

Guiding Yourself and Others Through Conflict

Relationship Awareness Theory

Presented by:
Jennifer Bluestein
Director of Professional Development
Greenberg Traurig, LLP

Kathren Davis
Senior Legal Recruiting Manager
Seyfarth Shaw LLP



NALP Attendees: Guiding Yourself and Others Through Conflict

AGENDA

1. The Theory: What Drives Behavior & "Reading" People
2. Managing & Overdoing Our Strengths
3. What is Conflict?
4. Being a Trusted Advisor in the Face of Conflict



1

Relationship Awareness Theory

- Behavior is driven by **motives**
- Filters influence perception
- **Strengths** can be overdone
- Motives change in conflict



3 Primary Motives

We are motivated by concerns for...

PEOPLE

...wanting to help others

PERFORMANCE

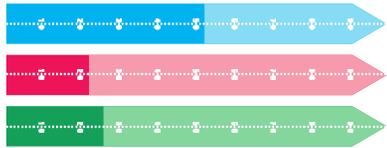
...wanting to achieve results

PROCESS

...wanting to establish order



Motivational Value System = MVS



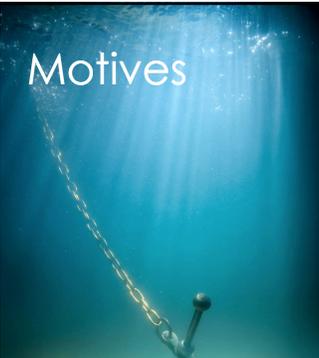
A system of motives and values that drives your behaviors when things are going well.



Strengths



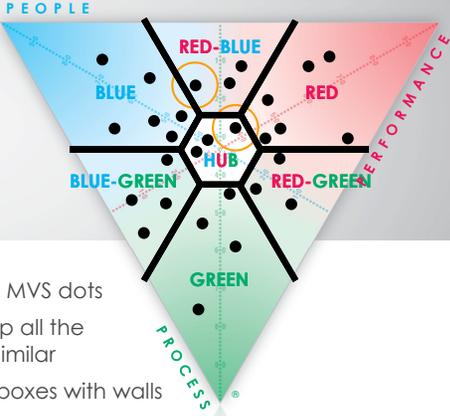
Motives



Your motives anchor your strengths.
They are the reason why you do what you do.



The Seven MVS Types

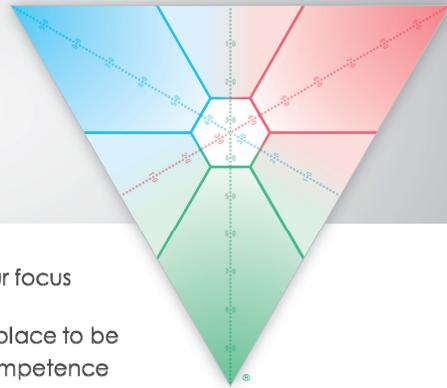


- Over 5,000 possible MVS dots
- 7 MVS regions group all the MVS dots that are similar
- MVS types are not boxes with walls
- Some MVS dots are close to borders



About the Results

- Where we get our focus and priorities
- No best or worst place to be
- It is not about competence
- It is about the filter through which we view the world



Blue MVS Altruistic-Nurturing

People who are motivated by the protection, growth, and welfare of others. They have a strong desire to help others who can genuinely benefit.



Altruistic – unselfish concern for the welfare of others
Nurturing – protecting, supporting, and encouraging others



Red MVS Assertive-Directing

People who are motivated by task accomplishment and achieving results. They have a strong desire to set goals, take decisive actions, and claim earned rewards.

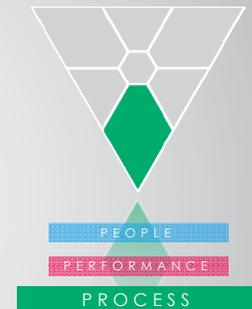


Assertive – confidently self-assured and forceful
Directing – giving authoritative instruction or guidance



Green MVS Analytic-Autonomizing

People who are motivated by meaningful order and thinking things through. They have a strong desire to pursue independent interests, to be practical, and to be fair.



Analytic – methodical examination of structures or information
Autonomizing – maintaining objective independence, self-governing



Red-Blue MVS

Assertive-Nurturing

People who are motivated by the maximum growth and development of others. They have a strong desire to direct, persuade, or lead others for the benefit of others.

Assertive – confidently self-assured and forceful
Nurturing – protecting, supporting, and encouraging others

Red-Green MVS

Judicious-Competing

People who are motivated by intelligent assertiveness and fairness in competition. They have a strong desire to develop strategy and assess risks and opportunities.

Judicious – having, showing, or being done with good judgment or sense
Competing – striving to gain or win by doing something better than others

Blue-Green MVS

Cautious-Supporting

People who are motivated by developing self-sufficiency in self and others. They have a strong desire to analyze the needs of others and to help them help themselves.

Cautious – careful to avoid potential problems or dangers
Supporting – providing encouragement, comfort, and emotional help

Hub MVS

Flexible-Cohering

People who are motivated by flexibility and adapting to others or situations. They have a strong desire to collaborate with others and to remain open to different viewpoints and options.

Flexible – able to respond to changing circumstances and conditions
Cohering – bringing together to form a united whole

Blue MVS

Altruistic-Nurturing

- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we...



Red MVS

Assertive-Directing

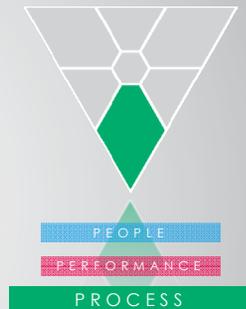
- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we...



Green MVS

Analytic-Autonomizing

- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we (do/don't)...



Red-Blue MVS

Assertive-Nurturing

- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we (do/don't)...



Red-Green MVS

Judicious-Competing

- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we (do/don't)...

PEOPLE
PERFORMANCE
PROCESS

Blue-Green MVS

Cautious-Supporting

- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we (do/don't)...

PEOPLE
PERFORMANCE
PROCESS

Hub MVS

Flexible-Cohering

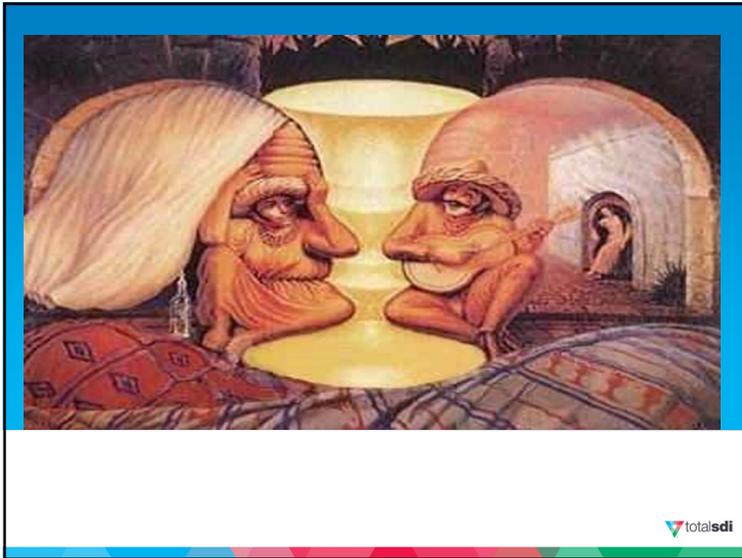
- We are most engaged working in teams when...
- If we are not engaged, it's because we (do/don't)...

PEOPLE
PERFORMANCE
PROCESS

2

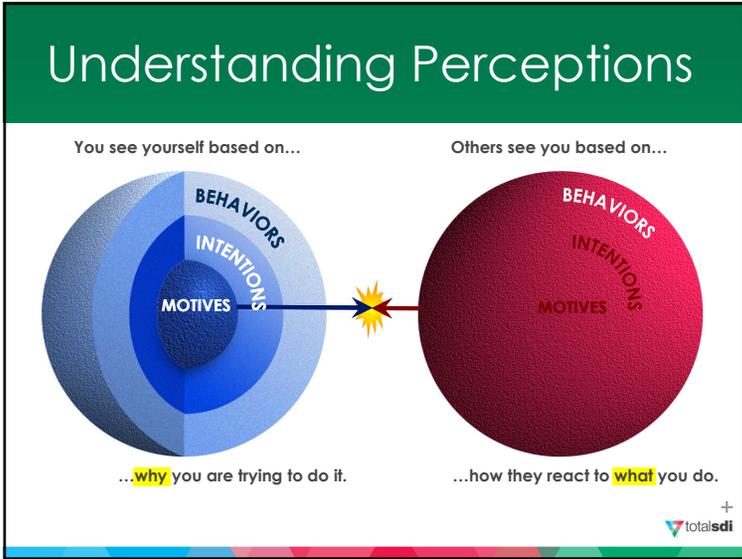
Filters Influence Perception

- Behavior is driven by **motives**
- **Filters** influence perception
- **Strengths** can be overdone
- Motives change in **conflict**



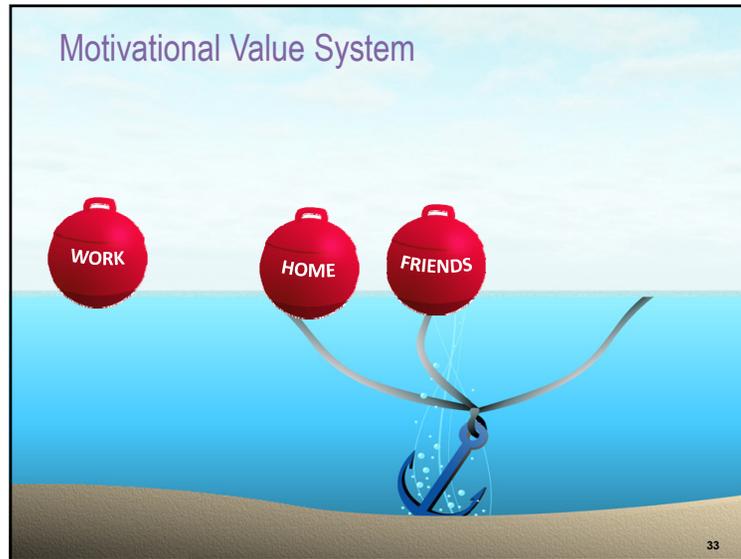
The Impact of Filters

- Just as a book can't be judged by its cover, a motive can't be judged by a strength.
- We focus on things that help us fulfill our motives and screen out things that do not.
- Strengths can be used for many different reasons.



Your Strengths...

- Are what people see
- Shift based on the environment
- Are intended to be productive
- Are connected to motives



The Art of Borrowing

Understand...

- Your own motives
- Others' motives

Clearly know...

- The results you want
- The results others want

Choose the right strength to...

- Improve relationships
- Produce good outcomes

totalsdi

Living Triangle: Borrowing

(MVS Color Groups)

Develop a script to influence a different color group of partners to participate in a first year training on a Saturday. The goal is to introduce a new kind of training that involves a mock client meeting with an unhappy client.

You will need to speak "their language" to sell it.

What's important to them?
 Red Green Blue
 Hub

totalsdi

3

Overdoing Our Strengths

- Behavior is driven by motives
- Filters influence perception
- Strengths** can be overdone
- Motives change in conflict

totalsdi

Overdone Strengths Defined

Overdone strengths (weaknesses) are behaviors intended as strengths, but are perceived negatively

...and could trigger conflict.



The Problem with Weaknesses

A weakness implies a deficiency or fault

In Relationship Awareness:

- Weaknesses are rooted in strengths.
- When well-intended strengths do not produce expected results, we try harder.
- Strengths, when overdone, can be unappreciated or ineffective.



Examples of Overdone Strengths

Strength	Overdone/Misapplied Strengths
Trusting	Gullible
Modest	Self-Effacing
Caring	Submissive
Self-Confident	Arrogant
Forceful	Impatient or Dictatorial
Risk Taker	Gambler
Cautious	Suspicious
Analytical	Nit picking
Principled	Unbending
Flexible	Wishy Washy
Socializer	Unable to stand alone
Tolerant	Uncaring



4

Diffusing Conflict

STRENGTH DEPLOYMENT INVENTORY (SDI) When Self-Worth is Threatened

- Behavior is driven by **motives**
- Filters** influence perception
- Strengths** can be overdone
- Motives change in **conflict**



Opposition vs. Conflict

←

Opposition is about disagreement

↓

Opposition can be productive

↓

People go into conflict only about things that are important to them

→

Conflict is about a threat to values

↓

Conflict is usually unproductive

↓

Conflict provides an opportunity to learn what matters to people and a chance to make it right



How Does Conflict Start?

Threat to Strengths:	Threat to Motives:	Threat of Overdone Strengths:
Strength is restricted from use	BLUES might feel conflict if people are mistreated.	Frequency
Strength is disregarded or insulted	REDS might feel conflict if a task is not getting done.	Duration
Feeling forced to use a non-preferred strength	GREENS might feel conflict if order is disrupted.	Intensity
A person feels disvalued	HUBS might feel conflict if flexibility is restricted.	Context



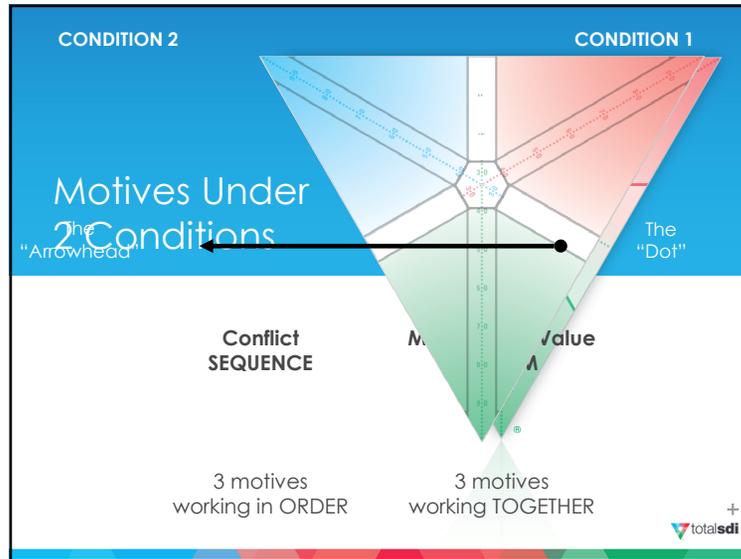
The SDI Measures Motives Under Two Conditions



1. **When things are going well**
(Motivational Value System)
2. **When faced with conflict**
(Conflict Sequence)

SDI explains *why* we do what we do.





3 Motives in Conflict

Wanting to...

- ACCOMMODATE**
...and preserve harmony
- ASSERT**
...and prevail over obstacles
- ANALYZE**
...and slow things down

totalsdi

CONFLICT SEQUENCE RESULTS

Jennifer Bluestein

CONFLICT SEQUENCE RESULTS
Jennifer Bluestein

YOUR CONFLICT SEQUENCE
Your Conflict Sequence (CS) arrowhead is in the G-[BR] region of the triangle.

G-[BR] Green-[Blue or Red]
You want to maintain order and principles. If that does not work, you want to make a choice, depending on what's more reasonable in the situation: to give in with conditions or to forcefully engage.

HOW YOU EXPERIENCE CONFLICT
As a person with a G-[BR] Conflict Sequence, you that seek information or rational explanations. You analyze the situation and focus on facts. You are cautious and hesitant to prevent making a mistake. You want to be sure things make sense. You believe that the best way to show you care about the problem is to give it the time and attention it needs so it can be solved correctly.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESULTS
The SDI helps you assess your motives and the situation you face in relating to others under two conditions:
1) when everything is going well
2) when you are faced with conflict

WHAT DO THE BRACKETS MEAN?
As a G-[BR], your Conflict Sequence is one of seven sequences that have brackets. This means that the colors of motives, within the brackets are equal or interchangeable. When you are in a stage of conflict that has a bracket, you typically choose one of the bracketed colors (or a combination of colors), based on how you see the situation.

CONFLICT SEQUENCE RESULTS
MOTIVATIONAL VALUE SYSTEM

MV/M/S is: ● **RED-BLUE**

CONFLICT SEQUENCE
MV CS is: → **G-[BR]**

totalsdi

The Building Blocks of Conflict Sequences

CONFLICT STAGE	FOCUS ON	BLUE Accommodate	RED Assert	GREEN Analyze
1	Self, Problem, & Others	Wanting to accommodate others	Wanting to assert oneself	Wanting to analyze the situation
2	Self, Problem, & Others	Wanting to conditionally give in or defer to others	Wanting to prevail against the issue or others	Wanting to disengage from others or clarify the issue
3	Self, Problem, & Others	Feeling driven to give up	Feeling driven to fight	Feeling driven to retreat

totalsdi



Living Triangle: Your Own Stage 1 Conflict

(Stage 1 Color)

What triggers us to go into conflict?

What we do when in conflict...

How we feel...

When approaching us...
DO DON'T



Stage 2 Conflict

How well do these statements describe what you do when you are in Stage 2 conflict?

- Stage 2 Blue**
Accommodate with conditions or make peace
- Stage 2 [BR]**
Defer to others, and/or assert rights
- Stage 2 Red**
Confront to win or enforce rights
- Stage 2 [RG]**
Yield, confront, and/or reconsider depending on the situation
- Stage 2 [BRG]**
Yield on minor aspects, accommodate and/or analyze
- Stage 2 [RG]**
Use the rules to win, assert, and/or analyze
- Stage 2 Green**
Back off and reconsider or Re-evaluate means and ends




Focus on: Stage 2 Conflict

**Advising Internal Clients –
2nd Stage R, G or B?**

Your managing partner has told you the corporate group wants to hire an additional mid-level associate. You know corporate associate hours are down, and you don't see the need at this point. You are opposing the request, and the managing partner has asked you to speak with the corporate head. What do you say?



The Building Blocks of Conflict Sequences

CONFLICT STAGE	FOCUS ON	BLUE Accommodate	RED Assert	GREEN Analyze
1	Self, Problem, & Others	Wanting to accommodate others	Wanting to assert oneself	Wanting to analyze the situation
2	Self, Problem, & Others	Wanting to conditionally give in or defer to others	Wanting to prevail against the issue or others	Wanting to disengage from others or clarify the issue
3	Self, Problem, & Others	Feeling driven to give up	Feeling driven to fight	Feeling driven to retreat



Stage 3 Conflict

How well do these statements describe what you do when you are in Stage 3 conflict?

Stage 3 Blue
Surrender the issue or admit defeat

Stage 3 [BR]
Give up or argue

Stage 3 Red
Make a strong, final stand and argument

Stage 3 [BG]
Withdraw or give up

Stage 3 [BRG]
Give up, withdraw, or argue depending on the situation

Stage 3 [RG]
Argue or withdraw

Stage 3 Green
Withdraw or detach

total sdi

Path Back to MVS

Resolving conflict involves "connecting the dots" ...getting back to the MVS.

Thinking about **People** and how to help

Thinking about **Perspective** and keeping options open

Thinking about **Performance** and what to do

Stage 1 Green
Thinking about **Process** and what is logical

total sdi

Effective teams understand the relationships between...

- Motives
- Conflict
- Strengths
- Filters

total sdi

Going Forward

- SDI and conflicts in everyday work
- Understanding your team
- Communicating with internal clients
- Questions about SDI

total sdi