



CONFLICT

INSTINCT VS. MINDFULNESS

Being able to deal with conflict effectively requires understanding others, reading the situation, and acting accordingly.

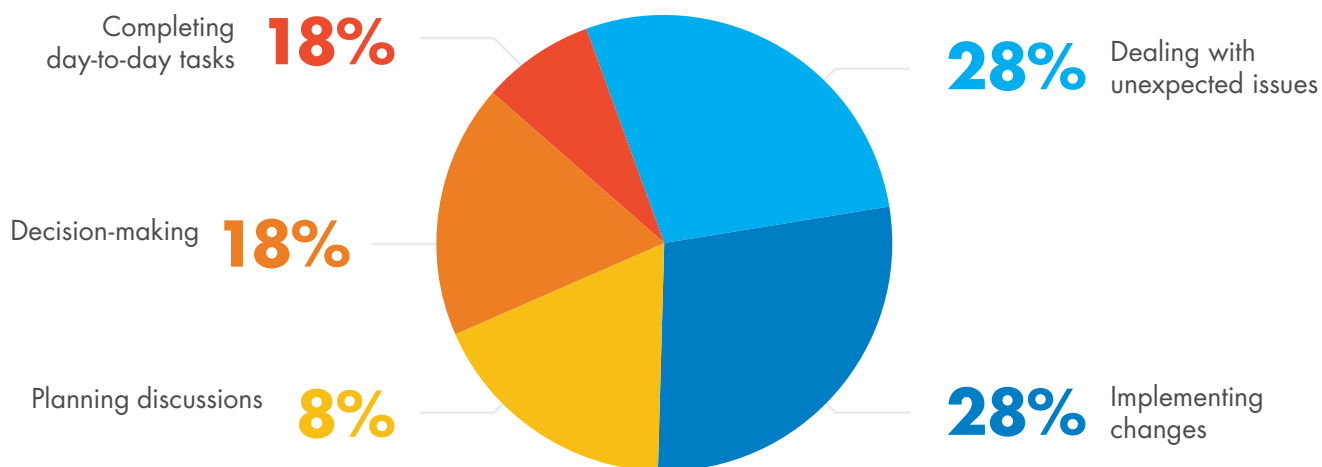
Ralph Kilmann, one of the authors of the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, defines conflict as any situation in which one person's concerns or desires differ from those of another.

Based on his definition he states that conflict has the following foundations:

1. Conflict is inevitable.
2. Conflict is neutral.
3. Conflict can promote growth OR impede potential – it depends on how it is managed.

We wanted to know where conflict occurs most often in organizations. The answer – during times of change and dealing with surprises. These two areas account for more than half of the conflict observed in the workplace – this does not necessarily mean that it is bad, as Kilmann states, conflict in and of itself is neutral; however, it does highlight the situations where people are most likely to encounter differences of opinion. If we can better address these differing concerns when facing change or dealing with surprises, we will be better able to deal with more than half of the conflict that comes our way.

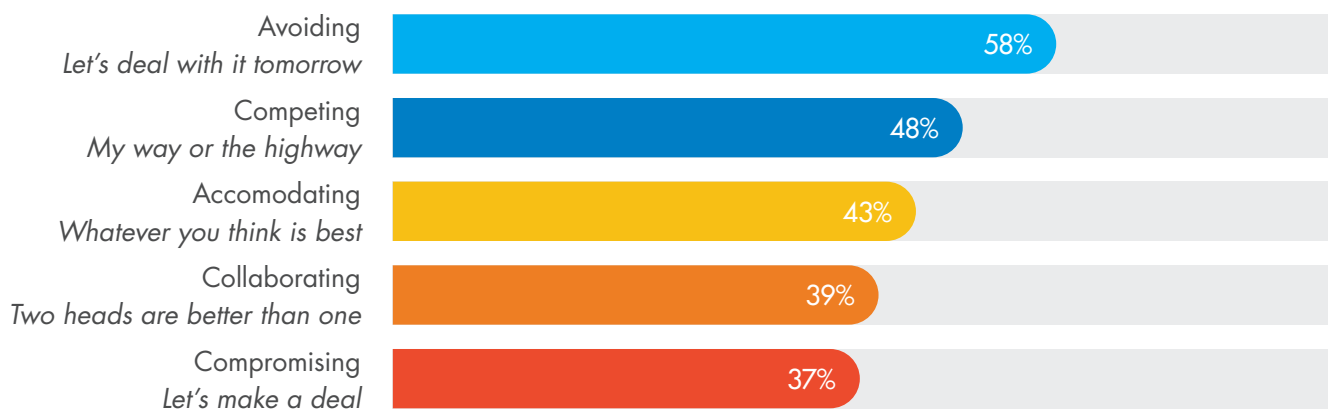
WHEN DOES CONFLICT OCCUR MOST OFTEN IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?



Conflict occurs the most during times of ambiguity, surprise and change. The stress associated with the need to adapt and implement new solutions can exacerbate conflict by making it difficult to do what is necessary

– pause and evaluate a situation before reacting. Our instincts push us to jump in right away, but this hampers our ability to be thoughtful and intentional, which is the key first step to successfully resolving conflict.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIOURS DO YOU OFTEN SEE PEOPLE USE WHEN DEALING WITH CONFLICT:



When we asked respondents which behaviors they frequently see when people are dealing with conflict, avoiding was the most common. Of all the methods for dealing with conflict, avoiding is the approach that results in the least value produced – it guarantees that neither parties concerns are addressed. While this approach is effective when tensions are high and a time-out is required, avoiding is not a long-term solution. If people cannot re-engage with another approach, value and time are both lost.

Collaborating is the method for dealing with conflict that results in the most value added; its focus is on finding win-win solutions. Effective collaboration takes time and energy, and the participants need to be able to communicate well and identify underlying concerns.

This approach is seen much less often than avoiding, but holds the key for effectively dealing with differences of opinion when discussing topics of utmost importance.

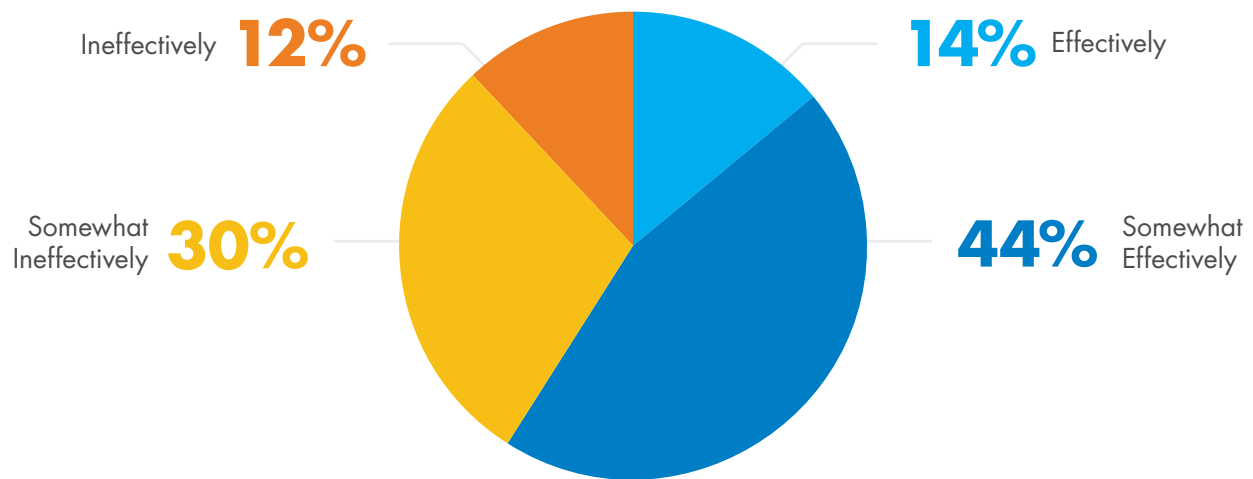
Competing, accommodating and compromising are middle of the road solutions that are more or less effective based on the complexity, timeliness, importance of the issue, as well as the communication skills and trust of those involved.

AVOIDING
IS THE MOST COMMON REACTION TO CONFLICT





HOW EFFECTIVELY DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MANAGEMENT OR LEADERSHIP TEAM DEAL WITH CONFLICT?



Only 14% of current managers and leaders are seen as truly effective when it comes to managing conflict, with an additional 44% appearing to get more right than wrong. This does leave a group of 42% of people in leadership and management positions that get more wrong than right – and that's a problem.

To improve their conflict management, people in leadership positions need to take more time to:

- Assess the situation
- Choose behaviours accordingly, rather than operate on instinct
- Use these behaviours with care
- Switch their behaviour when necessary

This requires both situational and self-awareness, and flexibility.

42% OF LEADERS GET MORE WRONG THAN RIGHT

WHO WE SURVEYED

We wanted to know the critical people issues that organizations are facing today.

We surveyed Human Resource professionals from more than 300 Canadian organizations to explore issues such as leadership, change, conflict, selection and diversity. Their responses highlight a number of key findings – areas that need addressing to continually find success through people.

The survey respondents come from a wide range of industries, company sizes, and levels within organizations. As such, the results provide a great overview of the people challenges that are being met by all types of organizations across Canada.



Local **52%**

National **26%**

Global **22%**



5000+ **17%**

200-999 **20%**

10-49 **14%**

1000-4999 **20%**

50-199 **12%**

1-9 **17%**

INDUSTRY

23% EDUCATION SERVICES

13% GOVERNMENT

13% NON-PROFIT/NGO

12% PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL SERVICES

8% MANUFACTURING/NATURAL RESOURCES

8% HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

6% BUSINESS/FINANCE

17% OTHER

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We work with more than 4000 organizations, including 84 of the top 100 companies in Canada. We're proud to work closely with our clients every day, helping them to find and develop great people.

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