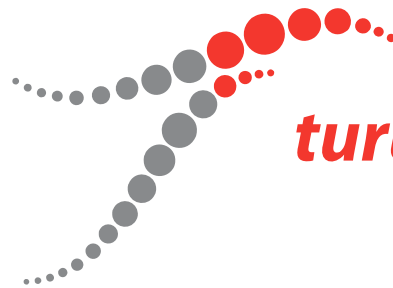




Joel A. DiGirolamo, BSEE, MBA, MS Psychology

Conflict in Organizations



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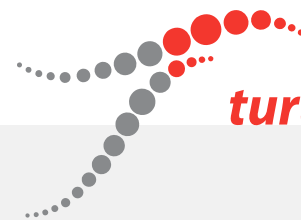
Agenda

Background

When Conflict Arises

Good Conflict

Tools



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Going Postal

Is the homicide rate for postal workers
higher or lower than all other industries?



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Definition of Conflict

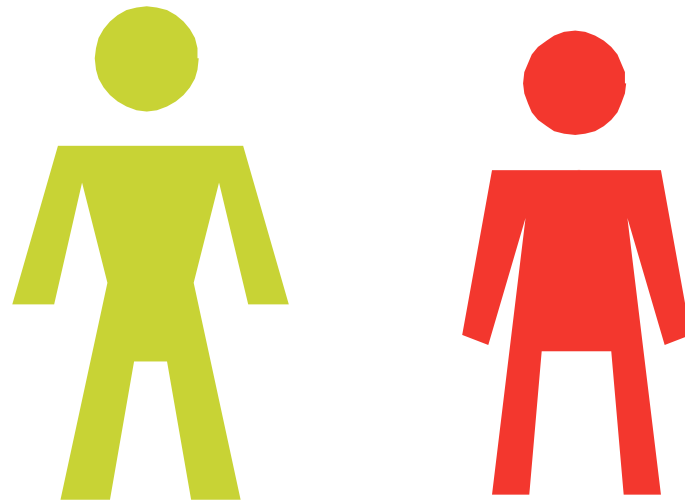
A process that begins when an individual or group perceives differences and opposition between itself and another individual or group about interests and resources, beliefs, values, or practices that matter to them.



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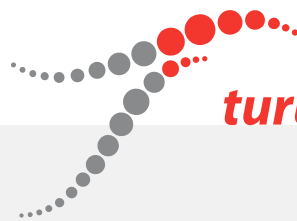
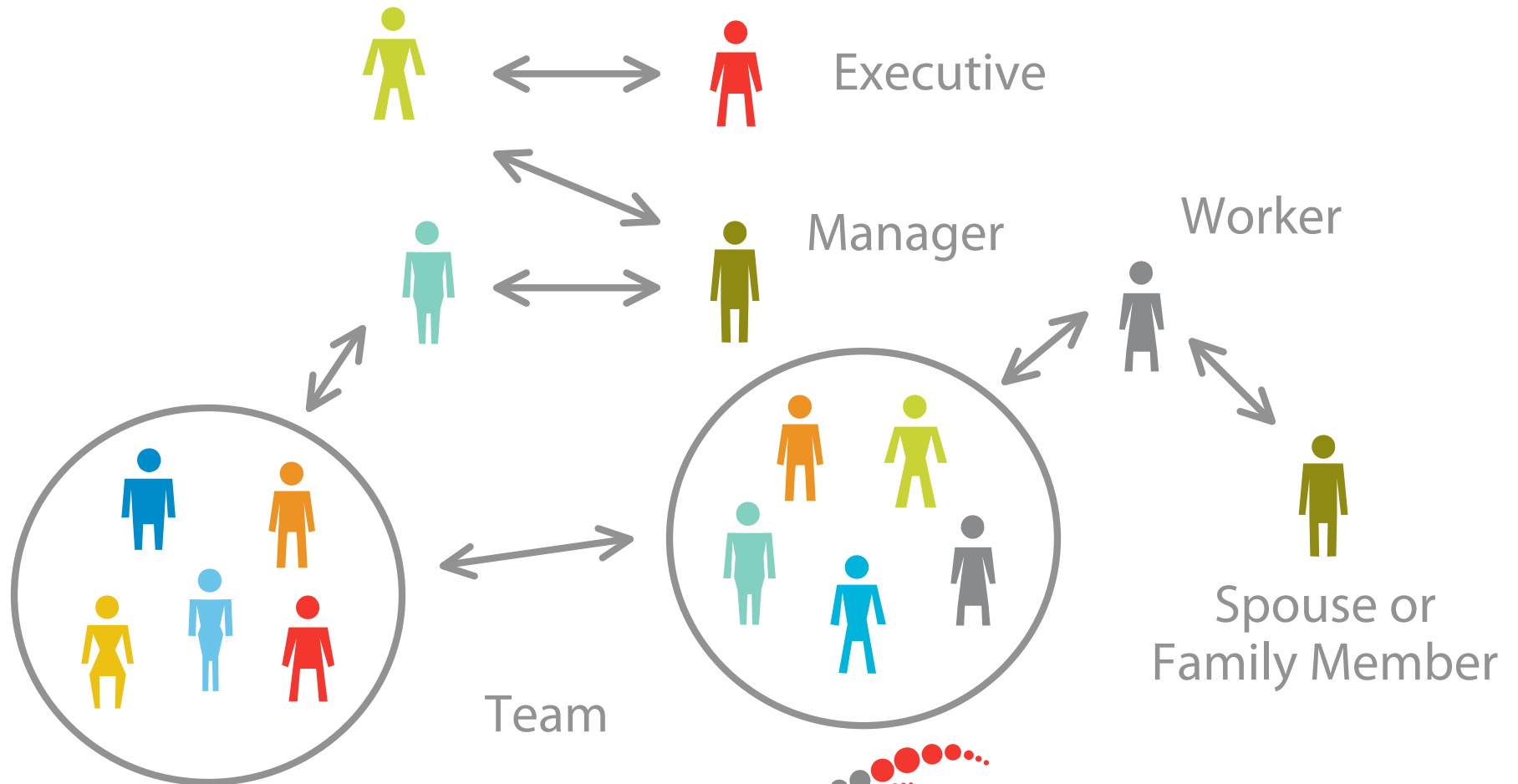
How many people or groups does it take to have a conflict?



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Conflict Between...



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Why Does Conflict Occur?

Expectations

Different Knowledge

Fear

Poor Communication

Attachment

Incompatible Values

Stress

Past Trauma

Scarce Resources

Different Paradigms

Misunderstanding

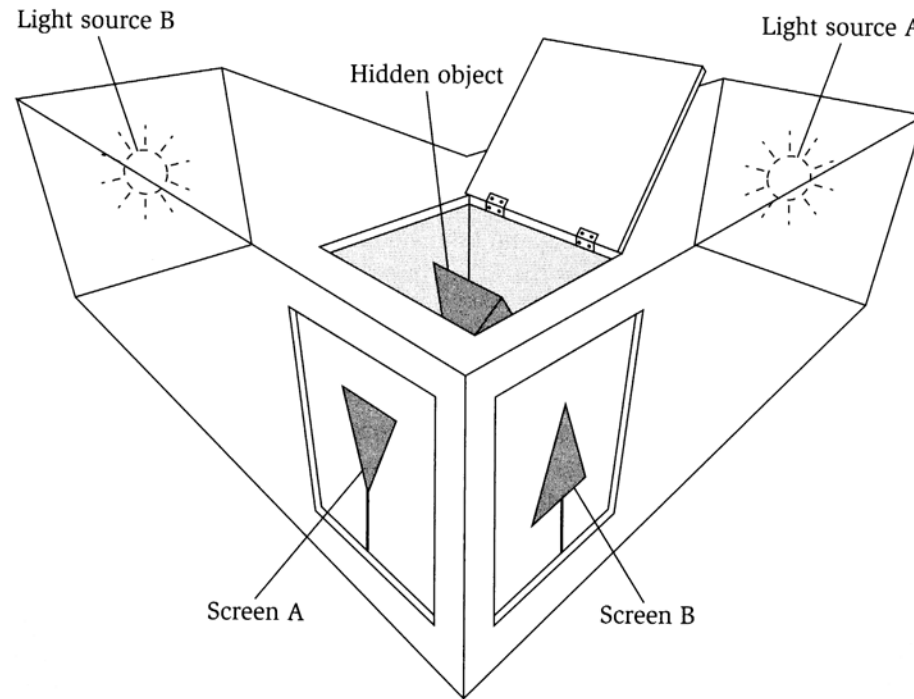
Perceived Oppression



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Plato's Cave



Source: Gruber (1990) The Cooperative Synthesis of Disparate Points of View



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Anger

Expectations

Attachments



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Effects of Conflict on Your Business

Job Satisfaction ↓

- Turnover ↑
- Absenteeism ↑
- Health Issues ↑
 - Cost ↑
 - Job Satisfaction ↓

Job Performance ↓



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Creativity & Innovation in Groups

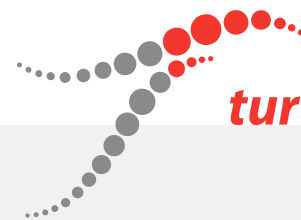
Team Members with Diverse Backgrounds

Open & Safe Atmosphere

Encourage All Views to be Heard

Share Viewpoints, Mental Models, Experience

Listen & Discuss Content & Process



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Is Conflict Always Bad?

Team Processes

Trauma in Our Personal Lives

“Creative Tension”

Learn New Skills

Deal to Executives

Deep Bonds



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Tools

Drama Triangle

- Model to Raise Awareness

Mirroring Dialog

- From Couples Therapy (Imago)
- Promotes Active Listening, Ensuring You Are Heard
- Limits Personal Attacks

Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

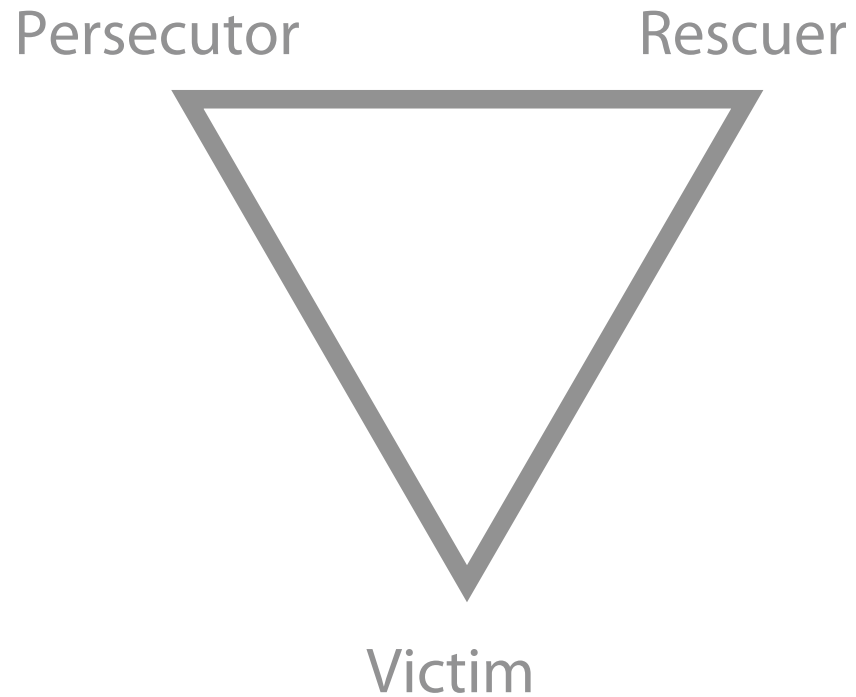
- Competing, Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding, Accommodating



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Drama Triangle



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Mirroring Dialog - An Example

Sender: "I..."

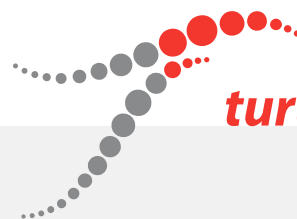
Receiver: "What I hear you saying is..., Is that correct?"

Sender: "Yes, that's correct." or "Well sort of, except..."

Receiver: "Is there more?"

Sender: "No."

Receiver: "It makes sense to me that... That must make you feel..."



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Thomas-Kilman Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)



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Questions

What is the Level of Conflict in Your Organization?

Is the Conflict (or Lack of it) Helping or Hurting Your Organization?

What Conflict Management Strategies Does Your Organization Use?

Which Tools Do Your Managers have Available to Resolve Conflict?



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Questions?



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THE ART, PSYCHOLOGY, AND SCIENCE OF MANAGEMENT —
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Back-up



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THE ART, PSYCHOLOGY, AND SCIENCE OF MANAGEMENT —
AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Escalation

Pros

- Conveys Importance of the Situation
- Can Encourage Information Gathering & Problem Solving

Cons

- Can Crowd Out Integrative Thinking
- Can Provoke Hostility
- May Impede Creative Thinking



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Mental Models

Deeply Held Internal Images of How the World Works

Limit Our Thinking & Acting to Ways that are Familiar to Us



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Aggression

Physical or Verbal

Direct or Indirect

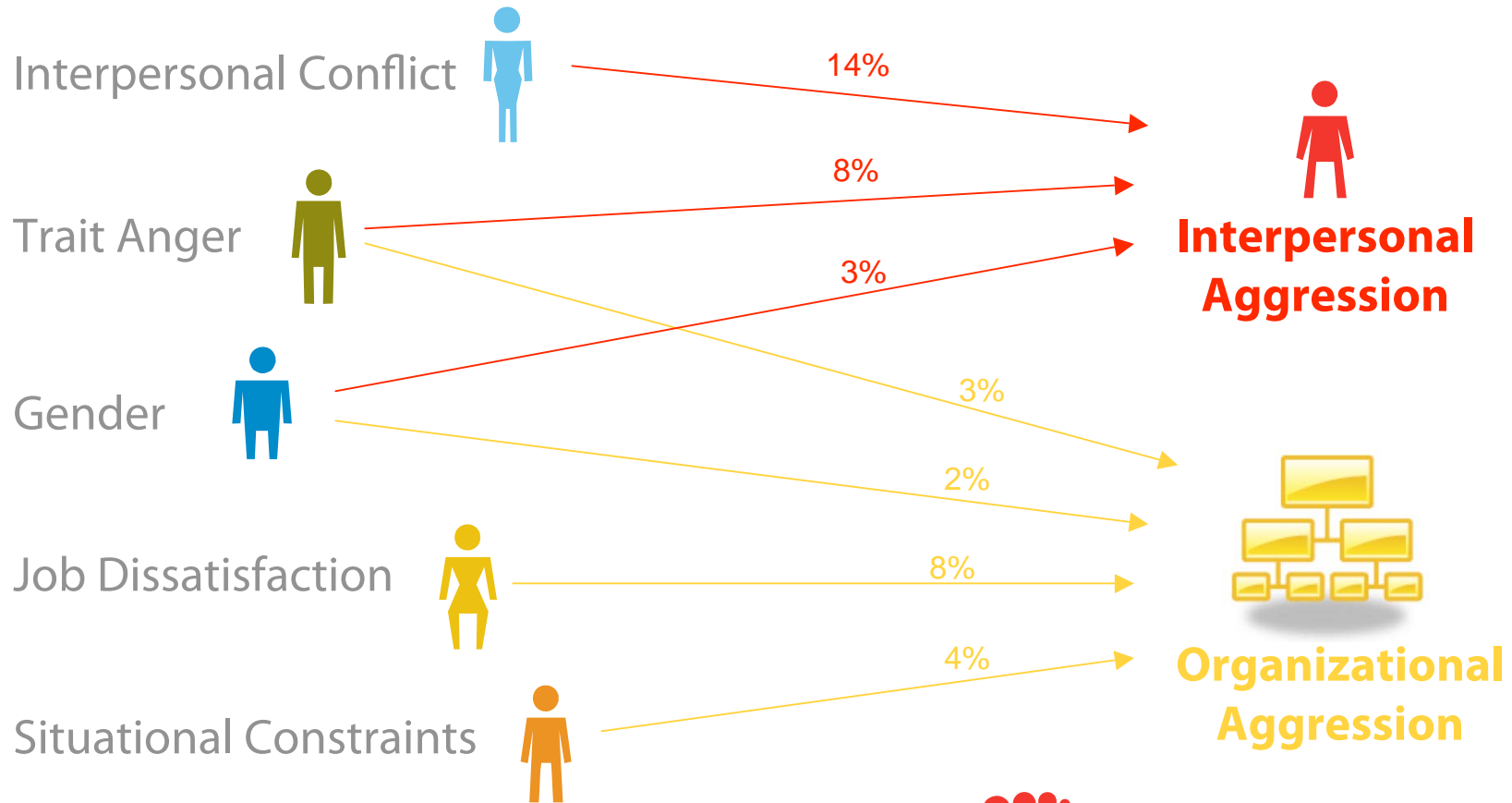
Active or Passive



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A Study of Studies (Meta-Analysis)



Source: Hershcovis et al., (2007)



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Conflict Resolution Strategies

Most Successful

- Discuss or Debate
- Open Communication
- Compromise or Reach Consensus
- Rotating Responsibilities

Less Successful

- Avoid or Ignore
- Idiosyncratic
- Vote

Source: Behfar et al., (2007)



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What is Fair?

Research Shows Fair Treatment & Procedures are More Important Than a Fair Outcome

- Procedural Justice

We Perceive Fair Treatment & Procedures as Producing Fair Outcomes

Ensure:

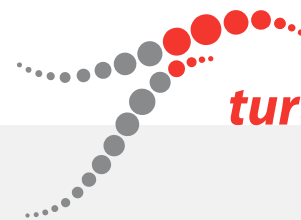
- All Parties Have a Voice, Respected
- Unbiased
- Consistency
- Valid Information



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Remember...

working here is always a choice



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It Only Takes One...

**If Any One Party Does Not Want
the Conflict Resolved, it will Not
be Resolved**



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How Do We Resolve Conflict?

Everyone Must Observe & Own:

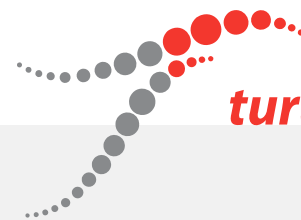
- Their Behavior & Emotions
- Their Thoughts & Values

Ensure All Parties Understand Each Person or Group's:

- Paradigms
- Mental Models

Full Disclosure:

- Fear
- Stress
- Victim, etc.



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Always!

Respect

Compassion



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Your Part

Tools - Use Diagnostic Tools

Observe & Own Your Behavior

Respect & Compassion

Confront Conflict Early & Head-On

Choice - We All Have Choices



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Conflict at Many Levels

National Culture

Organization

Group

Individual



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Conflict Over...

Resources

- Intra-group or Inter-group

Interpretation of Reality

Information Sharing

Positive Identity

- Values
- Self-Esteem



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Styles of Handling Conflict

Integrating

Forcing

Smoothing

Avoiding

Compromising



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Conflict Management Strategies

Unilateral

Joint

3rd Party



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Times When Conflict Arises

Mergers & Acquisitions

Union Negotiations

Performance Appraisals

Interpersonal Issues

Changing Job Functions

Downsizing

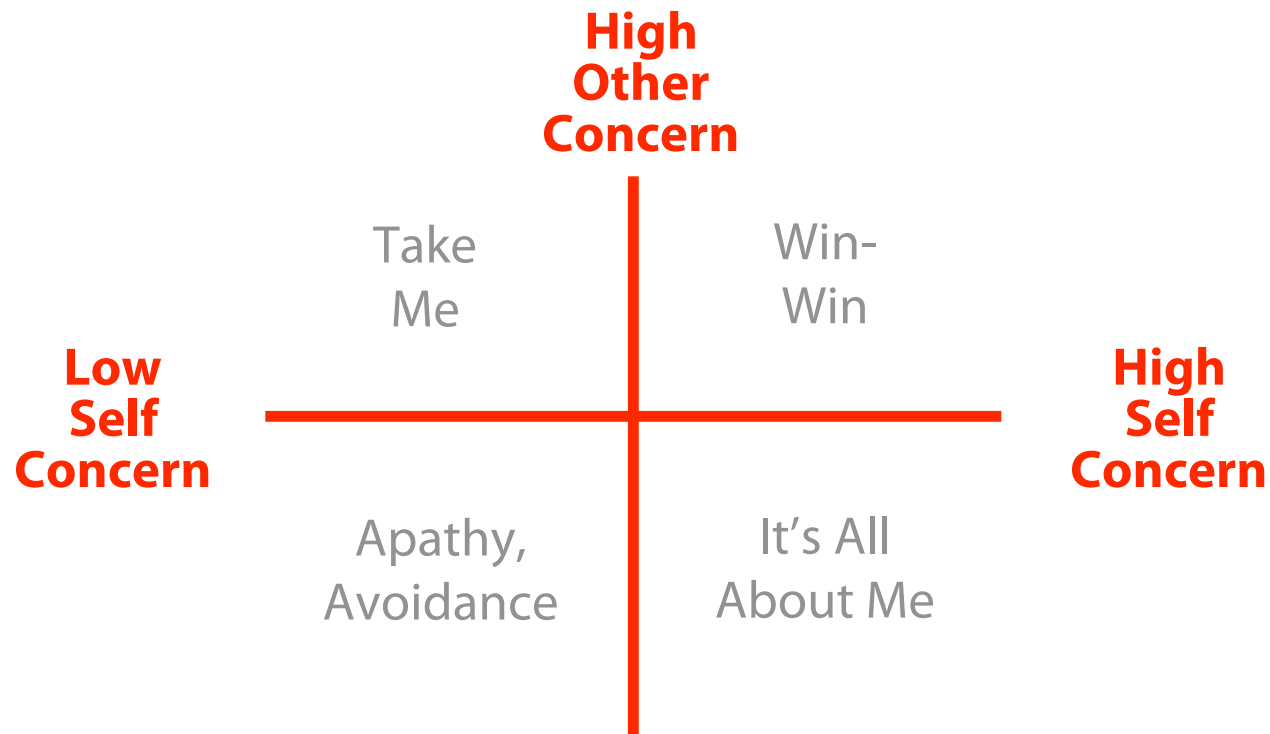
Reorganizations



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Dual Concern Theory



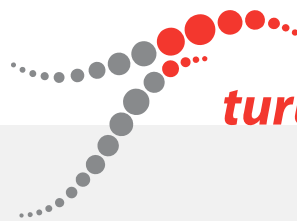
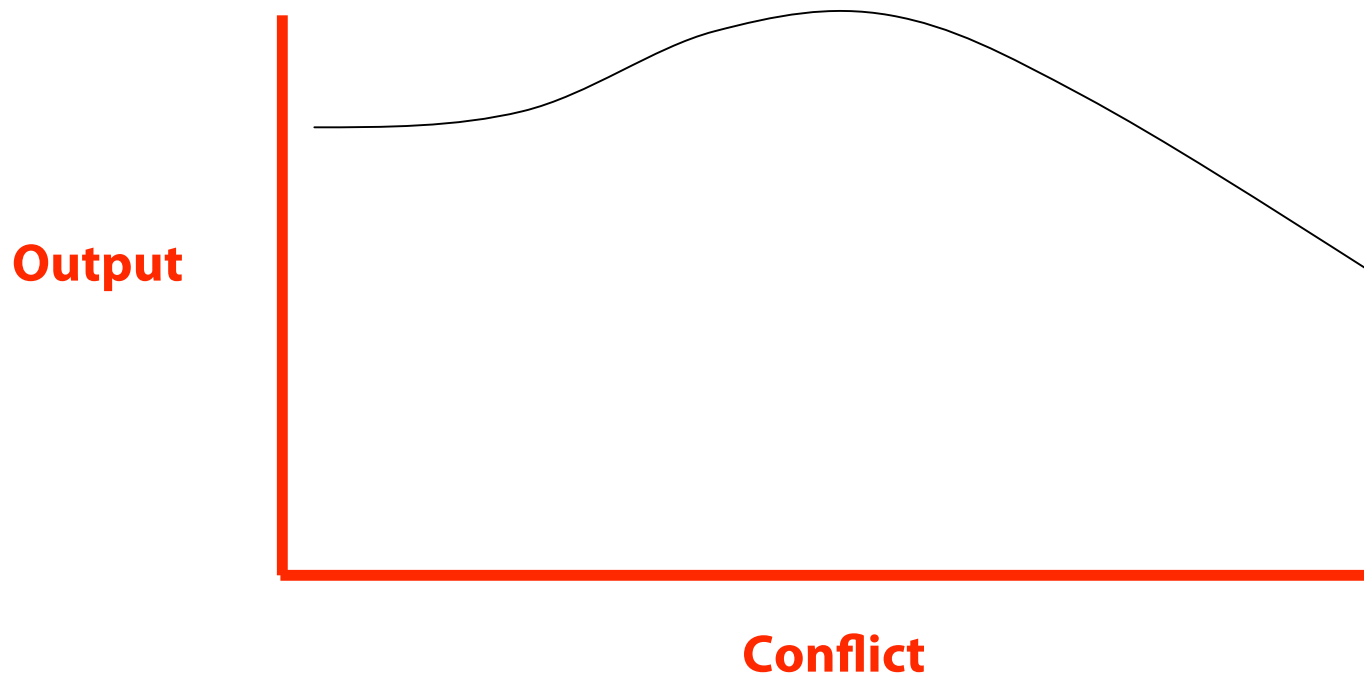
Low Other Concern



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Conflict vs. Output (Conceptual)



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Models

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

- Examples - E, I N, S T, S J, P
- Questionable Validity

Big Five Factor Model (NEO-PI, FFM)

- Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism
- High Validity

Emotional Intelligence

- Ability to Perceive and Manage Emotions of One's Self and of Others
- Validity is Controversial



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Models Cont.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

- Physiological, Safety, Social, Esteem, Self-Actualization
- No Known Validity Studies

DISC

- Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, Conscientiousness
- High Claimed Validity



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Myers-Briggs Flow

How We Gather Energy



**Extraversion
&
Introversion**

How We Gather Information



**Intuitive
&
Sensing**

How We Make Decisions



**Thinking
&
Feeling**

How We Close



**Judging
&
Perceiving**



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Myers-Briggs Flow

Extraversion & Introversion

- How We Gather Energy

Intuitive & Sensing

- How We Gather Information

Thinking & Feeling

- How We Make Decisions

Judging & Perceiving

- How We Close



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A Comparison of Models

MBTI	FFM	GMA	WGCTA
Extraversion (E)	Extraversion, Openness		
Introversion (I)	Neuroticism		
Sensing (S)			
Intuitive (N)	Extraversion, Openness	✓	✓
Thinking (T)	Conscientiousness		
Feeling (F)	Neuroticism, Agreeableness		
Judging (J)	Conscientiousness		
Perceiving (P)	Openness		

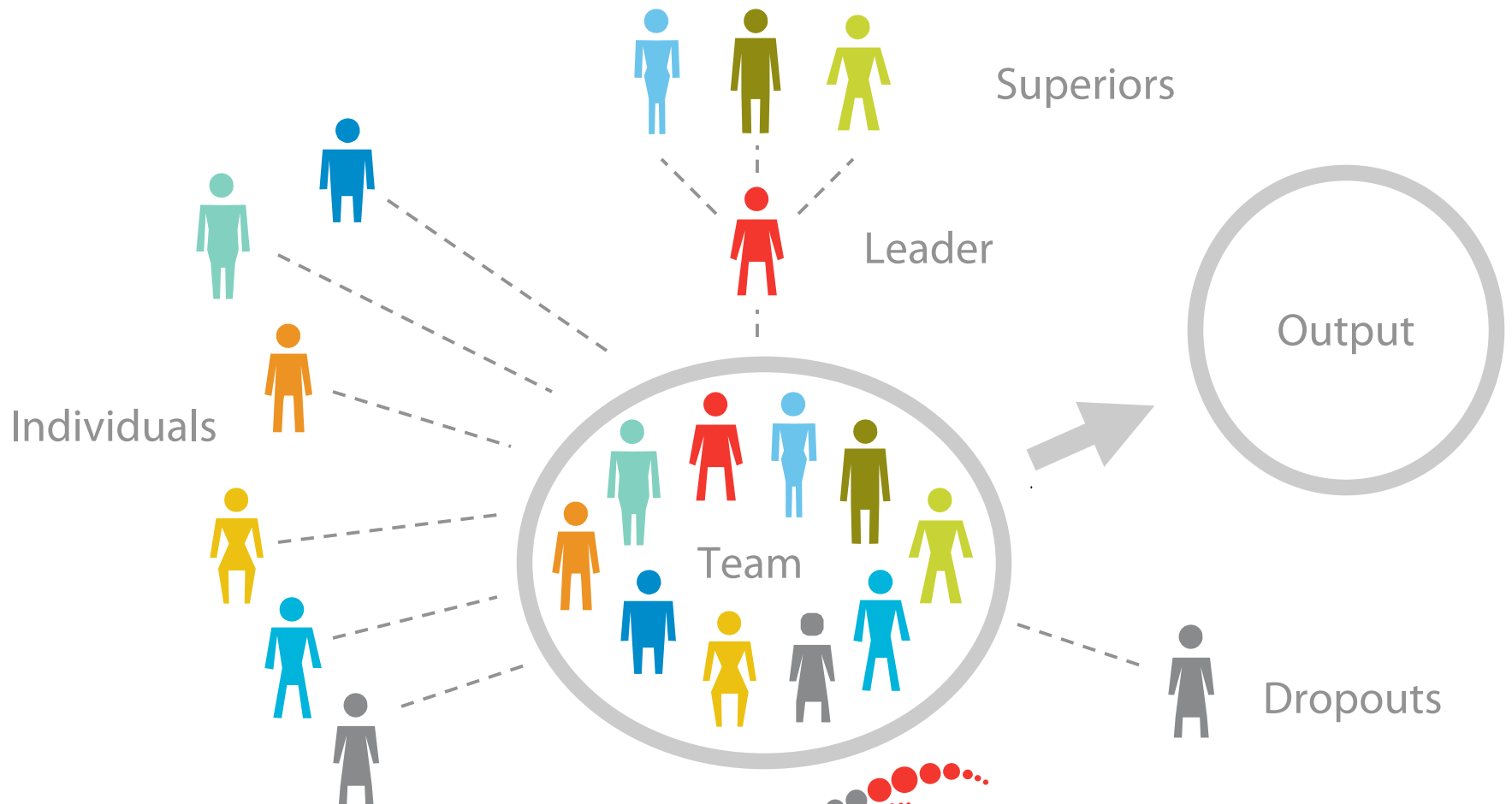
Source: Personality and Intelligence in Business People: A Study of Two Personality and Two Intelligence Measures (2007)



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Team Model



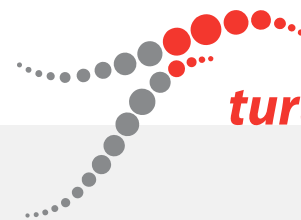
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Problem Solving

1. Diagnose the Problem

2. Develop Alternative Solutions



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Bibliography - 1

The Psychology of Conflict and Conflict Management in Organizations - Edited by De Dreu & Gelfand

- \$80, 512 pages, 2007
- Very thorough, pragmatic

The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice - Edited by Deutsch, Coleman, & Marcus

- \$60, 960 pages, 2006
- Many excellent models, a bit more theoretical



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Bibliography - 2

Karpman Drama Triangle

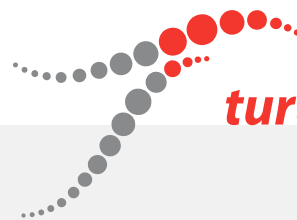
- Free description at en.wikipedia.org

Getting the Love You Want: A Guide for Couples by Hendrix

- \$10, 320 pages, 2007 (Latest Edition)
- Good description of the mirroring dialog

Short-Term Couples Therapy: The Imago Model in Action - by Luquet

- \$37, 304 pages, 2006 (2nd Edition)
- Mirroring dialog exercises, good resource lists



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Bibliography - 3

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

- \$13.50 + Shipping
- Available from www.cpp.com, No ordering restriction

The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organization - by Senge

- \$17, 464 pages, 2006 (Latest Edition)
- A classic in understanding organizational dynamics
- Light on psychology jargon



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