

THE CONFLICT RESPONSE ROLES INVENTORY (CR2I)TM



CR2ITM

Understanding and Working With the 5 Conflict Response Roles



The Conflict Response Roles Inventory (CR2I)TM is a psychometric instrument designed to help you understand yourself - and others - when in conflict.

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UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING WITH THE 5 CONFLICT RESPONSE ROLES

ABOUT THIS INSTRUMENT

The Conflict Response Roles InventoryTM is your tool to better understand yourself, and others, when in conflict. Once you have completed this psychometric instrument, you will know which of your needs may be threatened, or perceived to be threatened, when in conflict. You will also know the order, or priority, you give these needs. You will also gain a much better understanding of what you actually do – your behaviours and strategies – to meet these needs or protect them.

This increased self-awareness has a number of benefits: you will be able to have more compassion for yourself because you understand what is going on for you. You will be better equipped to make sure your needs are being met and/or protected in a way that is to your benefit (as opposed to being even more mired in conflict). Last but not least, you will be better able to understand the other people in a conflict, because they too are trying to protect themselves - just like you. And if they're not taking the best approach and making things worse, you will be able to de-code why this is happening – all of which will better enable you to manage the situation towards a more lasting, positive outcome.

Section A of the instrument comprises questions that encourage respondents to select their preferred conflict management response corresponding to one (1) of the five (5) conflict styles.

Section B of the instrument comprises of a set of statements to which respondents express their degree of agreement or disagreement on a rating scale from 1 to 5. Each of these statements is associated with one of the five conflict response roles.

It is important to note that this instrument only assesses self-reported conflict response role measures based upon the respondent's answers and selections. It cannot and does not objectively measure the respondent's conflict response role(s); instead it reports the respondents' self-disclosed perceptions of their conflict response role. Randomization and question and/or statement variety has been used to objectify the responses as much as possible.

WHY USE THE CONFLICT RESPONSE ROLES INVENTORY?

Conflict has many dimensions but in order to manage or address conflict between people in groups and in systems, a helpful first step is to begin with self-assessment. This is because how we resolve conflict is necessarily affected by the choices we make. The Conflict Response Roles Inventory (CR2I)™ is designed to identify the role(s) we adopt in conflict situations. The main purpose of this set of tools is to bring our unconscious behaviours into the conscious realm so we can actively use this information more strategically, and ultimately to be more effective in conflict situations.

What is the Conflict Response Roles Inventory?

- It is a self-assessment tool, meaning it is not an objective measurement device. It is only as valid as our own genuine perceptions of how we show up in conflict situations.
- It is designed to identify roles that we adopt in conflict situations, not innate personality characteristics (i.e., it reflects what you do versus what you are)
- It is meant to illuminate patterns that you choose in conflict, not to judge one as better than others. Each role has both advantages and disadvantages.
- If we view conflict as a signal that something is wrong or something important is threatened, it can help you understand your learned conflict coping mechanisms and help you use the roles that are least 'natural' to you. This versatility makes it easier to bridge differences between people in conflict.

The Conflict Response Roles Inventory™ is a tool designed to help people determine and understand their own learned coping mechanisms, patterns of behaviours they adopt when attempting to protect something that is important to them. It helps you answer questions such as: What role do you take on when conflict surfaces? What is your protective strategy? How can you incorporate the characteristics of each of the five roles to increase the chance that your basic interests are met?

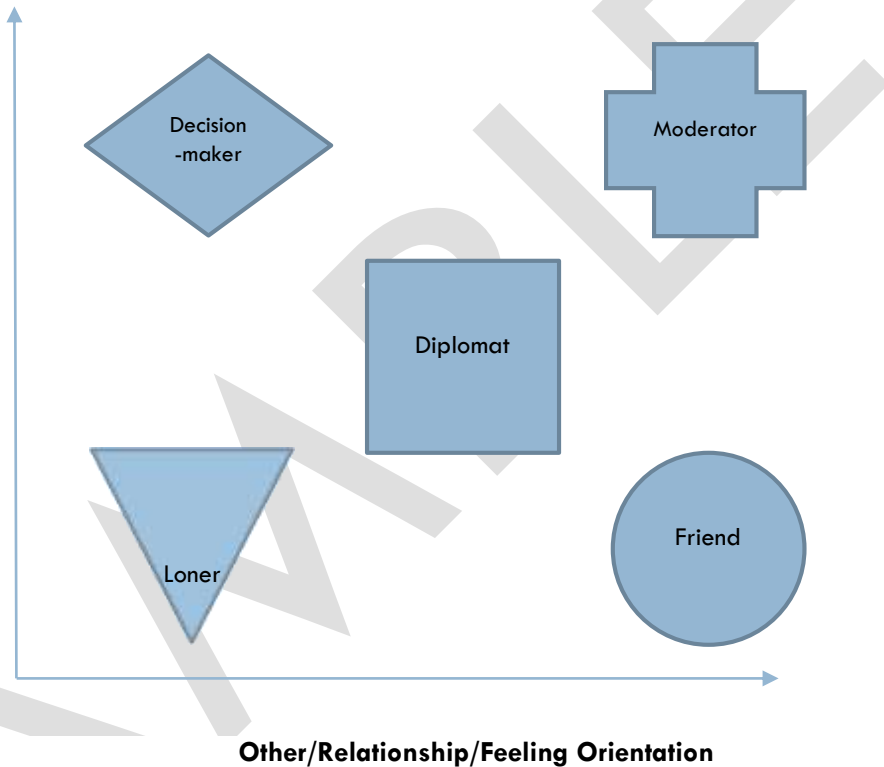
UNDERSTANDING YOUR SCORE: YOUR CR²I PROFILE

Having completed all questions in the Conflict Response Role Inventory™, you were provided with a set of scores that you will be able to plot onto a graph. Each of the five conflict response roles can be mapped on a graph comprised of two axes which represents three guiding forces that inform and influence the behaviours associated with the role.

After receiving your results, please write your scores on top of or next to their corresponding symbols in *Figure 1* below:

Self /Task/Fact Orientation

The vertical axis represents the focus on self, task/process and fact. It reflects the varying degrees to which these three needs must be satisfied, alone or in combination, in a conflict situation. In other words, the higher on that axis your score is found, the likelier you are to strive to satisfy your own needs, and/or focus on the task (process) itself, and/or heed the facts of a typical conflict situation.



Other/Relationship/Feeling Orientation

The horizontal axis represents the focus on others, relationship, and feeling. Here a higher score indicates a stronger pull towards meeting the needs of the other party in a conflict situation, or serving the relationship itself, or focusing on the emotional content. These will necessarily vary from person to person and according to each specific situation but as a general rule, each of the five conflict response roles is associated with a particular area on the graph depending on how strongly it is influenced by one or more of those guiding forces.

FIGURE 1

Now to see how your various conflict response roles compare, take a few moments to graph your CR2I raw scores in the following bar graph:

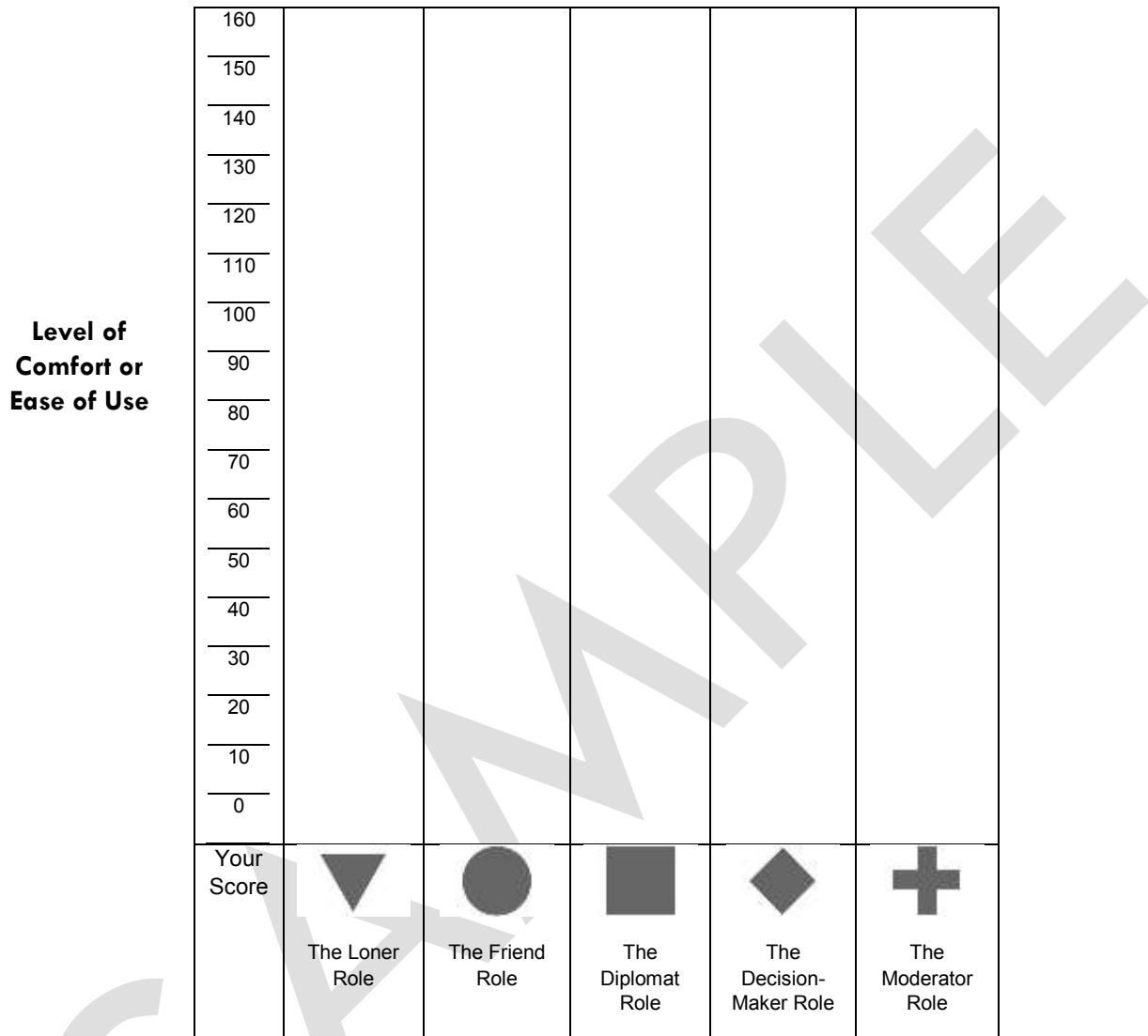


TABLE 1

Many of us will have a primary response role, meaning a role in which we are most comfortable in a conflict situation. This may appear as a score that more clearly identifies us in one sector of the graph in *Figure 1* than any other. Each has its own distinctive characteristic behaviours in a conflict, which are described in the five role profiles below.

CHANGING ROLES

Because conflict is dynamic and not static, nothing is absolute; therefore we shift in relation to the movement of the conflict itself. Typically your scores will indicate, in descending order, your most comfortable or ingrained role, to your least-used or least-preferred one, as identified in *Table 1*.

For example, it may be that the role you primarily adopt is that of Decision-maker. However, if you find yourself in a protracted conflict situation and you don't seem to be winning, you may eventually give up that role and take on your secondary role preference of Loner. For example, as Decision Maker-primary you have become tired of constantly battling and belittling the other party's position to no apparent effect, you may suddenly and automatically switch into avoidance (Loner) role whereby you act as if the conflict is over; the decision is made, and thus there is no further need for argument. You may then begin to play an ad hoc game of figurative hide-and-seek around the office, ducking the other party at every opportunity in order to avoid being drawn back into the debate.

This type of shifting is true for each of us in the sense that we may typically adopt a variety of roles depending on how our efforts are frustrated by the other party's behaviour in the conflict.

Although we naturally gravitate towards one role we tend not to rely solely on one to get us through conflict, particularly if we are not having our underlying needs met even after a protracted struggle.

Generally, role shifting will occur when we experience a peak of frustration within the conflict situation. Instead we may work through a succession of roles, depending on our relative comfort with those roles and our previous experience (or success) in using them. The order in which we adopt them typically corresponds with our scores; we will advance through our adopted roles in descending order of comfort, at a rate that is dependent on our progressive level of frustration or exhaustion.

Since conflict cannot exist in a vacuum, it is useful to know how two roles may react with one another. If you could predict with reasonable accuracy the side effects of a conflict involving a people using the Decision-maker and Loner roles, for example, you might be better equipped to intentionally adopt a role that would be less likely to cause undue friction and lead to a smoother, more productive outcome.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LEARN ABOUT CONFLICT RESPONSE ROLES?

While conflict is inevitable, the good news is that you have a choice: you can either remain a victim of conflict, suffering the difficult consequences, or you can make it work for you.

Common Interpretation Questions

Is one role is better than another?

No! Please remember that the descriptions are not value judgments – each role has strengths and challenges.

What if I have tie scores, or I don't have a clear-cut conflict response role?

Many may also find that no single clear-cut conflict response role emerges, but instead they have more than one score within a relatively narrow range. Depending on the situation they may have more than one set of needs. You may read the descriptions of the five conflict response roles below that match your scores and realize that you have, at one time or another, played each of those roles. This is because we tend to be versatile and can naturally adopt more than one role when faced with conflict and sometimes we may adopt several roles in succession, even within the same conflict situation.

I've taken this test before, but my score/answers were different this time. Why?

Again, because your preferences relating to conflict response roles are learned, over time you can learn to adopt each of the five roles. This means that if you took the test before, you may have consciously or unconsciously changed your preferred role based on your life learning.

Even conflicts that appear to have been resolved have a way of coming back again and again, albeit in different guises. Therefore, recognizing our patterns and our own contributions to the conflict will go a long way toward consciously turning nonproductive or destructive conflict into productive conflict.

Effectively handled, conflict can lead to greater trust, cooperation, productivity, and generally healthier interactions.

THE 5 CONFLICT RESPONSE ROLES: MOTIVATIONS, CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSEQUENCES

If you are one of the parties directly involved in a conflict, a good place to start managing it is to take a look at your responses to conflict and, more specifically, your preferred Conflict Response Role(s). After all, we are the sole authors of our behaviours, responses and actions. Try as we might, we can neither “fix” other people nor be responsible for their thoughts, actions, words or feelings. The only person over whom we ultimately have control is the self, so we might as well exert as much influence over that individual as we can.

Each of the role profiles on the following pages analyzes:

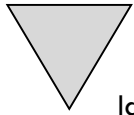
- the underlying needs, desires and expectations that motivate individuals to adopt each of these roles.
- the characteristic traits that each exhibits in conflict situations, and,
- the possible consequences of playing these roles in a conflict situation.

Remember that your inventory score(s) may reveal more than one conflict response role that you are likely to adopt at any given time, depending on the situation. As such, you may identify with several of these roles to varying degrees.

NOTE:

Some pages have been removed from this preview booklet.

SAMPLE



THE LONER ROLE

The Need: The Loner role's actions are motivated by a strong need for safety and security. In large measure this also involves a feeling of control over their environment, if not over their emotions. (When the going gets tough, the Loner role is often the first to get going – right out of the picture.) To a certain extent Loner role-users also need to feel they are making proper choices that will cause themselves and others the least amount of grief and difficulty.

The Focus: In direct contrast to the Moderator role, the Loner role scores low on both vertical and horizontal axes. Loner role-users do focus somewhat on their own feelings, although it might be more accurate to say that they focus on avoiding uncomfortable feelings. Similarly, they focus on facts in the sense that they prefer to avoid looking too closely at them (or examining them at all), and their way of focusing on the relationship involves disappearing from it, albeit temporarily while the conflict is still ongoing.

The Characteristics: The role of Loner is easily recognized by a tendency toward avoidance, silence and denial. The Loner role-user is noticeable in his or her absence from the scene whenever conflict is present, receding into the background at the earliest opportunity. Most people using the Loner role will steadfastly fail to acknowledge the existence of a conflict, even at its most obvious. Silence is another feature of the Loner role, and if forced into stating an opinion or position the Loner role-user will typically stonewall for as long as possible in order to prevent any ill will if it looks likely to be in opposition to another.

The Style: While the Loner role typically operates at a faster pace than the Diplomat role, any movement is usually in the opposite direction, that is, away from the conflict and not towards it. The Loner role's style is very much one of withdrawal. The secret to the Loner role's success is maintaining a low profile and flying well under the radar so as not to attract undue attention and thereby risk being asked for an opinion, something that might commit them to supporting a side in a conflict and risk making them unpopular with the other side.

The Consequences: The Loner role can be appropriate for when the current conflict issue is truly unimportant and looks likely to spiral out of control needlessly, when it is largely irrelevant, or when it is simply "much ado about nothing." It may also be useful when it's not your battle to fight or when things are too heated. But instead of facing the conflict and dealing with it head-on, Loner role-users internalize and agonize, sometimes manifesting their discomfort physically in the form of stress-related illness or injury. Other consequences can include a loss of relationship, since their denial and avoidance behaviour is often perceived as a lack of caring and commitment. Furthermore, an inequality or lack of equilibrium develops because the Loner role-user's disappearing act becomes a controlling act of passive-aggressiveness. In adopting a Loner role there are usually no winners at all, since the conflict issues tend to linger and fester.

ABOUT FIFTH HOUSE GROUP

Fifth House Group is the go-to company for the creative arts & entertainment industries. Our mission is to help remove barriers to inspiring collaborations so creators can captivate audiences and produce transcendent experiences.

With a combined 30+ years in entertainment business management, consulting, conflict resolution, team & leadership development and skills training, we specialize in:

Conflict Prevention and Resolution:

Conflict can harm relationships, damage partnerships, and disrupt creative collaborations. We offer a number of options to deal with difficult situations, including Education, Coaching, Facilitation, Mediation, and Team/Group Intervention.

Team and Leadership Development:

Any individual or team can develop the essential "life skills" necessary to survive the arts & entertainment industries and enjoy a more satisfying, less stressful work and creative life (which benefits the home life too). We offer team and leadership skills development for the creative arts and entertainment media industries including leadership skills assessments; team building and accountability; and customized training and evaluation programs, one-on-one or large groups.

One of our most popular services is the development and delivery of workshops on specific topics and skills within these subject areas. From time to time also undertake special projects that are consistent with our mission, vision and values.

For more information on our services, please visit www.fifthhousegroup.com.



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