

Tools and Resources

Conflict Readiness Evaluation

This brief evaluation is designed to help you determine how well your church is prepared to deal with conflict.

1. Church members understand and know how to apply biblical peacemaking principles so that they can resolve most of their own conflicts personally and privately. In particular, they know when and how to: make an effective confession, overlook an offense, confront others constructively, involve church leaders in a dispute, forgive as God forgives, negotiate in a biblical manner, and deal with people who refuse to be reasonable; they also know when it is appropriate for a Christian to file a lawsuit.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

2. Leaders are trained to resolve conflict in a biblical manner, that is, they know when to intervene in conflicts within the congregation and how to apply biblical principles of negotiation, conflict counseling, mediation, and arbitration.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

3. Leaders are trained and willing to exercise church discipline in a loving, constructive, consistent, and redemptive manner, and they understand what steps to take to avoid being sued by disgruntled members.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

4. Leaders understand the common legal actions that are filed against churches today and follow established legal practices needed to protect the church from legal liability. Specifically, the church is incorporated, insured, uses conciliation clauses in contracts, gets all important agreements in writing, uses professionals before conflicts arise, and follows all of its policies and procedures consistently.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

5. The church has adopted special policies needed to prevent unnecessary conflict and reduce exposure to legal liability. These policies cover: the control of church property; confidentiality and access to church records; biblical counseling; conflict resolution; screening youth workers; reporting actual or suspected child abuse; selecting, supervising, and discharging employees and volunteers.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

6. Members have been fully and specifically informed about the church's policies and bylaws and have expressly consented to be bound by them.

Not Prepared 0 1 2 3 4 5 Fully Prepared

Adapted from *Managing Conflict in Your Church*

Total Score: _____ out of 30

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Individual Conflict Style Assessment: *How Do I Respond to Conflict?*

Part One Circle one number on the line below each statement that represents how you might respond.

WHEN I FIRST DISCOVER THAT DIFFERENCES EXIST – MILD CONFLICT

A. I make sure that all views are out in the open and treated with equal consideration, even if there seems to be substantial disagreement.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

B. I devote more attention to making sure others understand the logic and benefits of my position than I do to pleasing them.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

C. I make my needs known, but I tone them down a bit and look for solutions somewhere in the middle.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

D. I pull back from discussion for a time to avoid tension.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

E. I devote more attention to feelings of others than to my personal goals.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

F. I make sure my agenda doesn't get in the way of our relationship.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

G. I actively explain my ideas and just as actively take steps to understand others.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

H. I am more concerned with goals I believe to be important than with how others feel about things.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

I. I decide the differences aren't worth worrying about.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

J. I give up some points in exchange for others.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

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Part Two Circle one number on the line below each statement that represents how you might respond.

IF DIFFERENCES PERSIST AND FEELINGS ESCALATE – INTENSE CONFLICT

K. I enter more actively into discussion and hold out for ways to meet the needs of others as well as my own.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

L. I put forth greater effort to make sure that the truth, as I see it, is recognized and less on pleasing others.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

M. I try to be reasonable by not asking for my full preferences, but I make sure I get some of what I want.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

N. I don't push for things to be done my way, and I pull back somewhat from the demands of others.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

O. I set aside my own preferences and become more concerned with keeping the relationship comfortable.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

P. I interact less with others and look for ways to find a safe distance.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

Q. I do what needs to be done and hope we can mend feelings later.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

R. I do what is necessary to soothe the other's feelings.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

S. I pay close attention to the desires of others but remain firm that they need to pay equal attention to my desires.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

T. I press for moderation and compromise so we can make a decision and move on with things.

Not at all like me 1 2 3 4 5 6 Very much like me

Styles of Conflict Management

Scoring & Interpretation

Transfer the number from each item to the tally sheet. For example, on item A, if you selected number 6, write 6 on the line designated for A on the tally sheet. Then add the numbers. **Sample: B 1 + H 4 = 5.**

Assisting – *work mutually with the other person to resolve the issue(s)*

Statement A _____ + Statement G _____ = _____ Mild

Statement K _____ + Statement S _____ = _____ Intense

Adjusting – *let go of some of your needs and wants to serve some of the other person's*

Statement C _____ + Statement J _____ = _____ Mild

Statement M _____ + Statement T _____ = _____ Intense

Accommodating – *let go of most or all of your needs and wants to defer to the other person's*

Statement E _____ + Statement F _____ = _____ Mild

Statement O _____ + Statement R _____ = _____ Intense

Avoiding – *do not engage with the other person to resolve the issue*

Statement D _____ + Statement I _____ = _____ Mild

Statement N _____ + Statement P _____ = _____ Intense

Asserting – *present your needs and wants at the expense of the other person's*

Statement B _____ + Statement H _____ = _____ Mild

Statement L _____ + Statement Q _____ = _____ Intense

Preferred and Default Style of Conflict Management

Using your scores from page five and six, list your score numbers and style names here in order of largest number at the top of the list to smallest number at the bottom of the list. The style that received the highest score in each of the columns, *MILD* and *INTENSE*, indicates a "preferred" or primary style of conflict management. If two or more styles have the same score, they are equally "preferred". The second highest score indicates one's "default" style if the number is relatively close to the highest score. A fairly even score across all of the styles indicates a "flat profile". Persons with a flat profile tend to be able to choose easily among the various responses to conflict.

This exercise gives you two sets of scores. *MILD* scores apply to your response when disagreement first arises. *INTENSE* scores apply to your response if things are not easily resolved and emotions get stronger. The scores indicate your indication to use each style. The higher your score in a given style, the more likely you are to use this style in responding to conflict.

In MILD Conflict my preferred style is:

Response when issue/conflicts first arise and have little emotion attached.

In INTENSE Conflict my default style is:

Response after the issues/conflicts have been unresolved and have grown in intensity.

Score Preferred Style

List highest score at top with corresponding name of style.

Score Default Style

List highest score at top with corresponding name of style.

Result Example:

In Mild Conflict I respond with:

10 Adjust
 9 Accommodate
 6 Assert
 5 Assist
 5 Avoid

In Intense Conflict I respond with:

12 Avoid
 11 Accommodate
 8 Assist
 7 Adjust
 5 Assist

Adapted from Kraybill's Beta form of "Inventory of Personal Conflict Management Styles" and used in this setting only.