



# Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

## A Brief Guide for Clients

### What Is Conflict?

Conflict is a situation in which people's concerns—the things they care about—appear incompatible. Conflict is neither good nor bad; it's a fact of life. But unmanaged conflict with co-workers, customers, families, and others can be a significant source of stress.

People tend to approach conflict in different ways. By understanding how you prefer to approach conflict, you can gain insight into the ways that others tend to approach it. You can also learn to adapt your approach to conflict so you can succeed in different situations.

### About the TKI

The *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument* (TKI) allows you to look at how you tend to respond to conflicts. You'll learn five different approaches to conflict and discover how to choose the approach that will be most productive in different situations.

You will be taking the TKI online using a secure Web site provided by your coach or trainer. Follow the instructions from your coach or trainer to access the Web site.

We suggest you set aside 20-30 minutes to complete the assessment. Read the instructions at the beginning of the assessment carefully. As you answer the assessment items, think about your work life. Try to answer quickly and truthfully, without overanalyzing the assessment items. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers.

After you complete the assessment, your coach or trainer will provide you with your personalized *TKI Profile and Interpretive Report*. You'll want to read the information in the report carefully. Many people find it useful to highlight

information in the report that seems particularly applicable to their situations. You may also want to note any of the descriptions that don't seem to apply to you. Your coach or trainer will most likely have some assignments or activities that will help you get the most from the assessment.

Once you have read the information in the report and understand it, take a few minutes to identify specific behavior changes you think would reduce your level of stress and/or help you manage conflicts related to your job. Select just one or two specific changes on which you can concentrate.

Remember that the results of the assessment are your own private information. You do not need to share your results with your manager or anyone else unless you choose to do so.

### Developing New Skills

Changing your behavior is not an easy thing, especially when you are changing behaviors that you've been using for many years. Here are a few tips that can help you be successful:

- Focus on just a few skills at a time. Pick one or two behaviors that seem most promising, and concentrate on them.
- Be gentle with yourself. At first, new skills will seem awkward. The more practice you get, the more polished your performance will become. Try to take a step back and recognize the progress you are making.
- As you master new behaviors, consider adding a few more. Return to the report occasionally to refresh your memory and identify new skills to work on.

### Getting Help

As you work on changing your stress and conflict management behaviors, you may discover that you need some help. Here are a few ideas for seeking help from others:

- Consider sharing your plans with a trusted colleague, supervisor, or manager. Ask that person to review your plans and provide feedback. Then ask for their support as you make the changes.
- Some people prefer to work through these behavior changes in a group. You may be able to work with others who can provide support and guidance.
- Seek assistance from your coach or trainer, your manager or supervisor, or a human resources representative. These individuals may be able to assist you in putting your results to work.
- Find a mentor in your company, a school, or a professional organization. Share your plans with the mentor, and ask that person to be your guide as you implement the new behaviors and skills.



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