Conflict Resolution
for well-functioning teams - or relations in general

Conflict or friction is natural when we grow and develop who we are. It is often a combination of two or more type of conflicts. Make sure to identify which, and if possible choose collaboration as your solution style.

The 5 conflicts
- Conflict of interest
- Power conflict
- Maturity conflict
- Conflicting values
- Conflict of misconception

The 5 solutions
- Collaboration
- Compromising
- Adjusting
- Avoiding
- Fight or force

DANDY PEOPLE

Version 1.1

#1 Start here

Conflict of interest

This is the right way!

The most common conflict is when two or more parties have different perspectives, needs or goals that they are protective of and fight to pursue.

One example is when change is inflicted on people in the organization and they meet to argue their different standpoints to try to convince others that their view is the correct one.

Power conflict
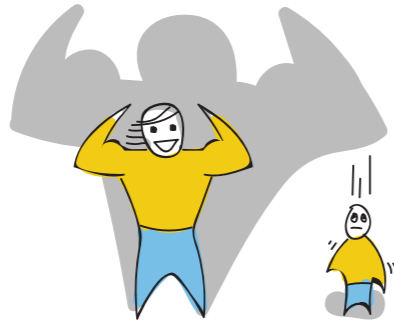
Power and authority is what most people think is the basis of all conflicts. Power conflict is something most of us know from work and family, where the question is about who should be in charge.

The possible threat of losing power might be a source of conflict in Agile transformations, when mandate is moved into the teams and you share your competence with people in the team.

Maturity conflict

This is the goal *?* *Ok...*

This type of conflict can be seen as the problems that a team has to overcome in their development together. The individual development of singular individuals can also be a source of tension in the team, one person going through change can affect the whole team. Conflict can arise from different levels of engagement within the team as well.

Maturity conflicts are very common during change, where different ways of doing things are being tested. Groups that never get time to mature together often have this constant ongoing conflict. Maturity conflicts are always part of the road towards being a well-functioning team. This is also the reason why you want to keep Agile team stable over a longer period of time, to not break the high performance that comes with maturity.

Conflicting values

We need openness & transparency *We need more Control*
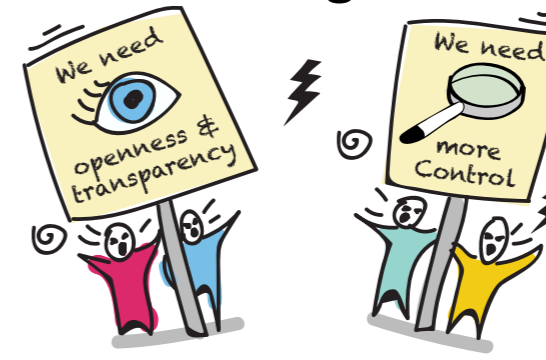
This form of conflict is often very difficult to solve. Values are not for sale. Conflicting values can be shown in our different views in politics, our view of how to treat each other, or of how to build well-functioning companies and organizations. A solution might not even be what people want, which is why compromises can be almost impossible to achieve and people might instead go their separate ways, to find people who are more like themselves and share their values.
Since Agile values are the foundation of Agile teams and ways of working, friction between them and existing, contradicting company values may be a source of conflict.

Conflict of misconception

It's a 9! *Anyone can see it's a 6!* *LOL!*

When you don't know enough about each other's assignments, context or working conditions, misconception conflicts come very easily. You get irritated with people's actions, their decisions and there is a common misunderstanding of each other.

A group that lacks good ways of communicating easily gets into this type of conflict. When people with different backgrounds and competencies come together and work in cross-functional teams, this is a very common struggle in the beginning.

#2 Try this to find a solution

1. What could be the causes of the conflict?
2. How have we handled it so far?
3. How do we want it to be when we have come through this?
4. What is our next step towards a solution?
- Start working on it and follow up.
- Repeat above until the conflict is resolved.

Conflict resolution always has its price. With that mindset, it is easier to understand how far a conflict has gone and find a suitable solution. It is not **HOW** you analyze a conflict that is the most important thing, is **THAT** you do it.

#3 The conflict resolution compass

There are 5 general styles when handling conflicts. **Collaboration, Compromising Adjusting, Avoiding and Fight or force.**

None of the five styles represent the best way in all situations. Depending on the situation, one or two resolution styles might be more efficient to solve that specific conflict, but to solve the problem together and to understand each other, like you do using the collaboration style is usually the long term preferred style. To be able to handle conflicts efficiently one must develop the ability to evaluate the situation and use the best style for the situation. The drawback of collaboration might be that it takes more energy.

ME-FOCUS →

WE-FOCUS

Fight or force
You try to achieve your own goals at the other part's expense. It is a power-oriented way where you use force or authority to gain advantage - using your ability to argue, your position or your role. You hold back privilege and sanction to penalize the other part. In solutions that use the power of fight and force, one party often looks like the winner and the other as the loser.

Collaboration
To actually solve the problem is a **win-win solution** in conflict resolution. Both parties strive to understand each other's similarities & differences & take equaly responsibility to find solutions that meet both parties needs. To collaborate can also be to create understanding around differences in beliefs and to learn from each other, which often helps us find more creative solutions.

Compromising
The goal of a compromise is to find a mutually acceptable solution that is partly satisfying to both parties. This requires that both parties give something up but also get one or more goals or needs met. There is no loser or winner in a compromise. To compromise often means to split your differences, exchange privileges or to find a golden middle way.

Avoiding
The people are avoiding each other or holding back their feelings and point of view. The conflict is ignored or suppressed. The matter might be pushed aside, postponed and handled at a later, better time, or you pull back from a threatening situation. A distinguishing feature is that the problem might never be solved. Instead the conflict is latent and can pop up again at a later time.

Adjusting
To mitigate individuals having different views while pointing out common interests, differences are not spoken about. Adjusting means neglect your own interests to satisfy someone else's needs. There is an element of sacrifice in this style. To adjust could mean giving in to others' opinions. A pitfall in this style is that this probably will occur again at a later point. This is a very useful style to find short-term or temporary solutions.

YOU-FOCUS

Infographic Poster by:
mia.kolmodin@dandypeople.com
bjorn.sandberg@dandypeople.com
Free download: dandypeople.com/posters