

## Methodological tool:

### Positive organizational behavior

Number of methodological Tool	EUPANEXT_LO_012_M_001
Work Area Code and Title	WA3 COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL, TELEPHONE HANDLING, CODE OF CONDUCT, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RELATIONSHIPS
Unit Code and Title	2.7 Recall and apply key principles of good relationships with customers, external stakeholders and colleagues in a clear and effective way
Learning Outcome Number and Title	LO012: Demonstrate the ability to recall the key principles of good working relationships within the organisation and demonstrate competence in applying these principles in a clear and effective way within the organisation. Be able to perform Public Relations activities to improve workplace relations, for example acknowledging birthdays, name days and other special occasions.
Objective of the methodological tool	After the completion of this case study participants will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain good working relationships, even when under pressure</li> <li>2. Understand their conflict resolution style, using the Kilmann Questionnaire</li> </ol>
Individual or group exercise	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group
Type of methodological tool	<input type="checkbox"/> Written Exercise <input type="checkbox"/> Video Analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Simulation <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple choice <input type="checkbox"/> Group exercise with cards <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise using ICT <input type="checkbox"/> Role Play <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Case study <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Group Work
Description of the exercise/Procedure	<p>The exercise consists of two (2) parts.</p> <p><b>PART A</b></p> <p>In the <u>first part</u>, participants are asked to form two (2) groups (or more – but there should not be more than 5 participants in each</p>

	<p>group).</p> <p>Give each group five (5) A4 sheets.</p> <p>Their goal is to build a paper bridge, in five (5) minutes, without using glue or any other type of office equipment, other than paper.</p> <p>This exercise becomes more difficult if you give the participants one A2 paper and 2 A4 paper and ask them to build the bridge.</p> <p>Then give them a toy car to pass over the bridge.</p> <p>Give the participants a time frame of three (3) to five (5) minutes. The team that manages to carry out the task first is the winner.</p> <p>Participants are requested to describe their emotions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at a personal level</li> <li>• as members of the team in a potentially stressful situation</li> </ul> <p><b>ALTERNATIVELY</b></p> <p>You can run some experiential exercises, such as treasure hunting, in which good working relationships are important to be able to reach the goals. On the other hand, you also give each group a scenario where two members of the group have a conflict and will not cooperate. In fact, they will sacrifice the benefit of the group to cause problems to one another. Therefore, they will not communicate messages and will try to cause misunderstandings in the group. Through the experiential exercise, the participants should describe the results of this conflict to the success of the group.</p> <p><b>PART B</b></p> <p>During the second part, participants are asked to complete the Kilmann questionnaire.</p>
Exercise is accompanied by	<p>1. The Kilmann Questionnaire, interpretation of results and material for the trainer (<a href="http://www.terencemauri.com/wp-content/uploads/10.Thomas-Kilmann-Conflict-Questionnaire.pdf">http://www.terencemauri.com/wp-content/uploads/10.Thomas-Kilmann-Conflict-Questionnaire.pdf</a>).</p>
Exercise solution	<p>The bridge exercise will demonstrate the need of good relationships for the success of a goal. The treasure hunting exercise will demonstrate how bad relationships affect the results.</p> <p>As far as the Kilmann questionnaire is concerned, please consult the</p>

	material for the trainer.
Other comments to the trainer	-
Approximate Time needed for the completion of this exercise	



Attachments to the Methodological Tools

## Case study

### THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE QUESTIONNAIRE

Consider situations in which you find your wishes differing from those of another person.

How do you usually respond to such situations?

On the following pages are several pairs of statements describing possible behavioral responses. For each pair, please circle the "A" or "B" statement which is most characteristic of your own behavior.

In many cases, neither the "A" nor the "B" statement may be very typical of your behavior, but please select the response which you would be more likely to use.

1. **A.** There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.  
**B.** Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things upon which we both agree.
2. **A.** I try to find a compromise solution.  
**B.** I attempt to deal with all of mine and other people's concerns.
3. **A.** I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.  
**B.** I might try to soothe the other person's feelings and preserve our relationship.
4. **A.** I try to find a compromise solution.  
**B.** I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
5. **A.** I consistently seek the other person's help in working out a solution.  
**B.** I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
6. **A.** I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.  
**B.** I try to win my position.



7. **A.** I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think about it.  
**B.** I give up some points in exchange for others.
8. **A.** I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.  
**B.** I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
9. **A.** I feel that differences are not always worrying about.  
**B.** I make some effort to get my way.
10. **A.** I am firm in pursuing my goals.  
**B.** I try to find a compromise solution.
11. **A.** I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.  
**B.** I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
12. **A.** I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.  
**B.** I will let the other person have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
13. **A.** I propose middle ground.  
**B.** I press to get my points made.
14. **A.** I tell another my ideas and ask them for theirs.  
**B.** I try to show him the logic and benefits of my position.
15. **A.** I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.  
**B.** I try to do what is necessary to avoid tension.
16. **A.** I try not to hurt the other's feelings.  
**B.** I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
17. **A.** I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.

- B.** I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
18. **A.** If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.  
**B.** I will let the other person have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
19. **A.** I try to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.  
**B.** I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
20. **A.** I attempt to immediately work through our differences.  
**B.** I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
21. **A.** In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's feelings.  
**B.** I always lean toward a direct discussion of the problem.
22. **A.** I try to find a position that is intermediate between mine and another person's.  
**B.** I assert my wishes.
23. **A.** I am often concerned with satisfying all my wishes.  
**B.** There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving problems.
24. **A.** If the other's position seems important to them, I would try to meet their wishes.  
**B.** I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.
25. **A.** I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.  
**B.** In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
26. **A.** I propose a middle ground.  
**B.** I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all my wishes.
27. **A.** I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.  
**B.** If it makes the other person happy, I might let them maintain their views.

28. **A.** I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.  
**B.** I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
29. **A.** I propose middle ground.  
**B.** I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
30. **A.** I try not to hurt the other person's feelings.  
**B.** I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

**SCORING THE THOMAS-KILMANN CONFLICT MODE QUESTIONNAIRE**

	<b>Competing</b>	<b>Collaborating</b>	<b>Compromising</b>	<b>Avoiding</b>	<b>Accommodating</b>
	(Forcing)	(Problem Solving)	(Sharing)	(Withdrawal)	(Smoothing)
1.				A	B
2.		B	A		
3.	A			B	
4.			A		B
5.		A		B	A
6.	B			A	
7.			B	A	

	<b>Competing</b>	<b>Collaborating</b>	<b>Compromising</b>	<b>Avoiding</b>	<b>Accommodating</b>
	(Forcing)	(Problem Solving)	(Sharing)	(Withdrawal)	(Smoothing)
8.	A	B			
9.	B			A	
10.	A		B		
11.		A			B
12.			B	A	
13.	B		A		
14.	B	A			
15.				B	A
16.	B				A
17.	A			B	
18.			B		A
19.		A		B	
20.		A	B		
21.		B			A
22.	B		A		



	<b>Competing</b>	<b>Collaborating</b>	<b>Compromising</b>	<b>Avoiding</b>	<b>Accommodating</b>
	(Forcing)	(Problem Solving)	(Sharing)	(Withdrawal)	(Smoothing)
23.		A		B	
24.			B		A
25.	A				B
26.		B	A		
27.				A	B
28.	A	B			
29.			A	B	
30.		B			A

<b>Total the number of letters circled in each column.</b>					
	<b>Competing</b>	<b>Collaborating</b>	<b>Compromising</b>	<b>Avoiding</b>	<b>Withdrawing</b>
	(Forcing)	(Problem Solving)	(Sharing)	(Withdrawal)	(Smoothing)
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

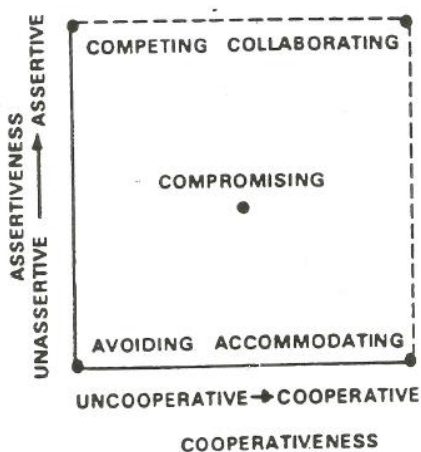


## Material for Trainer

### Interpretation and Theory:

The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode Inventory, also known as the TKI, has been around since the 1970s. The authors, Ralph Kilmann and Kenneth Thomas, set up their inventory along the same lines as Robert Blake and Jane Mouton, who in a 1964 publication on "The Managerial Grid", described a model that conceptualizes management styles and relations. The Blake and Mouton mode uses two axes. "Concern for people" is plotted using the vertical axis and "Concern for task" along the horizontal axis. Each axis has a numerical scale of 1 to 9. These axes interact so as to diagram five different styles of management.

The Thomas Kilmann Conflict Mode instrument uses these identical axes, and identifies five different styles of conflict: Forcing, Avoiding, Accomodating, Collaborating, Compromising.



### CONFLICT

Conflict is embedded in human relations. It arises when there is incompatibility of orientation between individuals or groups, and it can form in such situations as when people form incompatible goals and behaviours, when resources have to be allocated, and when decisions have to be made. Conflict is associated with:

**Value:** underlying values are different. This is arguably the most important and serious type of conflict because values are entrenched in social interaction and behaviour, and are very difficult to change.

**Interests:** what promotes one's self-interest opposes another's.

**Policy:** existing regulations do not reflect current needs.

**Goals:** there is controversy or disagreement about where a project is going.

**Method:** there is controversy or disagreement about how to arrive at the desired outcome.

Managed properly, conflict can result in growth because it allows for different points of view to be aired and considered. Managed badly, it can be destructive and costly – in resources and relationships. Groups can suffer from two opposite evils: too little conflict, and too much conflict. A little conflict can be a good thing for change and rejuvenation of outmoded structures and beliefs. A lot of conflict, however, can destroy a project and in serious cases even lead to costly lawsuits and official investigations.

Your profile of scores indicates the repertoire of conflict handling skills that you possess and use in conflict situations.

### **Interpreting Your Scores**

One of the most often asked questions is "What are the right answers?" In this type of test, there are no "right" answers. All five modes of handling conflict are useful in various situations, and each represents a set of useful social skills. Listed below examples:

**Collaboration:** "Two heads are better than one." The goal is 'to find a win-win solution'

**Accommodation:** "Kill your enemies with kindness." The goal is 'to yield'.

**Compromising:** "Split the difference." The goal is 'to find a middle ground'

**Avoiding:** "Leave well enough alone." The goal is 'to delay'

**Competing:** "Might makes right." The goal is 'to win'

The effectiveness of any handling any conflict depends on the requirements of the conflict and the skill that is employed.

Each of us is capable of using all five conflict modes, and none of us can be characterized as having a single rigid style of dealing with conflict. However, because of personality traits or by habit, individuals tend to use one or two modes at a greater frequency than the others. Conflict resolution tools that a person employs can be selected based on the personal preference and the requirements of the situation.

The following information may help you judge how appropriately you use the five methods of conflict resolution.

## Competing

is assertive and uncooperative, a power-oriented mode. When competing, an individual pursues his or her own concerns at the other person's expense, using whatever power seems appropriate to win his or her position. Competing might mean standing up for your rights, defending a position you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

### Uses

- When quick, decisive action is vital—for example, in an emergency
- On important issues when unpopular courses of action need implementing—for example, cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline
- On issues vital to company welfare when you know you're right
- When you need to protect yourself from people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior

### Signs of overuse

- *Are you surrounded by "yes" people?*

If so, perhaps it's because they have learned that it's unwise to disagree with you or have given up trying to influence you. This closes you off from information.

- *Are others afraid to admit ignorance and uncertainties to you?*

In a competitive climate, one must fight for influence and respect, acting more certain and confident than one feels. This means that people are less able to ask for information and opinions—they are less likely to learn.

In contrast, the fact that you scored high on competing makes it unlikely that you are underusing this mode.

### Signs of underuse

- *Feeling powerless in situations.*

People who underuse competing may be unaware of the power they have, unskilled in its use, or uncomfortable with the idea of using it. This may hinder their effectiveness by restricting their influence.

- *Having trouble taking a firm stand, even when one sees the need.*

Concerns for others' feelings or anxieties about the use of power can cause vacillation, which may result in postponing the decision and adding to the suffering and/or resentment of others.

### Collaborating

is both assertive and cooperative. When collaborating, an individual attempts to work with the other person to find a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both. It involves digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights, resolving some condition that would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

#### Uses

- When you need to find an integrative solution and the concerns of both parties are too important to be compromised
- When your objective is to learn and you wish to test your assumptions and understand others' views
- When you want to merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem
- When you want to gain commitment by incorporating others' concerns into a consensual decision
- When you need to work through hard feelings that have been interfering with a relationship

#### Signs of underuse

- *Is it difficult for you to see differences as opportunities for joint gain, learning, or problem solving?*

Although conflict situations often involve threatening or unproductive aspects, approaching all conflicts with pessimism can prevent you from seeing collaborative possibilities and thus deprive you of the mutual gains and satisfactions that accompany successful collaboration.

- *Are others uncommitted to your decisions or policies?*

Perhaps their concerns are not being incorporated into those decisions or policies. In contrast, the fact that you scored low on collaborating makes it unlikely that you are overusing this mode.

#### Signs of overuse

- *Spending time discussing issues in depth that don't seem to warrant it.*

Collaboration takes time and energy. Trivial problems don't require optimal solutions, and not all personal differences need to be hashed out. Overusing collaboration and consensus sometimes represents a desire to minimize risk—by diffusing responsibility or postponing action.

- *Failing to elicit collaborative responses from others.*

The exploratory nature of collaborative behavior may make it easy to disregard, and others may take advantage of the trust and openness shown. Overusers may miss signs of defensiveness, competitiveness, or conflicting interests.

### Compromising

is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. When compromising, an individual has the objective of finding an expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. Compromising falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating, giving up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding but doesn't explore it in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

#### Uses

- When goals are moderately important but not worth the effort or the potential disruption involved in using more assertive modes
- When two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals—as in labor–management bargaining
- When you want to achieve a temporary settlement of a complex issue
- When you need to arrive at an expedient solution under time pressure
- As a backup mode when collaboration or competition fails

#### Signs of overuse

- *Do you concentrate so heavily on the practicalities and tactics of compromise that you sometimes lose sight of larger issues?*

Doing so may lead to unintended and costly compromises of principles, values, long-term objectives, or company welfare.

- *Does an emphasis on bargaining and trading create a cynical climate of gamesmanship?*

Such a climate may undermine interpersonal trust and deflect attention from the merits of the issues being discussed.

### ***Signs of underuse***

- *Do you sometimes find yourself too sensitive or embarrassed to engage in the give-and-take of bargaining?*

This reticence can keep you from getting a fair share in negotiations—for yourself, your team, or your organization.

- *Do you sometimes find it difficult to make concessions?*

Without this safety valve, you may have trouble gracefully getting out of mutually destructive arguments, power struggles, and so on.

### **Avoiding**

is unassertive and uncooperative. When avoiding, an individual does not immediately pursue his or her own concerns or those of the other person. He or she does not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

### **Uses**

- When an issue is unimportant or when other, more important issues are pressing
- When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns—for example, when you have low power or you are frustrated by something that would be very difficult to change
- When the potential costs of confronting a conflict outweigh the benefits of its resolution
- When you need to let people cool down—to reduce tensions to a productive level and to regain perspective and composure
- When gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision
- When others can resolve the issue more effectively
- When the issue seems tangential or symptomatic of another, more basic issue



## Questions to Ask

Because you scored low on avoiding, there is a good chance that you are underusing this mode. To help you determine whether that is the case, consider the following questions:

### *Signs of underuse*

- *Do you sometimes find yourself hurting people's feelings or stirring up hostilities?*

You may need to exercise more discretion and tact, framing issues in nonthreatening ways.

- *Do you sometimes feel harried or overwhelmed by a number of issues?*

You may need to devote more time to setting priorities—that is, deciding which issues are relatively unimportant and perhaps delegating them to others.

In contrast, the fact that you scored low on avoiding makes it unlikely that you are overusing this mode. However, you may be interested in these signs of overuse in others:

### *Signs of overuse*

- *Causing coordination to suffer because people have trouble getting one's input on issues.*
- *Creating an atmosphere of "walking on eggshells."*

Sometimes a disproportionate amount of energy is devoted to caution and avoiding issues, indicating that those issues need to be faced and resolved.

- *Decisions on important issues getting made by default.*

## Accommodating

is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of competing. When accommodating, an individual neglects his or her own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

### Uses

- When you realize that you are wrong—to allow a better solution to be considered, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable

- When the issue is much more important to the other person than it is to you—to satisfy the needs of others and as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship
- When you want to build up social credits for later issues that are important to you
- When you are outmatched and losing and more competition would only damage your cause
- When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important
- When you want to help your employees develop by allowing them to experiment and learn from their mistakes

### **Accommodating as a Style**

Accommodators tend to see conflicts as social/emotional issues to be settled with support and sensitivity. They often believe in the Golden Rule (“Do unto others . . .”) and believe that generosity will eventually be rewarded in kind. They regard coworkers as friends—people to be supported and looked after—and value support, generosity, goodwill, and team cohesiveness. They often see compassion and friendship as more important than the minor issues involved in most conflicts. Accommodators help coworkers meet their concerns—for the sake of the coworker and to help build cohesiveness and goodwill.

### **Contributions of an Accommodating Style**

Accommodators’ compassion and generosity can serve an important role in the interpersonal relations of their organization—as a kind of shock absorber when people are under stress. Accommodators help maintain goodwill and trust. They provide psychological support and a sympathetic ear and can serve as peacemakers to restore harmony. Their style helps soothe hurt feelings and resentments.

### ***Signs of overuse***

- *Do you feel that your ideas and concerns sometimes don’t get the attention they deserve?*

Deferring too much to the concerns of others can deprive you of influence, respect, and recognition. It can also deprive the organization of your potential contributions.

- *Is discipline lax?*

Although discipline for its own sake may be of little value, some rules, procedures, and assignments are crucial and need to be enforced. Accommodating on these issues may harm you, others, or the organization.

In contrast, the fact that you scored high on accommodating makes it unlikely that you are underusing this mode. However, you may be interested in these signs of underuse in others:

***Signs of underuse***

- *Having trouble building goodwill.*

Accommodating on minor issues that are important to others is a gesture of goodwill.

- *Being viewed as unreasonable.*
- *Having trouble admitting when one is wrong.*
- *Failing to recognize legitimate exceptions to the rules.*
- *Refusing to give up.*

