

# **Maximizing Governance Communication Workshop**

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## How Conflict Escalates

When people hear another person's position, complaints or demands, it makes them fear that their needs will not be met. People then feel they must protect their needs by:

### Defending:

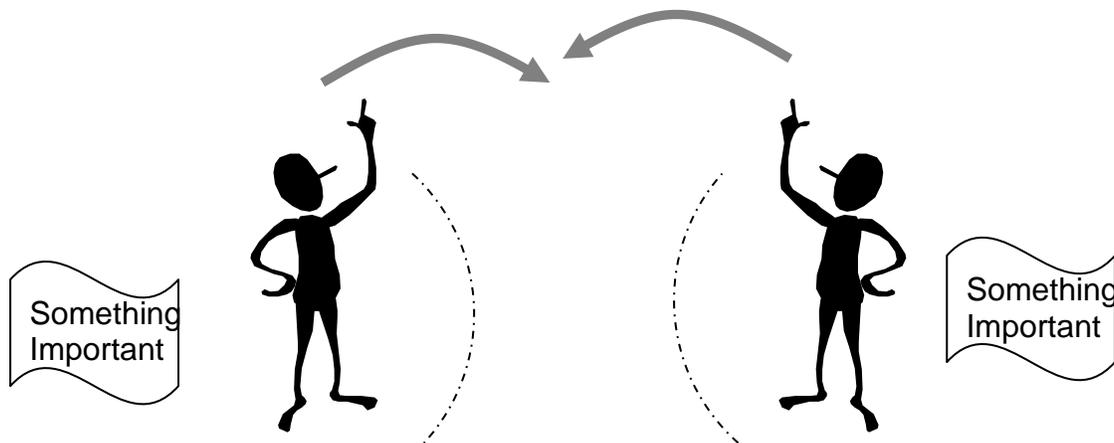
- their behaviour ("I'm not doing anything wrong.")
- their character ("I'm being reasonable.")
- getting others to take their side

### Attacking the source of the threat:

- trying to disempower the other by:
- threatening (scaring)
- insulting or humiliating ('you're incompetent')
- minimizing the other's complaint ("What are you getting so upset about?")
- finding other things to criticize or to complain about

### Cycle of Conflict Escalation

When the other hears the attacks, they respond similarly by defending themselves and attacking the other. This escalates the conflicts as both people shift their attention away from the problem and focus on defending themselves and attacking the other.



The effects of conflict escalation includes:

- distrust
- communication breakdown as both avoid hurtful interactions
- misunderstandings that result from unchecked assumptions
- each person's sense of legitimacy is undermined by the other's criticisms

- problem-solving is minimal as each spends energy on defending themselves and attacking the other.

## **Approaches to Conflict**

**Power-based approach:** using force to make someone to do something they would not otherwise do. Power-based approaches include the use of threats, manipulation, physical force, intimidation, public pressure, wars, strikes, acts of civil disobedience, etc

**Rights-based approach:** a general standard, a rule, a principle, a policy or a process. You ask, "What's the rule?" that applies to everyone and apply it in that instance. These standards may be explicit and codified in laws, policy manuals, contracts, religious moral codes, etc., or may be implicit in given cultures or contexts.

**Needs/Interests-based approach:** seeks to uncover and meet the needs of both parties. You ask, "What needs or underlying interests are you trying to address by taking a certain position. What is important to you about having what you're asking for?" Interest-based approaches seek to generate new ways of meeting as many needs as possible. \*

\*Adapted from Ury, Brett and Goldberg., Getting Disputes Resolved: Designing Systems to Cut the Costs of Conflict. The Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School, 1993.

## Four Personality and Conflict Styles Understanding and Valuing the Differences

<i>Drivers</i>	<i>Expressives</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results focused</li> <li>• Like fast paced environment</li> <li>• Most practical style: set high realistic goals</li> <li>• Make quick decisions even if only 55% sure</li> <li>• Excel in time management</li> <li>• Body language: erect, lean in, move fast, small less flowing gestures, serious facial expressions</li> <li>• Forthright in stating opinions and in making requests</li> <li>• Others may feel bulldozed when getting through agendas</li> <li>• May have a sincere concern for people, but just don't show it as much</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most flamboyant of styles</li> <li>• Thrive in limelight: like to tell jokes, be centre of attention etc.</li> <li>• Very energetic and always on the go</li> <li>• Like to socialize and work in groups</li> <li>• Dreamers—good vision and imagination</li> <li>• Like to talk in terms of generalizations</li> <li>• Often act first and think later</li> <li>• Not always good at time management</li> <li>• Body language: flowing gestures, lots of facial expression</li> <li>• May talk more than listen and monopolize conversation</li> <li>• Tend to think out loud</li> <li>• Tell as it is</li> <li>• People oriented</li> </ul>
<i>Analyticals</i>	<i>Amiables</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most perfectionist of styles</li> <li>• Sets high standards</li> <li>• Detail is important</li> <li>• Well-organized, do things 'by the book'</li> <li>• Needs data and information</li> <li>• Not a risk taker</li> <li>• Agonizes over decisions</li> <li>• Work well alone or with a small number of people</li> <li>• Body language: lean back, small gestures, not much eye contact, or facial expression</li> <li>• Quietest of styles: speak less often and think through before speaking</li> <li>• Tend to be indirect when making statement</li> <li>• Tend to speak about facts of case rather than the feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team player</li> <li>• Likes working in small groups or with another person</li> <li>• Don't seek the spotlight, and tend to encourage others</li> <li>• Often salvage other's worthwhile ideas</li> <li>• Need stable, clearly structured situation, because can get sidetracked helping others if others asked</li> <li>• Indecisive at decision-making but good at maintaining work structures</li> <li>• People-oriented: very easy-going and friendly</li> <li>• Body language: low key, less erect position, and eye contact</li> <li>• Doesn't speak a lot, and often slow in forming opinion until late in session</li> <li>• Often withholds judgment or criticisms</li> <li>• Needs to maintain pleasant relationships</li> </ul>

## How You Can Flex for Each Style

<b>To Flex to a Driver</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pick up your pace and energy</li><li>• Be task-oriented</li><li>• De-emphasize feelings</li><li>• Be clear about your goals</li><li>• Cut to the chase</li><li>• Be well organized in your communication</li></ul>	<b>To Flex to an Expressive</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pick up your pace and energy</li><li>• Focus on the big picture</li><li>• Say what you think</li><li>• Facilitate self determination</li><li>• Make personal contact</li><li>• Focus more on feelings</li><li>• Co-operate with their spontaneity</li></ul>
<b>To Flex to an Analytical</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be task-oriented</li><li>• De-emphasize feelings</li><li>• Be systematic</li><li>• Be organized and factual</li><li>• Slow down your pace</li><li>• Listen</li></ul>	<b>To Flex to an Amiable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have genuine personal contact</li><li>• Slow your pace</li><li>• Listen</li><li>• Don't come on too strong</li><li>• Focus more on feelings and show interest in the human side</li><li>• Be supportive</li><li>• Provide structure</li></ul>

## The Five Decision-Making Approaches

Each style is a result of a combination of preferences or habits of thinking when we're faced with making a decision.

- Sticking to a process // taking an ad hoc approach
- Taking action quickly // being cautious
- Gathering information narrowly // gathering information for the big picture
- Being led by corporate interests // focusing on personal interests
- Preferring continuity and predictability // preferring change and innovation
- Tending to talk about backstory // focusing on facts

### **Visionary**

The Visionary decision maker is a champion of radical change with a natural gift for leading people through turbulent times. Visionaries like change, gather information relatively narrowly, and are strongly focused on action. In their penchant for making quick decisions, they don't always consider the full picture.

### **Guardian**

A Guardian is a model of fairness who's focused on preserving the health, balance, and values of the organization. They like continuity, are moderately cautious, and gather information relatively widely. The Guardian can also be too cautious and slow moving during a crisis or when there is a strong need for change.

## **Motivator**

Motivators are decision-makers when there is a need for change. They are charismatic, can convince people of the need for action, and build alignment among parts of the company. But like all good storytellers, they risk believing the story in the face of countervailing facts.

## **Flexible**

Flexible leaders are more versatile than other types of leaders: They're comfortable with uncertainty, open-minded in adapting to circumstances, and willing to involve a variety of people in the decision-making. They can, however, get paralyzed by their own flexibility in being too open to all ideas.

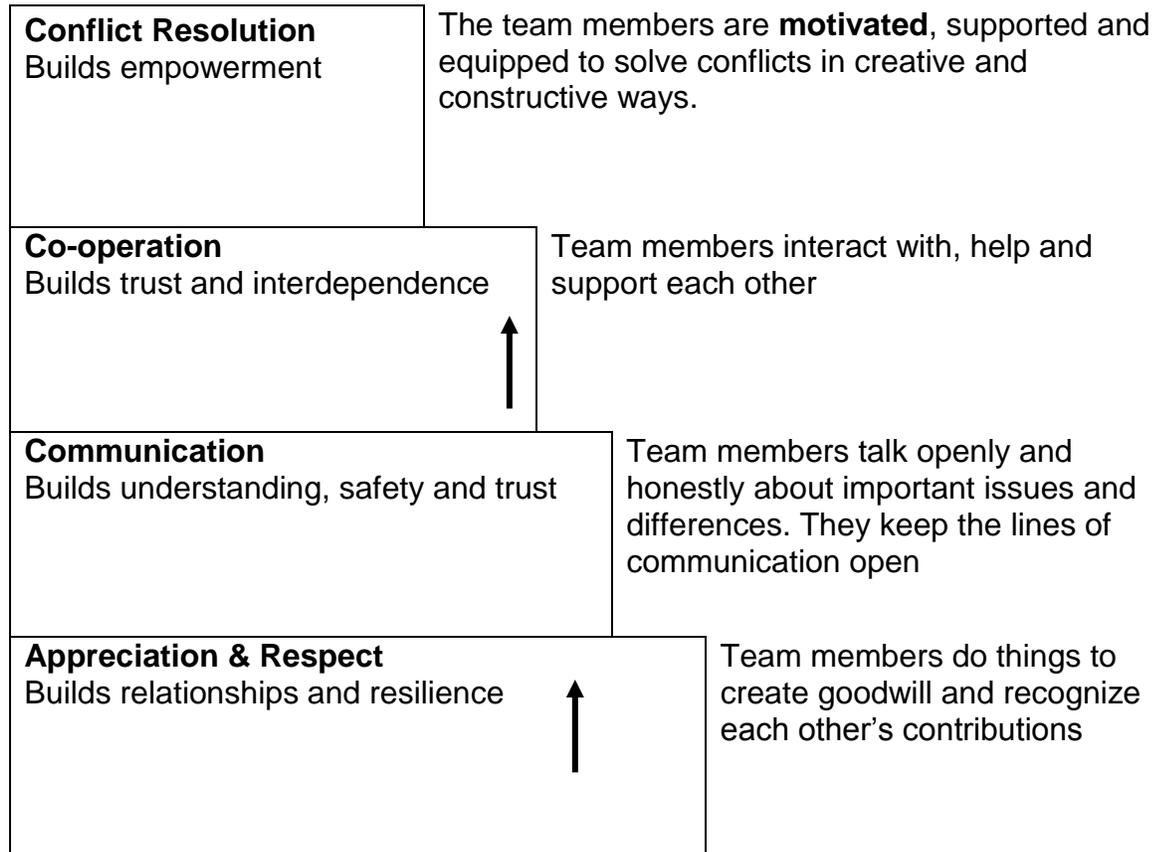
## **Catalyst**

The Catalyst is the most balanced, being in the middle on four out of the six characteristics. The more extreme the necessary decision, the more they can naturally resist inherent biases. That said, being middle of the road can sometimes yield only average results.

## Team Conflict Competence Creating a Collaborative Climate

How do we begin to create a climate ripe for conflict resolution? The climate is like the foundation of a house: it needs to be in place before you can build on it.

Consider the importance of:



How much are these building blocks present in your team? On a scale of 1 -10, rate your team.

Ask yourself: What is working? What would a 10 look like? How can you go from the number you're at now, to the next number up?

## **Notes**