

## Five Basic Methods for Resolving Conflict

Adapted from Thomas, Kenneth & Kilmann, Ralph. (1976). Thomas-Kilmann conflict MODE instrument.

METHODS	WHAT HAPPENS WHEN USED:	APPROPRIATE TO USE WHEN:	INAPPROPRIATE TO USE WHEN:
<b>1. Avoid/Deny</b>	Person denies existence of problem or refuses to engage. Results in lose/lose.	Issue is relatively unimportant. Timing is wrong, cooling off period is needed; short-term use.	Issue is important. When the issue will not disappear. Instead, it will grow. Losers are powerless to express themselves, their concerns.
<b>2. Accommodation</b>	Differences are played down; one person gives in; only surface harmony exists. Results in win/lose, resentment, defensiveness, and possible sabotage if issue remains suppressed.	Same as above, also when preservation of relationship is more important at the moment.	Reluctance to deal with conflict leads to evasion of an important issue. When others are ready and willing to deal with issue.
<b>3. Competition</b>	A person's authority, position, majority rule, or a persuasive minority settles the conflict. Best solution may not be discussed.	When power comes with position of authority. When this method has been agreed upon. When ethical or safety concerns are important.	Losers have no way to express needs; could result in future disruptions.
<b>4. Compromise/ Negotiation</b>	Everyone gives up something to meet midway. Results in win/lose if "middle of the road" position ignores the real diversity of the issue.	Everyone has enough leeway to give; resources or time are limited.	Original inflated position is unrealistic. Solution is too watered down to be effective. Everyone involved doubts commitment.
<b>5. Collaboration/ Integration</b>	Everyone recognizes the abilities and expertise of the others. Each person's interest is clear and emphasis is on best group solution. Results in win/win for all.	Time is available to complete the process. Everyone is committed and trained in use of process.	The conditions of time, abilities, and commitment are not present.