



Productive Conflict at Work: Recognizing & Responding to the Seven Styles of Argument

1. The ACCOMMODATOR: Defers to others and minimizes their own need to avoid confrontation.

You should: → Draw out the Accommodator's ideas and opinions

2. The COLLABORATOR: Aims to find consensus. Wants everybody's point of view to be part of the solution.

You should: → Establish what consensus means with the parties.

3. The COMPETITOR: Approaches conflict as a zero-sum game. Seeks to dominate co-workers and leaves little room for negotiation.

You should: → Establish and maintain order/rules of engagement.

4. The DEALMAKER: Pursues a transactional approach. Seeks compromise solutions involving concessions from all parties.

You should: → Discuss the consequences of each concession with the parties.

5. The UP-AND-OVER ARGUER: Escalates conflict directly to superiors. Avoids directly confronting a work colleague.

You should: → Set and enforce clear rules, share them with the parties, and explain to leaders.

6. The CONFLICT-AVOIDER: Avoids confrontation altogether for the sake of protecting the peace.

You should: → Coach the Avoider. Call upon them in discussions, and draw out their opinions.

7. The DEVIL'S ADVOCATE: Argues for the sake of arguing. Often uses hypothetical questions to test the other person's position.

You should: → Ask them: What are the barriers that prevent you from accepting our current agreement?