

CHALLENGING THE STEREOTYPE: WHAT IS THE CANADIAN APPROACH TO CONFLICT?

WEBINAR FAQs



Data and Research

Q: Where did the data from this webinar come from?

A: The data presented came from two sources:

- The 2020 People Trends Report. The Conflict section of this report is also provided as part of the webinar follow-up materials.
- Previously unreleased analyses of data collected by Psychometrics Canada from January 2014 to August 2020.

Q: Was the TKI used as the measurement instrument for everyone in the sample?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: Does the data address people's general conflict approach preferences (rather than focusing on a specific context, e.g. with coworkers or their boss)?

A: Correct, the data addresses people's generally preferred approach to conflict, rather than within a specific context.

- The TKI instrument contains steps and instructions to encourage the test taker to avoid responding in a manner that is specific to a context. Like with all assessments, some individuals may still respond with a context in mind. However, this is typically a limited number of individuals.
- The presented analysis also uses a very large amount of data (48,000+ individuals). As a result, most issues that would impact the quality or intention of the data will not have the chance to do so.

Q: Is it possible that social desirability played in people reporting their preferred approach?

A: Similar to the answer above, the TKI instrument contains steps to minimize the impact of social desirability in responses. A small number of individuals may still respond in a socially desirable manner, but the number of individuals in the aggregated results will override most of these issues.

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Q: What is the impact of gender on the results presented in the webinar?

A: I have taken a deeper dive into the gender differences for the current data, and have found the following results:

- 50.87% of the sample was Male, 48.97% of the sample was female, 0.16% of the sample did not specify their gender.
- There are no meaningful differences between genders in their preference towards the use of the Collaborative, Compromising and Avoiding approaches to conflict.
- There is a small difference in the preference towards the Accommodating approach (Female = 13%, Male = 10%).
- There is a difference in the preference towards the Competing approach (Male = 13%, Female = 6%).
- The rank ordering of preference stays the same as the average for Females (Compromising, Avoiding, Collaborating, Accommodating, Competing), but changes slightly for Males (Compromising, Avoiding, Collaborating, Competing, Accommodating).

It is worth noting that these gender differences do not appear in the normative group. More information about the normative group can be found here: [TKI Technical Brief](#)

Q: Are there differences between provinces or across countries?

A: Unfortunately, we do not have the province for each individual in the dataset, so I cannot confirm if there are differences across provinces. Additionally, this research similar to this has not been presented or published for other countries, so comparative data is not readily available.

Q: You referenced the MBTI earlier in the webinar. Is there a correlation between MBTI preference and conflict approach?

A: Yes, there are correlations between the MBTI and the TKI. Here are two resources to a) learn more and b) help you navigate this interaction.

- [Interpersonal Conflict-Handling Behaviour As Reflections of Junigan Personality Dimensions](#)
- [Using the TKI Assessment with the MBTI Instrument](#)

Q: May I use this data in my own work?

A: Certainly! We do ask that you credit Psychometrics Canada as the source of the aggregated data.

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Conflict Styles

Q: What is the easiest style to flex to, everything else being equal?

A: The easiest style to use will always be the one that you are most familiar and comfortable with (e.g. your default style). You have spent the most time honing skills based on this approach, so you will be most comfortable using the style in a variety of situations. However, keep in mind that this may not be the best approach to all challenges, so be sure to evaluate whether or not this style applies to the unique circumstance.

Q: What are your recommendations for harnessing and Avoiding style?

A: The Avoiding style is great when you need to need time to gather your thoughts, or when emotions are running high and you need to diffuse the situation. However, don't forget to communicate while using this approach. A statement such as "Let's gather our thoughts and return to this later" can help others understand your intentions, allow you to use this style in a productive manner.

Q: The Competing style feels uncomfortable to me but others seem to use it consistently. Do I have to match them to succeed?

A: You don't always have to match the style of someone else to succeed.

Start with the 8 questions on the "Practical Advice" slide. You will want to be able to answer as many of these as possible. Is the topic also important to you? If so, what needs are you not willing to give up? Can you communicate these needs? The solution may be accommodating their needs (if the topic isn't important to you) or a compromise (if there are needs that you are not willing to give up). You may need to use the Avoiding style to gather your thoughts (see above for further advice), and perhaps there is a win-win solution that you can find when you have more time to reflect. Most of these solutions will require some degree of assertiveness, but not as much as the Competing style requires.

Q: What is the difference between the Avoiding style and the Accommodation style?

A: For the Avoiding style, the situation does not get resolved until a later date. For the Accommodating style, the conflict is resolved, but you give up your needs to satisfy the needs of others.

It is easy for Avoiding to become Accommodating, if the conflict can be resolved without you. Consider the example that I provided during the webinar, where one of the Directors attempted to use an Avoiding approach (by hanging up on the call), but the rest of the Board could still continue on and make decisions without them. In the end, this Director ended up Accommodating the needs of the rest of the Board, without meaning to do so.

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Q: Which technique is best used to solve the conflict between supervisors and their direct reports? What if time is not available to address conflicts?

A: The best technique is actually establishing communication and trust.

Each of these styles individually will not be sufficient to resolve every conflict, as each situation has unique factors to be accounted for. The first step would be to understand these factors (using the 8 questions on the "Practical Advice" slide), and then choose an approach accordingly. If a supervisor walks through each of these questions with their direct report, it will help get all perspectives on the table and will make it easier to understand how the conflict needs to be resolved.

If there isn't sufficient time, then this should be addressed. A style such as Compromising, Competing or Accommodating may need to be used to address the situation within the timeframe necessary, and then the situation can be revisited in the future. However, if the conflict is on-going, then time will need to be made to address the issues.

Q: Can you speak to a collaborative process regarding a distributive negotiation?

A: For those who may not be familiar with distributive negotiation, this is when parties have to negotiate the division of a pre-determined value. In other words, they need to slice up the pie that has been provided, no extra value can be brought to the table.

This may be one of the situations where Collaboration is not possible. Remember that Collaboration needs to have a pie large enough to be able to satisfy the needs of all parties. However, when dividing a pie that isn't large enough to satisfy everyone's needs, you may only be able to arrive at a compromise (where everyone gets something, but not everything that they wanted).