

Federation of Tax Administrators





Conflict Is Inevitable

If well managed, drives:

- Problem solving
- Team work
- Innovation

Conflict Can't Be Stopped



Poorly-Managed Conflict

Hindered collaboration	Emotional violence
Poor morale	Injuries
Less innovation	Client complaints
Reduced efficiency	Litigation
Bad customer service	Decreased safety

Roadblock To Performance



Google Research – Two Years

“We knew it was important for people to feel like they could speak up if something’s wrong. But this is also the behavior that can set people at odds. We couldn’t figure out why some groups could clash and still perform, while others would hit a period of conflict and everything would fall apart.”

Smarter, Faster, Better – Charles Duhigg - 2016

Conflict’s Role In Team Effectiveness



Google Conclusions

Assumed factors didn't matter at all:

- **Who was on team**
- **Team co-location**
- **Consensus decision making**

Just one team norm made all the difference in team effectiveness

Vistelar Teaching For Over 30 Years



Summary

Well-managed conflict:

- **Performance can explode**

Poorly-managed conflict:

- **Bad stuff happens**

Must Learn To Better Manage Conflict



Vistelar – Spectrum of Conflict

How to:

- Prevent and de-escalate conflict
- Gain compliance when refusal occurs
- Defend ones self and others if attacked

Goals:

- Reduce complaints, liability, injuries
- Improve team performance, morale, safety

In-Person - Online Programs, Books



2015 Google Team Meeting

“The biggest thing you should take away from this work is that HOW teams work matters more than WHO is on them. Most of us think we need superstars on our teams. But, that’s not what our research found. You can take a team of average performers and, if you teach them to interact the right way, they’ll do things no superstars could ever accomplish.”

One Key Norm



Foundational Teaching

Treat People With Dignity

even if

you disagree with them

or

they're different from you

Inalienable Right Of Human Beings



Why Not Universally Applied?

Two Reasons – most people:

- Don't understand it drives better results – it's a selfish act
- Haven't been taught the HOWs of treating people with dignity

Result → Poorly Management Conflict



Google's Struggle

“It was clear to us what team norm drove performance. But, it wasn’t clear how to teach [the right way to interact] inside Google. We needed clear guidelines without losing the capacity for dissent and debate that’s so critical to how Google functions.”

**The HOWs of Treating
People with Dignity**

That’s What We Teach



Foundational Teaching

**Treat People With Dignity
even if you disagree with them
or they're different from you**

Drives Team Performance

Prevents and De-Escalates Conflict

Right Way To Interact



Interactions Drive Outcomes

Client interactions → point-of-impact results:

- Compliance
- Satisfaction – Procedural Justice

Team interactions → longer term outcomes

- Win-win agreements
- Increased performance and safety
- Less turnover

Foundation For Success



Still Hard Work To Do

Interacting the right way lays the groundwork for success, but not a cure-all for all organizational issues – still need:

- Operational effectiveness
- People management skills
- Negotiation skills

Issues Will Decline Over Time



Interaction Categories

Context: approach considerations

Goal: prepare

Contact: initial interaction

Goal: conflict prevention

Conflict: anger, abuse, refusal

Goal: de-escalation

Crisis: irrational behavior, rage

Goal: recovery

Combat: physical engagement

Goal: physical safety

Closure: follow-through

Goal: best outcome

Entire Spectrum Of Conflict



HOW To Treat With Dignity?

By Showing Respect – But How?

Five Maxims:

- Listen With All Your Senses
- Ask, Don't Tell
- Explain Why – Set Context
- Offer Options, Not Threats
- Give A Second Chance

Core Philosophy



Ultimate Goal

Social Contract for how people interact within your organization

– with clients and with each other

1) Voluntary 2) Right Way 3) Consistent



Library Principle



Context Situations

Approach Considerations

These situations occur prior to an interaction.

During this time, you must evaluate the entire “context” of a circumstance so you can make the appropriate decisions and prepare for the interaction – to ensure a good outcome.

Goal: Prepare



Emotional Equilibrium

Three Trigger Categories

- Indignity
- Stress
- Vulnerability



Identify Your Triggers

- Name It, Own It

Universal Triggers



Other's Emotional Triggers

- “Calm down!”
- “What’s your problem?”
- “You people!”
- “Come over here!”
- “I’m not going to tell you again!”
- “Because these are the rules ...”



“If It Feels Good, No Good”



Calm Down!



There's A Better Way



Contact Situations

Initial Interaction

These situations occur when making an initial contact. Here is the goal is to prevent conflict by beginning an interaction in the best way

possible and, if necessary, turning a defensive atmosphere into a supportive

Goal: Conflict Prevention



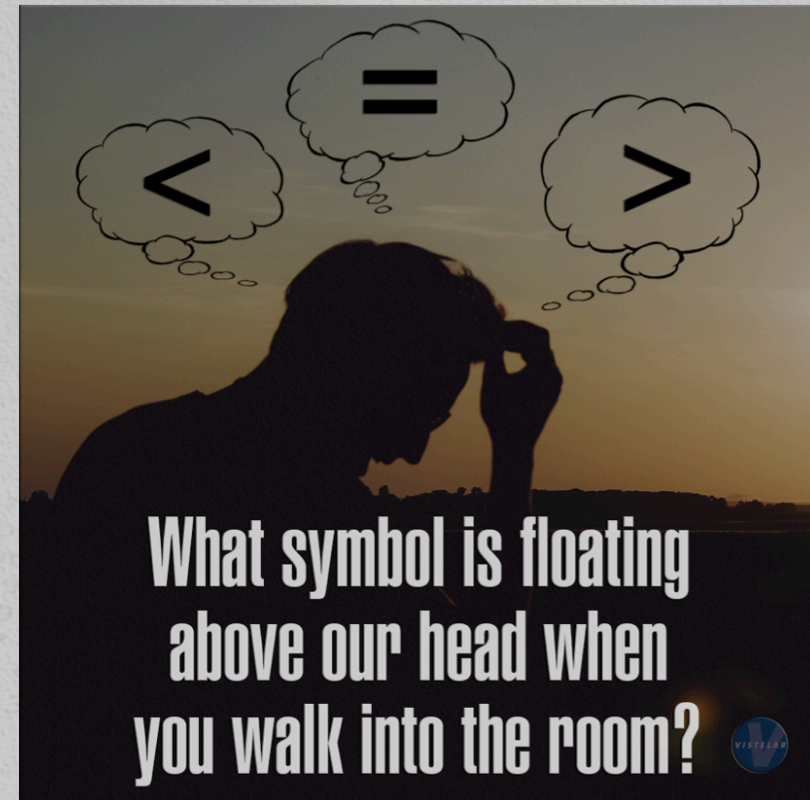
Showtime Mindset

Posture

Facial Expression

Positive Self-Talk

Emotional
Equilibrium



Professional Face



Peace Story



Just One Thing



Universal Greeting

Appropriate Greeting

Name & Affiliation

Reason For Contact

Relevant Question



Reasonable Doubt You're Not A Jerk



Conflict Situations

Anger, Abuse, Refusal

These situations occur when faced with defensiveness, anger, verbal abuse or refusal of a direction or command. Here the goal is to de-escalate the conflict to prevent its progression to emotional or physical violence.

Goal: De-Escalation



Respond, Don't React

Natural language is a disaster

“Never use words that rise readily to your lips or you’ll make the greatest speech you’ll ever learn to regret”

**– Dr. George Thompson, Verbal Judo
Institute**

“If It Feels Good, No Good”



Beyond Active Listening

Empathize

Ask To Clarify

Paraphrase

Summarize



Alternative: Redirections



Foundational Teaching

**Treat People With Dignity
even if you disagree with them
or they're different from you**

**– and even if you don't
respect them**

Right Way To Interact



Persuasion Sequence

Ask, Don't Tell

Explain Why, Set Context

Offer Options, Not Threats

Give A Second Chance

Take Appropriate Action

**TREAT WITH DIGNITY BY
SHOWING RESPECT**

FIVE MAXIMS

Listen With All Senses

Ask, Don't Tell

Explain Why - Set Context

Offer Options, Not Threats

Give A Second Chance

No Repetition



Crisis Situations

Irrational Behavior, Rage

These situations occur when someone becomes irrational. They may be on drugs or alcohol or have mental disorders, or they may be just incredibly angry. The goal here is recovery – to end the crisis – so normal communication tactics can be used

Goal: Recovery



Combat Situations

Physical Engagement

These situations occur when there's some form of physical engagement – initiated by you to control the situation or initiated by them, such as grabbing, pushing, hitting or presenting a weapon. The goal here yours and everyone else's physical safety.

Goal: Physical Safety



Closure Situations

Follow Through

These situations occur at the end of an interaction when next steps must be decided. Here the goal is to protect relationships, increase the chances of a better interaction next time, return

things

Goal: Best Outcome

to normal and learn from the interaction.



Benefits Of This Approach

With Clients:

- Compliance – Less Protests/Litigation
- Satisfaction – Less Complaints
- Efficiency – Problem Solving

With Team:

- Collaboration – Innovation
- Performance – Efficiency
- Morale – Less Turnover

Point-Of-Impact, Long-Term Outcomes



Summary

- Conflict is inevitable
- Well managed conflict – good thing
- Poorly-managed conflict – big problems
- One norm makes all the difference –
Treat People With Dignity even if ...
- Selfish act – just good results
- Must know the HOWs of doing this

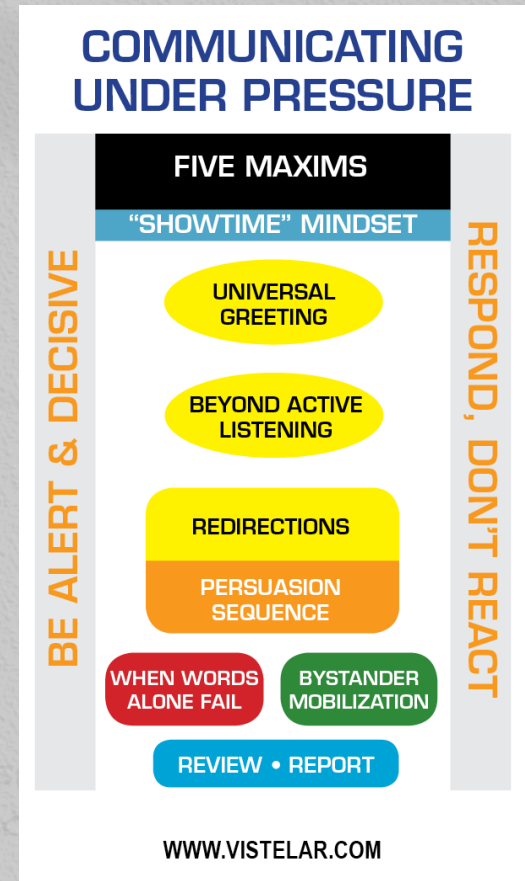
Ultimate Goal: Social Contract



Structured Framework

“We treat people as ladies and gentlemen, not because they are but because we are”

- ND Highway Patrol



Easy To Learn, Apply & Teach

Thanks!

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