that one's judgments are not correct

- To allow another better option to be applied

- To obtain a social loan in anticipation of future more important problems

- To minimise losses

- When the situation is out of control

- When harmony and stability are essential.

Conflict Solving Techniques

- **Define the subject of disagreement**

- **Narrow the area of dispute**

- **Widen the area of possible solutions**

- **Build and promote conflict-solving skills in individuals** such as self-awareness, self-control, problem-solving, collaboration, empathy, active listening, clear expression and assertive communication

- **Enhance communication where** the parties maintain self-respect, expresses personal needs, and manage to defend their own rights without abusing or dominating others

- **Refer to third-party mediation - m**ediators help parties see each other's perspectives and work toward a mutually agreeable solution

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Living Together Skills

Eventually, harmonious living together and conflict solving require a combination of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence such as:

- **Empathy – un**derstanding and sharing the feelings of others, putting yourself in their shoes to comprehend their perspective.

- **Respect and Tolerance –** appreciating and respect individual differences, including cultural, religious, and personal beliefs.

- **Active Listening –** paying full attention when others are speaking, and show that you are engaged in the conversation

- **Expressing Yourself - c**learly articulating your thoughts, feelings, and needs without aggression or blame.

- **Negotiation –** finding compromises that work for all parties involved in a disagreement.

- **Managing Anger – c**ontrolling one's emotions during conflicts, and avoid saying or doing things impulsively.

- **Teamwork and Collaboration – including** equitably sharing of benefits and responsibilities to avoid feelings of imbalance or resentment.

- **Patience and Understanding**

- **Self-awareness –** recognising one's own emotions and self-reflections

- **Positive Attitude – m**aintaining a positive outlook, focusing on the good aspects of the relationship and the people involved.

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Skills for Living and Working Together

Some of these skills have been codified as *transversal (personal) skills* in the multilingual classification of *European Skills, Competences, and Occupations, ESCO v.1.1.1*:

- **T2: Thinking skills and competences**

  Skills and competences relating to the ability to apply the mental processes of gathering, conceptualising, analysing, synthesising, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication. They include the ability to evaluate and use information of different kinds to plan activities, achieve goals, solve problems, deal with issues and perform complex tasks in routine and novel ways.

- **T3: Self-management skills and competences**

  Skills and competences requiring individuals to understand and control their own capabilities andlimitations and use this self-awareness to manage activities in a variety of contexts. They include the ability to act reflectively and responsibly, to accept feedback, adapting to change and to seek opportunities for personal and professional development.

- **T4: Social and communication skills and competences**

  Skills and competences relating to the ability to interact positively and productively with others. This is demonstrated by communicating ideas effectively and empathetically, coordinating one's own objectives and actions with those of others and acting in ways which are structured according to values, ensuring the well-being and progress of others, and offering leadership.

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The most important…

Keep in mind that:

- Conflicts are **an inherent part of group** dynamics - whenever individuals with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and interests come together to collaborate, conflicts can emerge due to the differing viewpoints and goals.

- **Intercultural and/or value-based conflicts can rarely be productive.**

- It is necessary **to look for win-win solutions** rather than solutions in which one wins and the other one loses.

- When a conflict arises or a problem needs to be solved, it is essential that everyone **focuses on solving the problem** and not on blaming others for it.

- Assess each choice objectively and **opt for the greater good**!
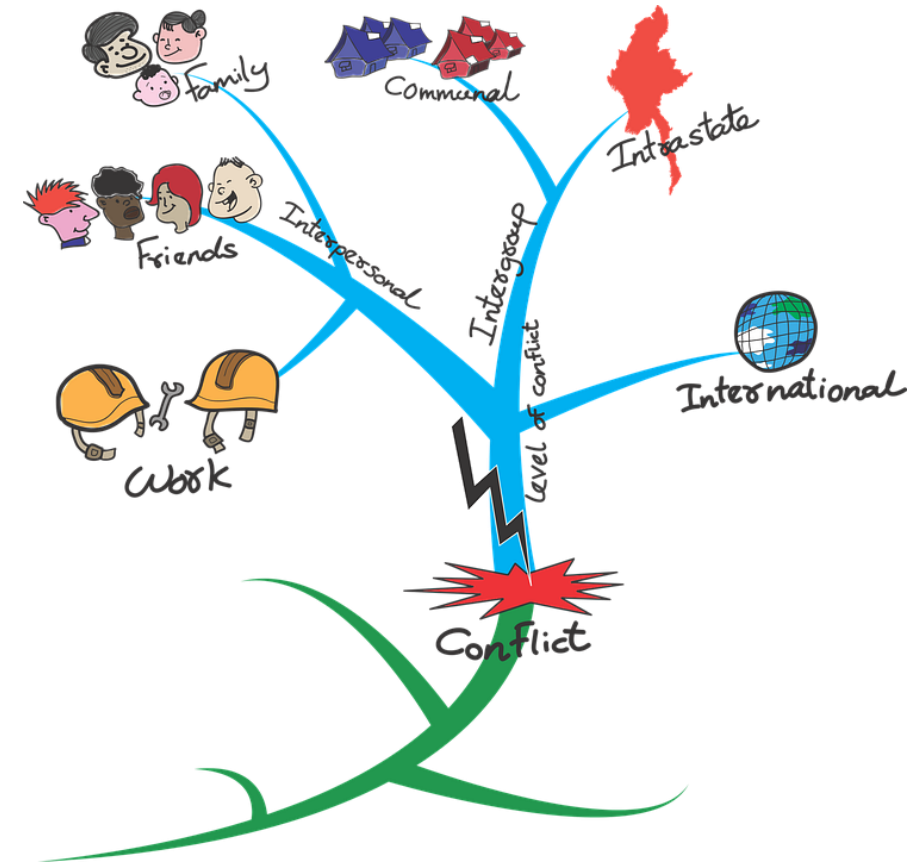
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Congratulations!
You have completed this part