

# TRAINING TOOL “ MINDSET & VALUES



- **NAME OF THE TOOL**

Moore's circle of conflict

- **DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL**

The exercise is used in the fourth part of the Mindset & Values training module. The aim of the exercise is to understand the sources of conflicts. Christopher Moore's Circle of Conflict identified five sources of conflict: values, relationships, data, interests and structure. The circle is adapted to include language as a source of conflicts and expands values conflicts to include adaptive challenges. The adapted circle depicts the six sources graphically. Understand that conflicts often have multiple sources. The size of each segment reflects the likelihood of that source being present. Sources of conflict that are difficult to resolve tend to persist over time.

Key Ideas:

There are five primary sources of conflict:

- **Relationship Conflicts** – Source of conflict is interpersonal differences, miscommunication, strong emotions, lack of trust or interaction styles. Language can sometimes play into this. Start with prayer and a one-to-one conversation. A third party mediator or coach may be useful to reach an understanding in some situations.
- **Data Conflicts** – The source of this kind of conflict is the lack of information, misinformation, different view of relevance of the data, or interpretations of what the data means. This kind of conflict can often be avoided by making sure that all data is shared and discussed. Developing a consensus about the data's importance and how to interpret it early in a process is critical.

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- **Interest Conflicts** – The source of this kinds of conflict is based on competing or conflicting interests, interests around the procedure for making a decision or negotiating an outcome or psychological interests (status, power, identity, autonomy etc.). In a disagreement, what one party wants is their position. Interests are the reasons behind that position. Identifying and addressing the underlying interests involved can often lead to a positive resolution.
- **Value Conflicts** – These conflicts are caused by differing world views or criteria for evaluating ideas. They also may be due to perceived disrespect or violation of a personally held value. Resolving this kind of conflict can often be done by naming the value at stake and understanding its importance to the individual or partnering organization. Often a resolution can be found that honors the value in question while achieving the desired outcome.
- **Structural Conflicts** – The source of this kinds of conflict is unequal power, authority, influence/voice, control of resources, or time constraints. Oftentimes structural conflicts have their roots in culture, history, or tradition and as such may be overlooked or not even considered. Deliberate conversation is needed to identify, explore, and collaboratively resolve the issue. It often takes courageous facilitation, a willingness to share experiences or perspectives, and a prayerful openness to release or share assumed privileges, “rights” or power.
- **Language** – as a source of conflicts was added by Jolie Bain Pillsbury in Adapted Circle of Conflict. The rationale for adding this element is language differences, communication errors and communication barriers. Sometimes the same words mean different things. People are also unaware that they are not in the same conversation. Another time People “listen for” different things.



## • OBJECTIVES OF THE TOOL

- raising awareness of the existence of various types of conflict causes (various sources of conflict)
- acquiring the ability to correctly identify the causes of conflicts and the correct naming of these causes
- learning how to respond to specific conflicts (what responses are most desirable)
- understanding how important in a modern approach to leadership is proper identification of conflicts and reacting to conflicts appearing in employee teams.

## • CONNECTION THE TOOL WITH THE SKILL

Professional life is an extremely conflicting area. It is a place where interests and personal ambitions clash, and competition is an everyday reality. All of this creates serious friction and antagonism. Conflicts at work can arise in many configurations. And there may be many people involved. Conflicts may arise, e.g. on the line:

- employee-employee,
- employee-supervisor,
- employee-customer.

However, properly managed conflict can not only be quickly discharged, but also bring positive results. However, for this to happen, its causes must be precisely determined. It is not easy, because the emotions that are evoked often obscure the real source of the dispute and do not allow it to be resolved in time. Christopher W. Moore, an American mediator, comes to the rescue. He created the so-called circle of conflicts, in which it indicates the causes and types of conflicts resulting from them. Due to its precise diagnosis and extraordinary functionality, Moore's Circle quickly became one of the basic tools of mediators all over the world

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The exercise is based on the assumptions described in the book Moore, Ch., W., The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict; 2nd edition, 1996.

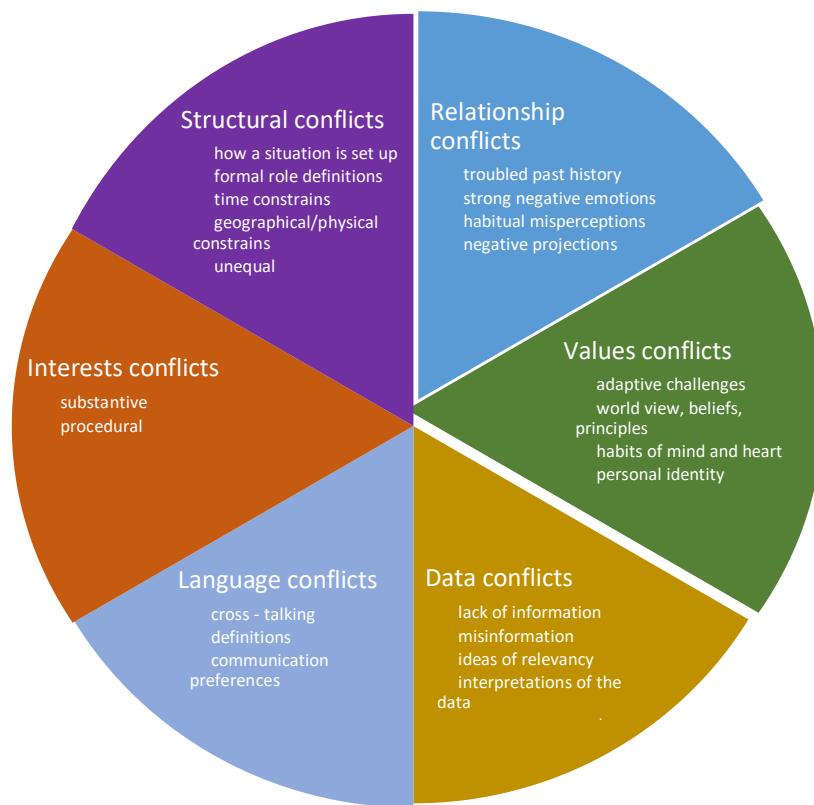
By carrying out the exercise, participants will acquire knowledge (and self-awareness) of the existence of various types of conflict causes (various sources of conflicts), the abilities to correctly identify the causes of conflicts and name them. Participants will learn how to respond to specific conflicts (what responses are most desirable). Participants will understand how important in a modern approach to leadership is proper identification of conflicts and reacting to conflicts appearing in employee teams.

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## RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- flipchart paper and markers,
- presentation, for example in the form of PowerPoint, about Moore's circle of conflict.



Source: own study based on Christopher W. Moore's Circle of Conflict  
Adapted Circle of Conflict. Includes language as a sixth source of conflict.

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## • IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOOL

The exercise is based on the team work of the training participants, that is moderated by the trainer.

How to Use the Circle of Conflict:

- Explain the six sources of conflict.
- Divide the training group into teams of 2-4 people. Give participants flipchart paper and markers. Each team will take one of the following conflict types. The task of the teams is to describe one conflict situation (real or imaginary) and to apply the following steps:
  - a) Observe/remind what people are saying and doing,
  - b) Identify and name one or more sources of conflict,
  - c) Take action where you can to address and resolve conflict.Participants will produce possible interventions that may deescalate the conflict.
- A selected representative of a given team is to present the results of the work in the forum of the entire training group.
- Have the whole group change the size of each area of the circle to represent how likely the source of conflict is in the work (participants can decide by consensus).
- Use the circle as a guide to help all the parties decide on the cause/s of a conflict.
- Facilitate a discussion about each named source of conflict. Take the time to pray and listen closely. Note specific actions, behaviours, examples, and words etc. that illustrate the issues. Make sure to keep the focus on the issue rather than on the person.

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The following list may be useful for the trainer:

If you see or hear...	You might...
<b>VALUES CONFLICTS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People leaving the room (flight).</li> <li>• Strong disagreements about what is right or wrong (fight).</li> <li>• Avoidance of specific topics.</li> <li>• Defensive or aggressive reactions that prevent discussion of topics threatening to identity or perceptions of “the way the world is.”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Label the type of values disagreement (e.g., cultural, political, religious, ideological) to illuminate potential cross talk.</li> <li>• Adopt group norms to overcome triggered reactions to values conflicts, e.g., patient, non-judgmental listening.</li> <li>• Explore assumptions or experiences to identify the source of differences in principles or competing commitments.</li> <li>• Use appreciative inquiry to illuminate worldviews and/or belief systems and to catalyze mutual acceptance of differences.</li> </ul>
<b>RELATIONSHIP CONFLICTS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People choosing where to sit to avoid someone.</li> <li>• Awkward silences and meaningful glances in response to who is speaking.</li> <li>• Tension seemingly unrelated to the substantive topic.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore relationship barriers by noticing when they occur and how the tension shows up - between which people or groups.</li> <li>• Find ways for the people holding the tension to experience each other in new ways. As mutual understanding develops, move to address the pain in the relationship through redress, acceptance or forgiveness.</li> </ul>
<b>DATA CONFLICTS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences about data relevance.</li> <li>• Different interpretations of the same data.</li> <li>• Different ways of collecting data.</li> <li>• Using different criteria for developing data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring the data challenges explicitly into the conversation and name the differences in the use, definition and interpretation of data.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of the “best available data” and work together to develop “better data.”</li> </ul>
<b>LANGUAGE CONFLICTS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same words meaning different things.</li> <li>• People unaware that they are not in the same conversation.</li> <li>• People “listening for” different things.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the language differences and invite a focus on the meaning underlying the words, rather than the words themselves.</li> </ul>

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- Model and encourage common language with common definitions.

**hexagonal  
leader**

- Explore e.g. MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) communication preferences.

## INTEREST CONFLICTS

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zero sum mentality.</li> <li>• People holding a position.</li> <li>• People not exploring each other's interests or articulating their own.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illuminate the competing interests underlying people's positions and use Interest Based Negotiation (Fisher and Ury, Getting to Yes, 1981.) to achieve a "win-win" solution by:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) separating the "people from the problem,"</li> <li>2) building relationships, and</li> <li>3) adopting criteria to choose options before making decisions.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |
|---|--|

## STRUCTURAL CONFLICTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People looking to other group members for "permission" to speak.</li> <li>• Fear or anger about the "way things are."</li> <li>• Assumption of hierarchical authority in collaborative settings.</li> <li>• An "inner circle" assuming disproportionate influence on decision-making.</li> <li>• Speech and/or behavior inferring that one gender, race, class or culture are "subordinate" to another.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name the structural factors influencing behavior.</li> <li>• Catalyze conversations about the structural factors and how they impact people's roles and authority.</li> <li>• Name the "unspoken" systemic or organizational frameworks influencing assumptions about who has power and who does not.</li> <li>• Develop strategies to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ for structural factors within the authority or influence of the group move to action, and</li> <li>✓ for structural factors not within the influence of the group, identify who does have influence and engage them.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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Conflict Orientation. Everyone has their own orientation towards conflict. Take time to reflect on yours and that of others. Find opportunities to practice the following that supports movement from talk to action:

- a) Conflict is normal and necessary to the work of achieving results, and
- b) It is possible to address and resolve conflicts.

## WHAT YOU LEARN

By using the exercise in training, participants will:

- gain awareness of the existence of various types of conflict causes (various sources of conflicts)
- acquire the ability to correctly identify the causes of conflicts and the correct name of these causes
- learn how to respond to specific conflicts (what responses are most desirable)
- understand how important in a modern approach to leadership is proper identification of conflicts and reacting to conflicts appearing in employee teams.