



How would you describe your confrontation style?

Is it the same with every person and every situation?

How effective is it?

Have you ever thought about it before?

Either way, you're going to think about it today as we talk about the five major confrontation styles.

But before we dig in I want to throw out a disclaimer here when it comes to labels and the assessments that assign those labels to us.

These sorts of assessments or quizzes- they're everywhere. They tell us what kind of personality we have, what our confrontation style is, which Brady Bunch character we are...

There is some value to be had from these exercises, but there's also a limited value. So take them with that in mind. Take whatever learning that you can get from them, but know that the real deep important work is not going to come out of taking a 10 question survey or even a hundred question assessment.

It's going to come from doing a lot of self-reflection coaching development and getting a lot of good critical feedback from other people.

The other caveat I want to mention about doing any sort of assessment and that assigns a label to you is that there's almost never just one. If you go online and you look for confrontation styles the five that we're going to talk about today will come up a lot. These are maybe the most common, but they are by no means the only ones. You're going to come up with results of the seven confrontation styles or the six or the nine or the three or whatever.

It's not a universal end all be all when you're categorizing anything, so do keep that in mind.

When it comes to the five that we're going to discuss today, we're going to discuss them as they place importance on the relationship or the result. That's really how they are categorized- when they're focused on one or the other and in some cases they're focused on both.

We start with competing. This type of confrontation style is very self-serving. This is the 'I'm looking out for me and what I want out of this' confrontation. 'I'm not concerned with what you want and not concerned with preserving this relationship. I'm just looking out for what I want in need.'

This one is definitely results over relationship.



Then we have the avoiding style. If the avoider had their way, they would never engage in a confrontation. They would just avoid it as long as they possibly could- ideally forever. This is 'I don't want to do this at all'. They stress relationships over results. They don't want to rock the boat, ruffle feathers, or... I'm not sure of a third cliché to throw in here. They want to keep the peace and they think the best way to keep the peace is by not having a conversation at all.

The other peacekeeper is the accommodator. The accommodator will have the confrontation but the end goal is to give the other person what they want. This is absolutely the relationship over the result. They want to concede to the other person because it's more important to them that the other person is happy and gets what they want instead of them getting what they want.

Then the last two are a little bit more equal when it comes to valuing relationships over result or vice versa. The aim is to make it more equal.

We have the compromiser or the compromising style. This is a very familiar one where 'I'll meet you in the middle. I'll meet you halfway. So neither one of us completely gets what we want and we're both being asked to sacrifice something but it's intended to have equal results. So we both give up the same and we both get the same. Nobody's completely happy but nobody's completely unhappy either.'

It's a give and take. It's a 50/50. It's a meet you in the middle and ideally it is to get both relationship and result though, though it's a little more relationship than result. You want to keep the other person happy and you're willing to do that by sacrificing something that you want.

Finally we get to the collaborating style, which is 'I want us both to win. I want us both to walk away with whatever it is that we want'. This is an equal part relationship and result- maybe a little bit more on the results side. They want to make sure everybody's happy and everybody's getting what they want.

The natural next question- and I'm wondering if it came to your mind as well- is which one's best? What's the one that I *should* have? I'm going to give you the most unsatisfying answer I can give you which is it depends.

One of the things that is going to make you fabulous at confronting is letting go of whatever your natural style is when the situation demands it.

You can take a "What is Your Confrontation Style" assessment in the Resource section. After taking it, you will receive a label.

Again take it for what it's worth. You will also have an opportunity to do some self-reflection and seek feedback to see what other people think about what your confrontation style is.



It's good to know what your go-to is but part of the lesson is that it depends which one is best depending on a lot of factors.

Knowing where you naturally gravitate is important and it's also important to say this is your go-to, but you shouldn't be going to that in every single situation because there is a time and a place for all five of those confrontations.

We're going to talk about all of them throughout these videos.

A lot of people look at that collaborating style at the end where the goal is for everybody to win and they say, okay, that's the best one. We should always do collaborating.

But none of them is the best one all the time. Maybe in an ideal world we could focus on that one because everybody gets what they want, but it's not always feasible.

For starters, that one takes a long time depending on what result you're trying to get. It might take you several meetings to really make everybody happy and give them exactly what they want and not every situation will be able to have that much time given to it.

Secondly sometimes what both sides want are so opposite or opposed or far apart that it's just not feasible that everybody's going to get everything they want. You might have to implement some other styles so that you come up with a good result. Even if it's not the best result for everybody involved.

A lot of people turn to the avoiding style, for example to say well, that's the bad one, I shouldn't do that one. But again, there's a time and a place for each of these including the avoider.

For example, you have this fabulous employee and they're always on time and they do great work and they always meet their deadlines and then one time, they miss the deadline. If you choose to confront that, it might do more harm than good.

If this is someone who's been fabulous for so many years, if it was a little mistake and it's probably not going to happen again, the best course of action is probably just to avoid it. It's not that serious and it's really not going to accomplish anything.

I want you to get out of the mindset of there's one right way because every situation is different and in a lot of situations you can make a good case for using different styles in that same situation.

Don't worry about always choosing the best one but choose one that can be effective for that situation.

I equate this question to which cooking temperature is best right? You can't answer it.

Are you cooking chicken?



Are you cooking broccoli?

Are you cooking something more delicious than broccoli?

You just can't answer it with a definitive answer.

When you're deciding which style to use you have to take all the factors into consideration. Recognize what your go-to style is. Recognize what the other person's style is.

If you are a confronter, if you're competing for example, or if you're anything but an avoider and you're trying to confront someone who is an avoider that's a really different approach than if you are a competer and you're about to approach another competer, right?

It's going to depend both on your own style and the other person's. It's going to depend on the situation and then you need to adjust accordingly.

It's an art far more than it's a science and you're not always going to choose the best style. Do the best you can. There's not a map that's going to tell you exactly what style to use in each situation. Do the best you can and learn and grow along the way.

So the most important question for you is, what is your go-to confrontation style and how can you learn to let it go depending on the situation?