

## Conflict/Negotiation Style Choices \*

### **Competing/Forcing**

- ★ Typical strategies: Dominate, control, outwit, coerce, fight.
- ★ Often appropriate when: Issue is trivial. An emergency looms. Others do not care about outcome, or an unpopular course of action must be taken.
- ★ Often inappropriate when: Cooperation from others is important. Issue is complex. Maintaining ongoing relationships are important. Issue is not urgent.

*“My way or the highway!”*

### **Accommodation**

- ★ Typical strategies: Quickly agree, appease, flatter.
- ★ Often appropriate when: Issue is not important to you. You believe you may be wrong. You are “taking turns.” You are in a position of weakness.
- ★ Often inappropriate when: You believe you are right. You are likely to resent it. The other party is unethical.

*“Whatever you want is OK with me!”*

### **Avoidance**

- ★ Typical strategies: Flee, deny, ignore, withdraw, wish, hope.
- ★ Often appropriate when: Issue is trivial. Have time. Cooling-off period is needed.
- ★ Often inappropriate when: Prompt action is needed. Negative feelings may linger. The issue is important.

*“Conflict? What conflict?”*

### **Collaboration**

- ★ Typical strategies: Gather information, look for alternatives, dialogue, welcome disagreement.
- ★ Often appropriate when: The issues and the relationship are both important. The issues are complex. Cooperation is necessary. There is reasonable hope to address all concerns (time, resources, shared interests).
- ★ Often inappropriate when: Time is short. The issues are unimportant or simple.

*“How can we resolve this problem?”*

### **Compromise**

- ★ Typical strategies: Bargain, reduce expectations, a little something for everyone.
- ★ Often appropriate when: Finding some solution is better than a stalemate. Cooperation is important, but time is limited.
- ★ Often inappropriate when: You cannot live with the consequences of the agreement reached. Finding the optimal solution is important.

*“Let’s split the difference.”*

\* The above material adopted from work by Ken Thomas and Ralph Kilmann.