

# Conflict Management 101

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ASI Summer Leadership Training 2016

Dr. Jennifer Miller, Dean of Students



# In Pairs: Five Minute Challenge

- Please share your top 1-3 pet peeves
- What typical ASI scenarios might lead to conflict (we will go back to this list)?



# Trigger Words

- Basically *Trigger words* are words that raise folks blood pressure and set them off
- *Trigger words* are road blocks to conflict management
- When our communication triggers anger in another, their hostile response can trigger anger in us
- Disrespectful, manipulative, and negative styles of communication can obviously trigger anger in others
- Nobody likes feeling disrespected, manipulated, or attacked



# Trigger Words

- Let's take a few moments to brainstorm a few *Trigger words*
- Let's keep it PG please



# Remember our ASI Scenarios?

- Let's pick one
- Please count off by twos
- **Group A:** Gets to use trigger words for that confrontation in a skit that they design (PG please)
- **Group B:** Does the same confrontation with alternatives to trigger words



# Debrief

- How difficult was it for us to use alternatives to trigger words?
- How can we train ourselves to confront without using trigger words?
- Many of us agreed on what we consider to be trigger words, how many of us have used these same words with others?
- Our approach is often a reflection of our conflict management style



# Kraybill Conflict Style Inventory

- Please take ten minutes to complete the *Kraybill Conflict Style Inventory*
- I would recommend taking this inventory using the setting of ASI in a fictional (but possible) conflict situation
- Please answer honestly (This is for your eyes only)



# ASI Team Conflict Style Inventory

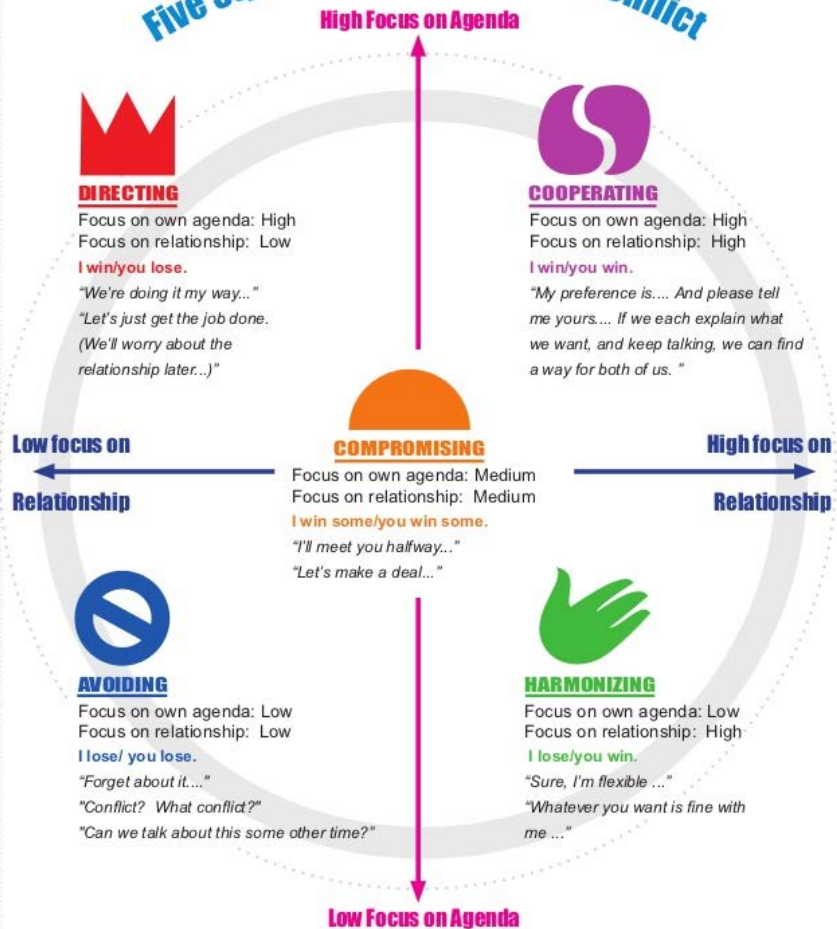
- Calm
  - Dolphins
  - Lions
  - Zebras
  - Turtles
  - Chameleons
- Storm
  - Dolphins
  - Lions
  - Zebras
  - Turtles
  - Chameleons





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# Five Styles of Responding to Conflict



# ASI Conflict Style Animal Kingdom

- What positive attributes does your animal have that you wish others would recognize?
- What advice would you give someone about resolving conflict with your animal?
- How might the makeup of the “animal kingdom” of the ASI board team impact the experiences of team members?
- What group expectations can we remind each other of when in conflict?



# General Conflict Management Tips

- Understand that conflict is neither bad, wrong, nor a sign of failure
- **Don't react:** Pause and get grounded
- **Practice detachment:** Zoom out to gain perspective
- **Do not displace:** Address the appropriate person
- Choose your battles
- Avoid e-mail, social media, and text communication regarding conflict
- Pay attention to your facial expressions and body language
- **Do not triangulate:** Ganging up never works
- Speak for yourself only



# General Conflict Management Tips

- Before speaking, ask yourself :
  - Is it kind?
  - Is it true?
  - Is it necessary?
- Be specific about what you need
- Be willing to let go and “reboot”
- **Be flexible:** You may not get what you want
- Avoid defensiveness and criticism
- Avoid sighing and eye rolling
- Do not shut down
- Reflect empathy
- Reflect back what you are hearing
- Take responsibility for yourself
- Sincerely apologize as needed to show integrity and character



# General Conflict Management Tips

- **Use assertive communication:** Ask for what you need and say no to what you can not do
- Do not be passive, aggressive, or passive aggressive
- Be clear, direct and appropriate
- Use “I” verses “You”
- Be patient
- You can’t control other people, their feelings, and their behaviors
- Avoid making judgments based on non-relevant factors
- Forgive
- Be grateful for the wisdom that different perspectives bring



# General Conflict Management Tips

- Avoid making judgments based on non-relevant factors
- After you have confronted someone, do not hold a grudge
- Don't take things personally. People rarely annoy you or make you mad intentionally
- Find ways to interact with folks in a positive, respectful manner
- Practice self-care
- Keep perspective (protect your energy for all of the important things in your life)



# Stress

- Stress is the body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental and/or emotional adjustment and/or response
- It can come from any situation and/or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, nervous, and/or anxious



# Final Thoughts

- There are tremendous learning opportunities afforded with each conflict scenario
- We can only move forward, we can't change the past
- Forgiveness and humility are critical
- Ongoing self-reflection is also crucial
- How ASI team members navigate conflict reflects on individuals and the organization as a whole
- We have tremendous support from each other as we learn and grow





# Questions?

Dr. Jennifer Miller  
Dean of Students, Cal State LA  
SA 116  
[Jennifer.miller@calstatela.edu](mailto:Jennifer.miller@calstatela.edu)  
3-3103

