

Conflict Styles: Collaborating

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

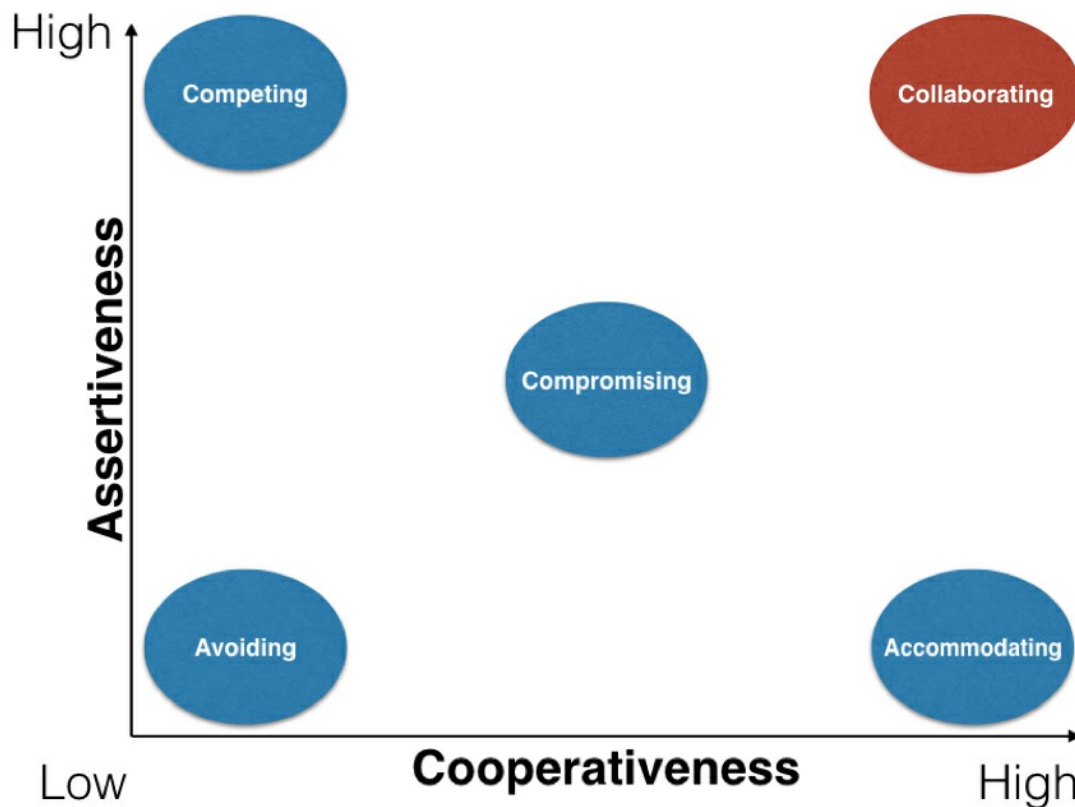
There are five different conflict styles. This lesson will discuss one of these styles and how it presents itself in various situations. The areas of focus include:

1. Collaborating as a Conflict Style

Recall that there are five different conflict styles. **Collaborating** is a conflict resolution style in which parties work jointly to try to meet all of each other's needs. Collaborating really focuses on finding a win-win solution.

As a style, collaborating is:

- High in **cooperativeness**
- High in **assertiveness**



Let's look at two examples of collaborating as a style.

EXAMPLE 1

Let's say you want to preserve the environmental integrity of a certain piece of land. However, there are farmers who use this land, and they want to protect their jobs. You could use a collaborative style to look at this issue and problem-solve in order to meet both your environmental need and the farmers' need to preserve jobs.

EXAMPLE 2

You can also find opportunities for collaboration in your personal life. Let's say there is a work-life balance issue at home. Your partner has just taken on some extra work duties, and it's really thrown a wrench into family living arrangements. You sit down with your partner to have a discussion because you want to ensure that the two of you and the kids have some quality time together. You also want to ensure that you can still share some of the household duties and that they won't all fall on the one spouse who's not taking on the extra responsibilities at work. You then collaborate to find a way to meet the needs of the changing work dynamic, as well as the family's needs.



TERMS TO KNOW

Collaborating

A conflict resolution style in which parties work jointly to try to meet all of each other's needs.

Cooperativeness

Behavior in which two parties work in concert to achieve their mutual and respective individual goals.

Assertiveness

Behavior in which a person confidently makes a statement without need of proof, affirming his/her rights without attacking.

2. Creation of Positive Outcomes / Prevention of Negative Outcomes

Most conflict-resolution processes and techniques work toward bringing parties together in a collaborative style, as this style is really focused on creating positive outcomes and preventing negative outcomes.

A **positive outcome** is a resolution to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his or her needs and/or reducing the likelihood of further conflict.

A **negative outcome** is a resolution that the party perceives as not meeting his or her needs and/or increasing the likelihood of further conflict.

IN CONTEXT

As an example of how collaboration creates positive outcomes and prevents negative outcomes, take a minute to consider accommodating, another style of conflict.

Accommodating, which was covered in another tutorial, is often the opposite of collaborating because as a style, accommodating is high in cooperativeness and low in assertiveness.

In the example of changing work/life responsibilities, someone with an accommodating style might give in and offer to take on extra responsibilities at home even though he/she maybe feels a little resentful about it. It's hard for this person to say no; he/she is uncomfortable being assertive or standing up for his/her needs.

Someone using the collaborative style would instead want to recognize the needs of both parties, then problem-solve so that all needs could be met.



THINK ABOUT IT

Do you tend towards the collaborating style as your preferred style? Can you think of a time when you responded to a conflict with this style?



BIG IDEA

It's important to remember that while collaborating might be the style that you tend towards and feel most

comfortable with (your preferred style), that doesn't mean it's the only way that you can respond in a conflict. There are other conflict styles, and you, as well as anyone, can respond in any number of ways to a particular conflict.



TERM TO KNOW

Positive/Negative Outcomes

Resolutions to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his/her needs and/or reducing likelihood of further conflict (positive) or not meeting his/her needs and/or increasing likelihood of further conflict (negative).



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about **collaborating as a style of conflict** and how this style focuses on creating **positive outcomes while preventing negative outcomes**. You now understand that even though collaborating may be your preferred style, you always have the ability to respond to conflict in a different way.

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TERMS TO KNOW

Assertiveness

Behavior in which a person confidently makes a statement without need of proof, affirming his/her rights without attacking another's.

Collaborating

A conflict resolution style in which parties work jointly to try to meet all of each others needs.

Cooperativeness

Behavior in which two parties work in concert to achieve their mutual and respective individual goals.

Positive/Negative Outcomes

Resolutions to a conflict that a party perceives as meeting his/her needs and/or reducing likelihood of further conflict (positive) or not meeting his/her needs and/or increasing likelihood of further conflict (negative).