



Take Flight Learning

# **PROFILE**



Crystal Owlfeather
January 13, 2020

REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### Conflict is What We Make of It

When was the last time you were excited to have a fight with your coworkers? If you're like most people, the answer is never. We instinctively view conflict as negative, violent, and stressful. We avoid conflicts or make up stories about how terrible they're going to be.

Conflicts are part of life though. In truth, they are neither positive nor negative. And rarely do we talk about how to have a constructive, interesting, graceful conflict. But what if we could teach ourselves to thrive in disputes? What if we could learn to turn every conflict into a positive experience?

The problem is that in most conflicts we operate on autopilot as if we were handed the controller for a video game we've never played. "How does this game work?" you wonder.

Someone says, "It's a fighting game!"

"Okay, I guess I'll hit random buttons and hope for the best."

In real life, if we randomly hit buttons, the chances of having a constructive conflict are, well, random. The key is to understand how to push—or not push—the buttons of different personality styles.

Whether you're an Eagle, Parrot, Dove, or Owl, you engage in conflict with some natural tendencies. Once you're aware of your patterns and those of your team, you'll be able to provide coworkers what they need in conflict while still standing up for your needs. You'll learn why you react to conflict in certain ways and how you provoke positive and negative reactions in others.

Conflicts are not mistakes. They help businesses thrive because they lead us to confront the big questions:

- What do we value as a company?
- What are we really working toward?
- How are we going to get it done?
- How are we treating each other?

The answers to these questions shape our company's reputation, profitability, consistency, and ability to hire and retain people, among other things.

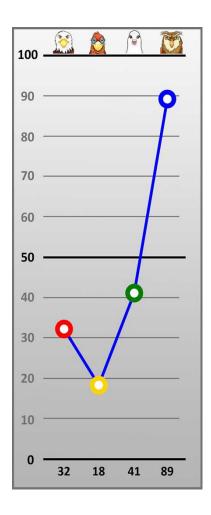
It's true that some conflicts create tension, limit free expression, distract people, brew mistrust, and divide people. But constructive conflicts can open discussions about sensitive issues and solve stubborn problems. They can improve communication and free people to release pent-up emotions. They can direct a team to focus on complex, difficult issues that create new opportunities for our company and value for our customers. The process of having and resolving conflicts can also strengthen relationships.

Today, we'll explore how understanding the DISC personality styles can help us have constructive conflicts. You may never be excited to fight with coworkers, but after ReDISCovering Conflict, you'll know how to make the very best of work's toughest situations.



REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### Your ReDISCovering Conflict Graph





This graph represents your overall style. Note that you are not just an Eagle, Parrot, Dove or Owl. You are a combination of all four styles to varying degrees. The highest point on the graph represents your strongest style. Any styles that are above the midline (50) require less flexibility and are likely to determine how you engage in the leadership process.

### Your Approach to Managing Conflict

Crystal, your logical, analytical personality makes you a natural arbiter of truth in conflicts. You strive to understand the full scope of the issue, mining all the data and knowledge you need to speak authoritatively. Your attention to detail can be immensely valuable in process-based conflicts, where team members dispute how something ought to be done. However, you risk missing the forest for the trees in broader-ranging disputes. Your challenge will be to think from your coworkers' perspectives before you lay heavy logic on an unreceptive audience. When a conflict begins, you prefer to avoid it, especially if you feel caught off guard. You fear being wrong if you haven't sufficiently examined the situation. You want to come to the table prepared with facts and kevlar arguments. Thus, you probably won't respond to an issue immediately. Meanwhile the Eagles, keen to get the fight over with, might define the conflict without your participation. Of all styles, you are the most likely to focus on details and processes, which, in your experience, work in tandem to protect against whims, impulsivity, quality issues, and other risks. Facts do serve you well in



REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

debates about processes and goals. However, when the debate shifts to values and relationships, you might feel impatient. Although you may not speak often during a conflict, you make your case in precise, careful language. You're not afraid to critique others or debate against a position that you find untenable. You may come across as rigid, cold, or impersonal to Parrots and Doves who are less concerned with logic and more concerned with values and feelings. Just because your points make sense, that doesn't mean those styles will agree with you. During conflict, you tune into technicalities, substance, and rationale. You're concerned with the rules and policies (or lack thereof) that resulted in the conflict. Although this perspective can be grounded in evidence, it might overlook qualitative variables—like team dynamics, ethical debates, and misalignments—that are equally influential. You listen to what people say, not how they say it. You're not afraid to point out assumptions, ambiguities, and misnomers. Whether the team listens or not depends on your delivery. A Parrot feeling attacked might go on attack, while a Dove might shut down and feel hurt. Although Eagles can handle your critique, if you seem to be overly picky, they might argue that even if you're right, what you've said doesn't matter. After a conflict, you may hold a grudge toward people who didn't accept your logic. You may not trust these people as much as before and find ways to cut them out of future decisions. You risk judging people based on a nonrepresentative moment where fears, relationships, and pain points became an unstable concoction. No one (including you!) can be purely rational and objective all the time. During conflicts, you probably feel stressed by all the effort it takes to prepare, speak up, and contend with other personalities. The interruption to your routine probably frustrates you as well. As such, you are relieved by the chance to get back to the grind. However, if you disagree with the outcome of the conflict, you might be alarmed about the new processes or policies that come out of it. Crystal, your challenge during conflict is to tap into people's motivations, fears, and needs. The Eagles set on achievement might not be that open to your technical perspective without a nod to their goals. Parrots concerned about unity and values will acknowledge data insofar as it speaks to their concerns. Doves, worried about relationships, will not appreciate your use of logic to attack someone, even if they did mess up. In conflict, learn to balance your fact-heavy approach with the needs of other personalities. They don't need to know everything you know.

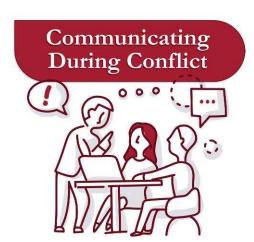


REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### Communicating During Conflict

We're fortunate to live in a period of history where conflicts are (mostly) fought with words. That's why our personality styles shape conflicts to a great extent. How we communicate in conflict and what we focus on stems from our unique blend of Eagle, Parrot, Dove, and Owl traits. Our personality styles also become filters through which other people's words, gestures, and facial expressions pass.

Communication takes a speaker and a listener. In a sense, miscommunication is the gap between how the personality styles express themselves and how they listen. When we're aware of each style's approach to communication, we learn to interpret their words the way they mean them. We also gain a powerful tool for speaking to people the way they listen best in conflicts.



#### In conflict, Crystal is likely to:

- Discuss systems and processes, not people
- Generally sound composed and calm
- Make logical, well-supported arguments
- Present hard facts and evidence
- Demonstrate that you did your homework

#### When others speak, Crystal may:

- Look down upon angry or dramatic statements
- Listen with skepticism
- Closely analyze what others say before responding
- Note misstatements or generalizations
- Record or remember exactly what was said

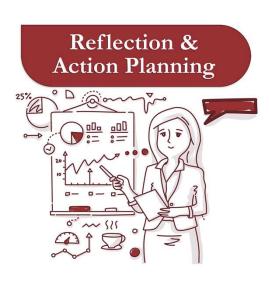


# ReDISCovering Conflict Profile REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

# Reflection & Action Planning

When you communicate during conflicts, which personality styles will have the hardest time listening to you? What three things could you do to connect better with those styles?

Picture the last time you had a miscommunication during a tense conflict. What do you think went wrong? In retrospect, how might you have spoken or communicated differently to produce a better outcome?





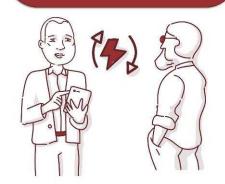
REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### **Avoiding Conflict**

We tend to assume the worst when a conflict looms. "It's a waste of time!" thinks the Eagle. "They're going to hate me for this," the Parrot fears. "The team will never be the same again," the Dove worries. "If I make a fuss, no one will tell me the truth again," the Owl reasons. These are just stories—fictional, imagined accounts—that we tell ourselves. When we harbor these assumptions, we try to avoid conflict. And in doing so, we add tinder to a fire that hasn't even been lit.

If we understand why we avoid conflict and why other personalities avoid it, we can unravel the stories that hold us back from constructive conflict. We can learn to defuse the concerns and fears that lead our coworkers to avoid conflict as well. We can learn to create and resolve conflict in such a way that our teams go into disputes with hope rather than fear.

# Avoiding Conflict



### Crystal, you may avoid conflict because:

- Talking about it won't fix it
- People shouldn't let feelings get in the way of quality work
- You would rather fix the problem without a discussion
- People will argue about stuff they don't really understand
- It's going to take a lot of effort to figure out what went wrong

#### Crystal's excuses for avoiding conflict might sound like:

- "This is really an issue between those two, not us."
- "There's not enough data to suggest a change."
- "Why is it worth working out this particular dilemma?"
- "Can't you and I just fix it without their input?"
- "No one else cares about the details, so why don't I just handle it?"

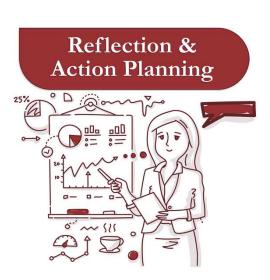


# ReDISCovering Conflict Profile REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### **Reflection & Action Planning**

How has avoiding conflict impacted you in your career?

Identify a specific instance in which you avoided conflict. What were the positive and negative repercussions?





### Triggering Conflict

During conflict, our most extreme emotions, tendencies, and reflexes can feel like they're set on hair triggers. When someone pushes the wrong button, we might respond with unusual intensity. Eagles, normally able to check their tempers, might explode with harsh remarks. Otherwise jovial Parrots, feeling backed into a corner by critique, could lash out. Quiet Owls might pounce on a misstatement. Doves, hurt by an insensitive comment, might storm out of the room.

To deal with conflict gracefully, we have to understand how each style can be triggered and how each one can be won over. We can train ourselves to not hit people's buttons, and we can learn to remain composed even when someone hits our buttons. This awareness can help us adapt like the chameleon even in the most heated situations.

# Triggering Conflict



### Crystal may get triggered if others:

- Question data without a reason
- Use authority to trump reason or logic
- Distort, ignore, or misstate facts
- Rush toward a decision
- Dismiss your idea without explaining their logic

### To win Crystal over, others might:

- Prepare and organize for tough conversations
- Ask tough questions rather than attack you
- Acknowledge the importance of process and consistency
- Schedule a time to resolve the conflict
- Collect and present evidence

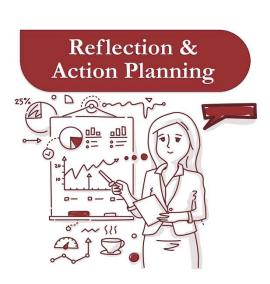


REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### Reflection & Action Planning

Which identified triggers on the previous page are most likely to evoke a negative reaction from you? What would be a graceful, effective way to respond to someone who hits these triggers?

Think back to the last time you pushed a coworker's button during a conflict. What is the coworker's personality style, and what words or actions set them off? In retrospect, how would you handle that conflict differently?





REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### **Reacting Under Stress**

Conflicts test our ability to manage stress. The ambiguity, importance, risk, and unpredictability of conflicts can drive us to act in ways we normally wouldn't. In those moments where stress overwhelms our best self, the results can be ugly.

The personality styles help us understand why people get stressed in conflict and how they're likely to express it. These stress reactions are critical to understand because it's not always obvious when someone is struggling. Moreover, we may not realize when we personally have switched from being constructive to being reactive. There are some telltale signs.

### Reacting Under Stress



#### Crystal may get stressed when:

- The conflict is rushed toward an uninformed resolution
- People refuse to agree on common facts
- You risk losing control over something important
- The group misdiagnoses the problem
- A fight about processes becomes about emotions

### When stressed, Crystal may:

- Repeat yourself
- Show more emotion than usual
- Get very sarcastic
- Show bitterness or even anger
- Obsess over one detail

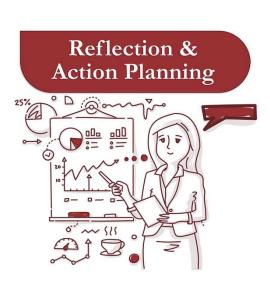


# ReDISCovering Conflict Profile REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

# Reflection & Action Planning

What are some of the indicators that let you know stress is building?

When was the last time you grew extremely stressed during a conflict? What brought you to the edge, and what could you have done differently to address the sources of your stress?





REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### Summary: How Crystal Handles Conflict

At work, teams engage in conflict when their goals, values, relationships, or processes have become misaligned or even dysfunctional. One purpose of conflict is to end or revise whatever has led to tension in the first place. And another purpose of conflict is to create something positive in its place.

Eagles, Parrots, Doves, and Owls each have an important role to play in the cycle of conflict. At times, it may seem as if their needs and priorities are so different that they cannot possibly find common ground. More often, this diversity is what propels teams to communicate openly, reaffirm shared values, strengthen relationships, and solve stubborn problems. Each style has an important role to play in constructive conflict.

#### Crystal is most constructive during conflict when you:

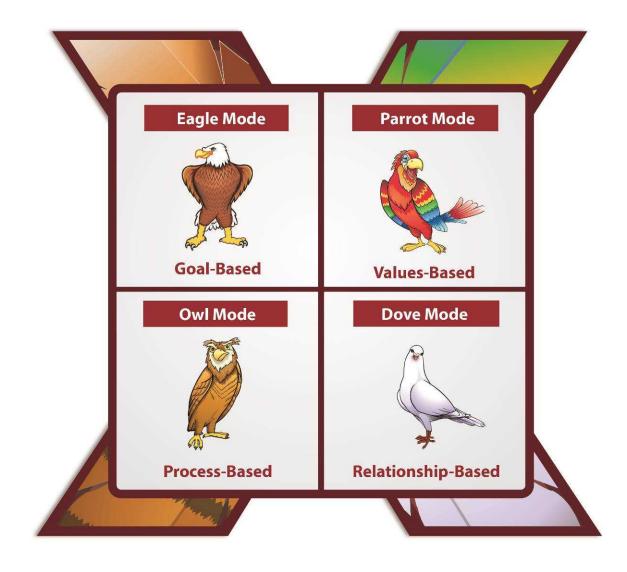
- Objectively analyze how the conflict came to be
- Ask questions to clarify what people said
- Point out assumptions that may be unfounded
- Take careful notes about who wants what
- Ask "Why?" when it's important to do so

### Crystal must be careful not to:

- Pin blame on someone
- Shoot down and criticize any proposed resolution
- Use sarcasm to attack other people
- Ask questions you don't want answers to
- Obsess over details the group may not care about



# Chameleon Conflict Model





### How the Styles Think About Each Type of Conflict

### Values-Based Conflict



May suspend values if that's what it takes to win May interpret values in a way that serves their goals



Feel shared values create alignment Feel active connection to values inspires commitment



Are more concerned with agreement on values than their wording Grow uneasy when people violate values they claim to support



May look down on corporate values as fluff View personal values as more important than group values

### Goal-Based Conflict



Set goals to allow for quick and effective decision making Define where energy should be focused



Insist on aligning values before discussing goals

Can be sidetracked into fun ideas without reference to a goal



Can't focus on goals while relationships feel tense and strained Believe that unhealthy relationships derail the group's objectives



Notice details and issues that make the goal unachievable Are likely to question or attack goals that seem undercooked



### How the Styles Think About Each Type of Conflict

#### Process-Based Conflict



Assume that if the goal is right, people will sort out how to accomplish it Are not concerned with the details, steps, and rules of a process



Tend to not work inside a process and don't like feeling constrained by one May fear that process can get in the way of freedom and creativity



Tend to respect processes but don't want to fight about them Are fine with the nuances of the process as long as everyone agrees to it



Believe quality is derived from clearly defined processes Focus on processes that allow repeatedly consistent results

### Relationship-Based Conflict



Find relationship drama to be a distraction from important work

Think that buddy-buddy coworkers will not hold each other accountable



Care about relationships, in part, because they have a need to be liked Assume that relationships are stable and congenial if left alone



Place a premium on healthy relationships Feel harmony enables everyone to thrive



Prefer working alone and don't want to depend on relationships

Are concerned with external factors that lead to relationship breakdowns



REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

### What Do You Fight For?

Often in conflict, we don't have the words to explain our thoughts and feelings. A tiny failure, misunderstanding, or breakdown can trigger a conflict. Although we think we're fighting about that thing, it's more likely that we're fighting about goals, values, relationships, and processes. Each personality style responds to these four types of conflicts differently. With awareness of what each style finds important or unimportant, we can discern what everyone is fighting for.

### Crystal tends to engage in conflict because of the belief that:

- People should know why we do things a certain way
- If our processes aren't optimal, they will be ignored or fought over
- Quality is in jeopardy if people don't agree on how things should be done
- There is always a best (or better) way to do something
- Making the same mistakes over and over isn't acceptable

# What Do You Fight For?



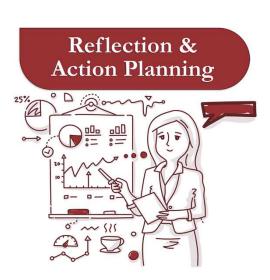


# ReDISCovering Conflict Profile REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

# Reflection & Action Planning

What type of conflict are you most likely to engage in (Values, Goals, Process, Relationship)? How does that help you? How does that hinder you?

Which type of conflict feels *least* natural to you? How do you tend to behave during those conflicts, and what could you do to contribute more constructively?





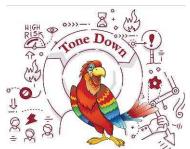
### Toning Down Style Overuse During Conflict

During conflicts, it's hard to stay true to who we are and what we believe. There's a tendency to ratchet up our strengths until they become weaknesses. And there's a tendency to grow rigid in moments when flexing our personality can lead to understanding, connection, and resolution.

You've learned how different triggers and stressors can turn a constructive dialogue into a destructive fight. You've also seen how different communication styles, avoidance patterns, and priorities can lead different personalities to clash in predictable ways. Here, we take a look at the big picture. Generally, what does each style need to tone down during conflict? What behaviors should each style dial up?



- Bluntness, which can offend and hurt Doves
- The drive for immediate answers and decisions
- An aggressive or angry tone
- The tendency to pick fights over everything
- The need to win each battle
- Impatience to resolve the conflict
- Blame, which rarely does any good
- A loud volume, which can shut down Owls and Doves



- Talkativeness, so others have a chance to speak
- Unrealistic ideas and resolutions
- "Yes, but..." statements that seem inauthentic
- Avoidance or denial of conflict
- Overusing humor to defuse tension
- Exaggeration or distortion of facts
- Manipulating others' opinions
- Tangents that lead the dispute in random directions



- Sensitivity to direct or blunt comments
- Passive aggression
- Avoiding or ignoring the conflict
- Shutting down and being silent
- Planning every word before speaking
- Personal tension with individuals
- Appeasement driven by discomfort
- Grudges and regrets after conflict



- Sarcasm, which can trigger other styles
- Pickiness about minor details
- Asserting who's right or wrong
- Asking too many questions
- Correcting every misstatement
- Being too critical of Parrots and Doves
- Shooting down ideas for a resolution
- Telling people what won't work



### Dialing Up Style During Conflict

When people engage in conflict, they naturally revert to the tendencies associated with their style. Sometimes, however, a different set of behaviors is needed in a given situation. While it may take energy to display a behavior that is not natural, conflict is best resolved by people who adapt to the person or issue at hand. Each style may need to dial up the following behaviors to increase conflict management effectiveness.



- Listening, so that other styles feel understood
- Questions that welcome other styles to give their opinions
- Words of affirmation and kindness
- Humor and lightheartedness
- Appreciation for details and facts
- Concern for warm, congenial relationships
- Inspiration, not just determination to hit goals
- Willingness to be wrong and question one's own assumptions



- A focus on the core issues
- Quieting down and listening
- Respectful disagreement with others
- Seriousness when the issue calls for it
- Attention to facts and data
- Respect for processes and systems
- Analytical, logical arguments
- Willingness to move carefully and deliberately



- Assertiveness, especially with Eagles and Parrots
- Speaking up during heated exchanges
- Direct, substantive feedback
- Arguments based on facts and goals
- Willingness to share their grievances
- Expressing disagreement with others' opinions
- Letting go of mean or offensive comments
- Forgiving people who wrong them



- Expressions of empathy and understanding
- Focus on big-picture goals and needs
- Questions about how others feel
- Acknowledging and initiating conflicts
- Smiles and lightheartedness
- Appreciation for other people
- Trust in others' perspectives
- Simplified, concise arguments

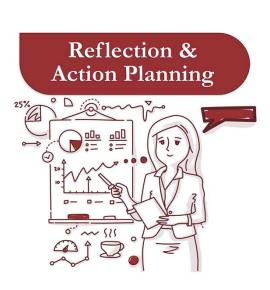


# ReDISCovering Conflict Profile REPORT FOR CRYSTAL OWLFEATHER

# Reflection & Action Planning

What behaviors do you tend to overuse during conflict? How would you tone them down?

What behaviors do you need to display more of in conflict?





# LEARN MORE

