

Five Approaches to Handling Conflict

Competing:

- *Assertive and uncooperative*
- Pursuing your own concerns at another's expense
- Using power to win your position (e.g., rank, economic sanctions)
- Could include "standing up for your rights" or defending a position you believe is correct

Accommodating:

- *Unassertive and cooperative*
- The opposite of competing
- Neglecting your own concerns in order to satisfy the concerns of another
- Could take the form of selfless generosity, obeying an order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view

Avoiding:

- *Unassertive and uncooperative*
- Pursuing neither your own concerns or those of your opponent
- Not addressing the conflict
- Could take the form of sidestepping an issue, postponing the resolution of a conflict, or withdrawing from a threatening situation

Collaboration:

- *Assertive and cooperative*
- The opposite of avoiding
- Attempting to jointly work toward a solution that fully satisfies the concerns of all involved
- "Digging into" an issue to identify and address the underlying concerns of all parties involved

Compromising:

- *Intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness; the middle ground between competing and accommodating*
- Finding a mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties
- Addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating
- Could take the form of splitting the difference, exchanging concessions or seeking a quick middle-ground position