

## Conflict Management Styles

"You" messages – telling the other party he/she is the cause of the problem	"I" messages – telling the other party how you feel, how you see things, what your concerns are
Communicate in generalities	Communicate specifically (who, what, when, where - giving details)
Talk about concerns with friends or associates who are sympathetic	Talk directly with the other party who is part of the conflict
Words are friendly, but gestures, body posture, and facial expressions communicate negative feelings (i.e., disapproval, distrust, resentment)	Verbal and non-verbal messages say the same thing because you are honestly saying what you mean and how you feel and what is bothering you
No apparent commitment to listening – do most of the talking	Obvious commitment to listening – willing to hear the other's story, reflects back what is said
Speaks of himself – stating personal concerns and preferences as if they must happen for resolution to take place	Speaks of himself and affirms the concerns of the other party – appears to be looking for a solution that is good for both parties
Reactive – quick to attack, defend, judge negatively, see the worst as if it were the whole picture	Responsive to the truth – able to listen longer, investigate so as to hear more of the story, consider other points of view, look for a common reality
Blame focus – switch issues, wants immediate resolution, more criticism than working through each others story in order to look for common reality, unwilling to bear his/her part of the responsibility for the conflict	Problem focus – takes one issue at a time and looks for common reality, suggests solutions that seek the good of both parties, looks for alternative solutions until a common agreement is reached

## **AN APPEASEMENT**

**Offers a self-demeaning apology**, grovels.

**Degrades self** in an attempt to make self look bad so offended party will show pity or mercy.

**Makes unclear appeal** to pity and mercy.

**Is asking for:**

1) Escape from consequences or punishment for wrongs done.

2) Escape from humiliation for wrong choices made.

**Seeks acceptance.**

Does not wish to take responsibility for wrong done, but does want offended party to accept them as if they had done no wrong.

## **AN ACCOUNT**

**Offers a full account of why** he did what was done. This comes in the form of an excuse.

**Uses disclaimers.** Asks to be recognized as generally being a good person.

**Spreads the blame** beyond self as if what was done would not have been done if the other party had not done what they did or circumstances were not what they were.

**Is asking for:**

1) The other party to see their own part in the wrong doing.

2) The other party to be reasonable and tolerant since the explanation given shows the accused is neither solely nor mostly to blame.

**Seeks exoneration.**

Denies responsibility; side-steps having to be accountable for what was done; excuses self due to *e x t e n u a t i n g* circumstances.

## **AN APOLOGY**

**Offers no defense** or excuse. Simply admits wrong done.

**Shows true sorrow** and pledges to work on keeping wrong from recurring in the future (*to change*).

**Adds nothing** to the apology.

**Is asking for:**

1) Forgiveness for the wrong done. Acknowledges that what was done was wrong, unwarranted, and indefensible.

2) Restoration of the relationship - a reconciled state of mutual love and trust.

**Seeks reconciliation.**

Takes authentic, obvious responsibility for the wrong done without any explanation or justification or personal defense. Accepts the consequences.