

THE QUIET POWER CONFLICT PLAYBOOK

THE PPP WAY

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Transform Your Natural Kindness Into Career-Advancing Power

Why Workplace Conflicts Matter More Than You Think

Promotions, budgets, opportunities—they all hinge on how you handle conflict.

While your less-agreeable colleagues navigate these moments instinctively, you're fighting your own wiring. Your kindness, your consideration, your preference for harmony—these aren't weaknesses (though they might feel like it sometimes). They're different tools requiring different strategies.

This playbook transforms your natural tendencies into strategic advantages.

PART I

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONFLICT PROFILE

As a kind leader (high in agreeableness), your conflict style is shaped by two additional dimensions:

Balance: Your Emotional Response Pattern

Balance determines how conflicts affect you physiologically and emotionally. Some leaders feel every conflict viscerally (low balance), while others maintain an almost zen-like calm—both responses have their place (high balance).

Low Balance (Sensitive): You feel emotions deeply and authentically. Conflicts can trigger intense responses: a racing heart, sleepless nights, and feeling physically drained for days after disagreements.

High Balance (Composed): You maintain calm even in heated moments. Others may wonder if you care (you do—you just process differently).

Exploration: Your Solution Approach

Exploration shapes how you navigate conflict resolution. The key difference: pragmatists want clarity and closure, while explorers seek possibilities and nuance.

Low Exploration (Pragmatic): You prefer clear, efficient solutions. You want conflicts resolved with concrete next steps. The downside: you might miss creative compromises.

High Exploration (Expansive): You see multiple perspectives and possibilities. You consider creative alternatives others miss. The challenge: deciding when to stop exploring and act.

PART II

IDENTIFY YOUR STRATEGIC PROFILE

Since we assume you're high in agreeableness, select your profile:

Profile 1: The Balanced Pragmatist (High Balance + Low Exploration)

"I stay calm and drive toward practical solutions"

Profile 2: The Balanced Explorer (High Balance + High Exploration)

"I remain composed while exploring creative options"

Profile 3: The Sensitive Pragmatist (Low Balance + Low Exploration)

"I feel deeply but focus on concrete outcomes"

Profile 4: The Sensitive Explorer (Low Balance + High Exploration)

"I experience strong emotions while seeing many possibilities"

PART III

**YOUR PROFILE'S STRATEGIC
ADVANTAGES**

BALANCED PRAGMATISTS (HIGH BALANCE + LOW EXPLORATION)

Balanced Pragmatists (High Balance + Low Exploration): Natural Strengths:

- Your calm demeanor de-escalates tense situations
- Your solution focus moves conflicts toward resolution
- Others trust you remain calm and composed under pressure

QUIET POWER MOVES That Work for You:

- Use your stability and calm presence to ground others and create safety for emotional opponents
- Frame conflicts as "problems to solve" not "battles to win"
- Position yourself as the voice of practical reason

LEVERAGING YOUR AGREEABLENESS:

"I appreciate your passion here. I'm trying to address your key concerns and propose a practical way forward..."

Why this works: Your high agreeableness makes this authentic, while your balanced pragmatism keeps it focused.

MANAGING YOUR AGREEABLENESS CHALLENGE: Your tendency to accommodate others can lead to your own needs being overlooked. Here's how to assert yourself while staying true to your nature:

"I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS, and I have to say I respectfully disagree with this proposal. When I look at the data, here is what I believe the data shows..."

WHY THIS WORKS: Leading with respect honors your agreeable nature while your calm delivery maintains authority.

BALANCED EXPLORERS (HIGH BALANCE + HIGH EXPLORATION)

For Balanced Explorers (High Balance + High Exploration):

Natural Strengths:

- You spot creative solutions others miss
- Your calm exploration reduces defensiveness
- You build bridges between opposing views

Quiet Power Moves That Work for You:

- Use exploration to find face-saving solutions
- Leverage balance to facilitate tough conversations
- Position yourself as the strategic synthesizer

Leveraging Your Agreeableness:

"I see merit in both perspectives. What if we combined the best elements of each approach? For example, we could take John's timeline but use Sarah's resource allocation..."

Why this works: Your agreeableness validates others while your exploration creates new possibilities.

Managing Your Agreeableness Challenge: Your desire to explore every option can be misread as indecisiveness. Here's how to be thorough while projecting confidence:

"I understand the urgency. I also think we need to examine our best options before we commit. I see three alternatives..."

Why this works: You acknowledge others'; needs (agreeable) while asserting your exploratory process.

SENSITIVE PRAGMATISTS (LOW BALANCE + LOW EXPLORATION)

For Sensitive Pragmatists (Low Balance + Low Exploration):

Natural Strengths:

- Your authentic emotions move people to action
- Your practical focus prevents endless deliberation
- You bring genuine urgency to important issues

Quiet Power Moves That Work for You:

- Channel emotions into compelling business cases
- Use pragmatism to secure concrete commitments
- Position yourself as the passionate advocate for results

Leveraging Your Agreeableness:

"This really matters to me because I care about our team's success. Here's why we need to implement this solution by month-end..."

Why this works: Your emotional authenticity combined with agreeableness creates powerful connection, while your pragmatism drives action.

Managing Your Agreeableness Challenge: Your emotional intensity combined with agreeableness can make you apologize for having strong opinions. Here's how to own your convictions:

"I feel like I need to be direct here. I am concerned that this approach isn't working, because we've missed three deadlines. We have to be ready by Friday, so the streamlined option seems to make most sense."

Why this works: Your emotional intensity gives you permission to be direct while staying solution-focused.

SENSITIVE EXPLORERS (LOW BALANCE + HIGH EXPLORATION)

For Sensitive Explorers (Low Balance + High Exploration):

Natural Strengths:

- Your emotional intelligence helps you read the room brilliantly
- Your creative approach generates win-win solutions
- You connect with others on deeper levels

Quiet Power Moves That Work for You:

- Use emotional insights to build coalitions
- Channel exploration into innovative problem-solving
- Position yourself as the passionate innovator

Leveraging Your Agreeableness:

"I can feel there's tension in the room. What if we take a step back and try to see this from our customer's perspective?"

Why this works: Your emotional sensitivity + agreeableness creates psychological safety for exploration.

Managing Your Agreeableness Challenge: Your combination of deep feelings and endless possibilities can overwhelm both you and others. Here's how to focus your insights:

"I've been reflecting on this deeply, and I believe we're missing something important. Can we explore a different angle? Specifically, what if we..."

Why this works: Your emotional investment gives weight to your exploratory challenge while providing direction.

PART IV

YOUR CONFLICT TRIGGERS & STRATEGIC RESPONSES

Common Workplace Conflict Triggers

According to research by CPP Inc. (publishers of the Myers-Briggs assessment), the most frequently mentioned triggers of workplace conflicts are ¹:

1. Personality clashes (49%)
2. Stress (34%)
3. Heavy workloads & insufficient resources (33%)
4. Poor leadership from the top of the organization (29%)
5. Lack of honesty and openness (26%)

Map Your Strategic Responses:

Trigger 1: _

My natural reaction: _

My quiet power move: _

. . .

Trigger 2: _

My natural reaction: _

My quiet power move: _

Trigger 3: _

My natural reaction: _

My quiet power move: _

PART V

**YOUR PRE-CONFLICT
PREPARATION CHECKLIST**

This checklist helps you prepare strategically for conflicts that matter:

Know Yourself (Person Analysis)

- Review your conflict profile: Am I a [Balanced/Sensitive] [Pragmatist/Explorer]?
- Check in emotionally: How am I feeling about this conflict right now?
- Clarify your strategic goal: Beyond winning/avoiding, what opportunity does this conflict create?
- What specific career benefit could I gain here?

Read the Social Map and/or the Room (Situation Assessment)

- Who has decision-making power in this specific situation?
- Who are my allies? Who should I align with before this conversation?
And are there people who oppose what I want?
- What pressures is my counterpart facing that I should consider?

- If I don't get to resolve this conflict and come to a mutual agreement with the other side, what are my alternatives (BATNA)? And what are their alternatives (BATNA)? Who has more / less power in this situation?

□ **Choose Your Frame (Construal Strategy)**

- How am I currently seeing this conflict? (threat vs. opportunity)
- What could a win-win outcome look like?
- How can I position this as a solution to THEIR problem too?

PART VI

**YOUR 30-DAY QUIET POWER
CHALLENGE**

Build your conflict confidence through deliberate practice:

Week 1: Awareness Foundation

Start simply by noticing. In every meeting, disagreement, or tense moment:

- What triggered me?
- What was my physical response?
- What did I want to say vs. what I actually said?

No judgment—just observe and take notes.

Week 2: Awareness + Strategic Response

Continue noticing, but now add a quiet power move:

- Pause before responding
- Ask yourself: "*What would my strategic response be?*"
- Try one technique from your profile's playbook
- Note what worked and what felt awkward

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Week 3: Building Your Personal Best Practices

You've been experimenting for two weeks. Time to codify what works:

- Which responses felt most natural?
- When did you feel most powerful?
- What patterns are emerging?
- Write down your top 3 "signature moves" that feel authentic AND effective

Week 4: Reflection & Refinement

Look back at your three-week journey:

- What surprised you about your conflict style?
- Which situations still challenge you most?
- How can you prepare for these specific scenarios?
- Create your personal conflict compass: a one-page guide to your most effective strategies

FINAL THOUGHT

Conflict competence for kind leaders isn't about domination or avoidance. It's about advancing strategically while honoring your values.

YOU ALREADY HAVE kindness and emotional intelligence. Now you have strategy.

TIME TO PUT THEM TOGETHER.

BEST,
Martin

THE QUIET POWER PLAYBOOK: For kind leaders who want promotions, not politics

More at thepppway.com

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REFERENCES & SOURCES



Can't access any of these papers? Here's how to get them legally (often free), and here's why it costs \$40 in the first place to access scientific papers.

1. CPP (Myers Briggs Company). (2008). *Workplace conflict and how businesses can harness it to thrive*. <https://shop.themyersbriggs.com/pdfs/cppglobalhumancapitalreportworkplaceconflict.pdf>

THIS REPORT IS BASED on answers from around 5,000 employees from nine countries, including the U.S., Brazil, Germany, France, Denmark, and the U.K. The report does not include the raw questions participants were asked. However, it seems that participants were asked “what they observe to be the main cause of conflict” at work (p. 9 of the report). The percentages then presumably indicate how frequently each trigger was mentioned by participants. Thus, presumably 49% of participants reported ‘personality clashes’ as a source of conflict they had observed.