# CAREER COMPASS
## Steer Your Career. Accelerate Our Mission.

# Finding Underlying and Unstated Issues

## Participant Workbook

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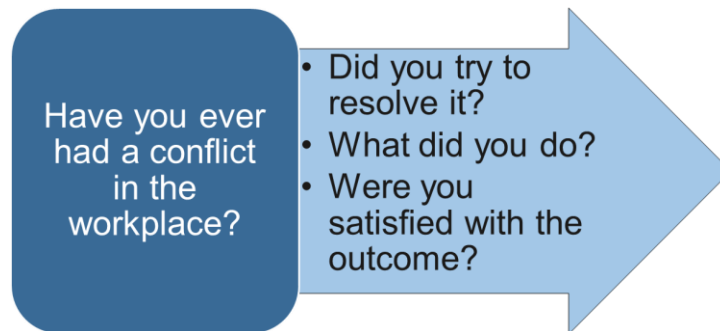
# Introduction

## Objectives:

- Learn how to determine underlying causes of conflict in the workplace
- Learn how to judge whether the conflict is positive or negative
- Assess your conflict management style and learn about others

## Agenda:

1. Introduction
2. How to find underlying issues
3. Conflict Resolution approaches

# Conflict

Have you ever had a conflict in the workplace?

- Did you try to resolve it?
- What did you do?
- Were you satisfied with the outcome?

*Have you ever had a conflict in the workplace? Did you try to resolve it? What did you do? Were you satisfied with the outcome? Use the space provided here to capture your response.*

*In your opinion, what is conflict? Use the space provided here to capture your response.*

## Definition:



**Conflict is defined as "A fight, battle, or struggle, especially a prolonged struggle; strife." (Dictionary.com)**

*Do you think conflict in the workplace is a good or bad thing? Use the space provided here to capture your response.*

# Misconceptions about Conflict:

- Conflict at work is unprofessional and should be avoided at all costs
- All conflict is caused by a breakdown in communication
- All conflicts can be resolved so that everyone is happy

# Positive vs. Negative Types of Conflict:

| Positive | Negative |
|---|---|
| • Can cause people to consider different ideas | • Can decrease morale |
| • Can increase participation | • Can cause disrespect |
| • Can increase commitment to the decisions and goals of the team | • Can cause high employee turnover |
| | • Can become highly personal and emotional |

# Scenario 1:

- A project lead opening arises on Maria's team.

- She thinks she's the perfect candidate, so when the role is given to someone else without her even being consulted, she feels very hurt.

- She hadn't told anyone she was interested in the position, but she assumed her accomplishments were being seen and would be rewarded.

***Would you classify the above conflict as positive or negative? Use the space provided here to capture your response.***

## Scenario 2:

- A group is evaluating several proposals for a project.

- The group has different opinions, and the conversation is lengthy and heated at times.

- After several hours, a decision that everyone can live with is made.

*Would you classify the above conflict as positive or negative? Use the space provided here to capture your response.*

## Riddle:

*What is the word that even in plain sight remains hidden?*

## Common Underlying Problems

- Poor communication
- Silos
- Personal issues
- Lack of mission
- Disengagement

*Think about any negative conflict you've had at work and whether one of the underlying reasons discussed was responsible. Are there any other underlying reasons for conflict you can think of that were not mentioned?*

## Tips for Finding Underlying Issues

- Embrace the idea of conflict
- Root cause analysis
- Active Listening
- Know your conflict style

# Conflict Management Style Quiz



**Question 1: When planning a retirement luncheon for a co-worker, an argument ensues about the best venue for it.  What do you do?**

a. Quietly slump down in your seat and hope no one asks your opinion
b. State your preference and persuade others
c. Offer suggestions that take everyone's preference into account
d. Go along with whatever is decided, regardless of whether you like it
e. Ask questions about everyone's preference and suggest something to make all happy

**Question 2: One of your coworkers speaks negatively about another coworker. What do you do?**

a.  Quickly exit the conversation

b.  Defend your friend and let your coworker know that you find his behavior inappropriate

c.  Admit that your friend has some faults, but is a good worker

d.  Listen and nod

e.  Get to the bottom of why your coworker feels this way and suggest common ground

**Question 3: You are attending a critical work meeting, where decisions that affect you and your job duties are being made. What do you do?**

a.  Keep out of the conversation- you feel uncomfortable drawing attention to yourself

b.  Use your knowledge on the subject to argue  your position

c.  Suggest an action that could be a "middle-ground" position

d.  Go along with whatever is decided, even if it unfairly puts more burden on you

e.  See where everyone is coming from and find a solution that meets everyone's interest

*Was there a letter you picked 2 or 3 times? That letter corresponds with the following conflict resolution style:*

*Mostly a: Circumventing*

*Mostly b: Competing*

*Mostly c: Compromising*

*Mostly d: Conceding*

*Mostly e: Collaborating*

# Conflict Resolution Approaches- The 5 Cs

## Circumvent (a)

- Avoiding the issue
- Use when picking your battles
- Use when you need more time to decide how you feel about an issue

## Concede (d)

- Putting others' concerns ahead of yours
- The "peacekeeper" mode
- Use when you realize you're wrong
- Use when the other party cares more about an issue

## Compete (b)

- Taking a firm stance
- Highly assertive with little or no allowance for opposing viewpoints
- Use "sparingly"
- Use when standing up for a moral or ethical issue

## Compromise (c)

- Finding an acceptable solution that partially satisfies all parties
- Makes everyone feel heard
- May be more time consuming than previous styles

## Collaborate (e)

- "Win-Win" approach
- All involved parties are satisfied with outcomes
- Focuses on interests, not positions

*Was the assessment of your conflict management style accurate? Why or why not? Use the space provided here to capture your response.*

# Final Reflection

- Think about your current work environment- are there underlying issues you may have not been aware of that you can see a bit more clearly now? Are they causing conflict?
- Will you address it? If so, how? Has your approach changed based on anything you learned today?

***Use the space provided to capture your response.***

# Contact Information

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- NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@navy.mil

# Development Resources

**Career Compass Resource Center:** An online source of information that provides NAVFAC civilian employees access to professional growth and development opportunities.

- https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ccrc

To access more content specific to the **Conflict Management** competency:

- https://www.navfac.navy.mil/conflict

**Career Compass Catalog:** an online tool which provides you with information to help you take ownership of your professional development. It identifies options to assist in planning and creating a successful career path within NAVFAC.

- https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ccc

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