



Learning Community

Origins of Conflict		
Limited Resources	Unmet Basic Needs	Different Values
Time	Belonging	Beliefs
Money	Power	Priorities
Property	Freedom	Principles
	Fun	

C O N F L I C T

Responses to Conflict		
Soft	Principled	Hard
Withdrawing	Listening	Threatening
Ignoring	Respecting	Pushing
Denying	Resolving	Hitting
Giving In		Yelling
Win-Win		

Soft Responses

Soft responses such as avoidance, accommodation, and compromise usually occur between individuals who are friends or who want to be pleasant to each other because they will continue to have contact in the future. Individuals may attempt to avoid conflict altogether by withdrawing from the situation, ignoring it, or denying that the conflict even matters. Soft responses typically result in feelings of disillusionment, self-doubt, fear, and anxiety about the future.

Principled Responses

Principled negotiators understand that communication is fundamental to cooperative interaction, and they understand what it means to participate in developing a common understanding. Principled negotiators are skilled, active, empathic listeners. Principled responses create the opportunity for the needs and interests of both disputants to be met. Principled responses to conflict preserve relationships.

Hard Responses

Hard responses to conflict are characterized by confrontations that involve force, threats, aggression, and anger. Hard negotiators demand concessions as a condition of the relationship and insist on their position. Hard responses are detrimental to cooperation and relationships and often result in hostility, physical damage, and violence.

Source: Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, and Community and Juvenile Justice Settings Program Report, Donna Crawford and Richard Bodine. 1996. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. U.S. Department of Justice.