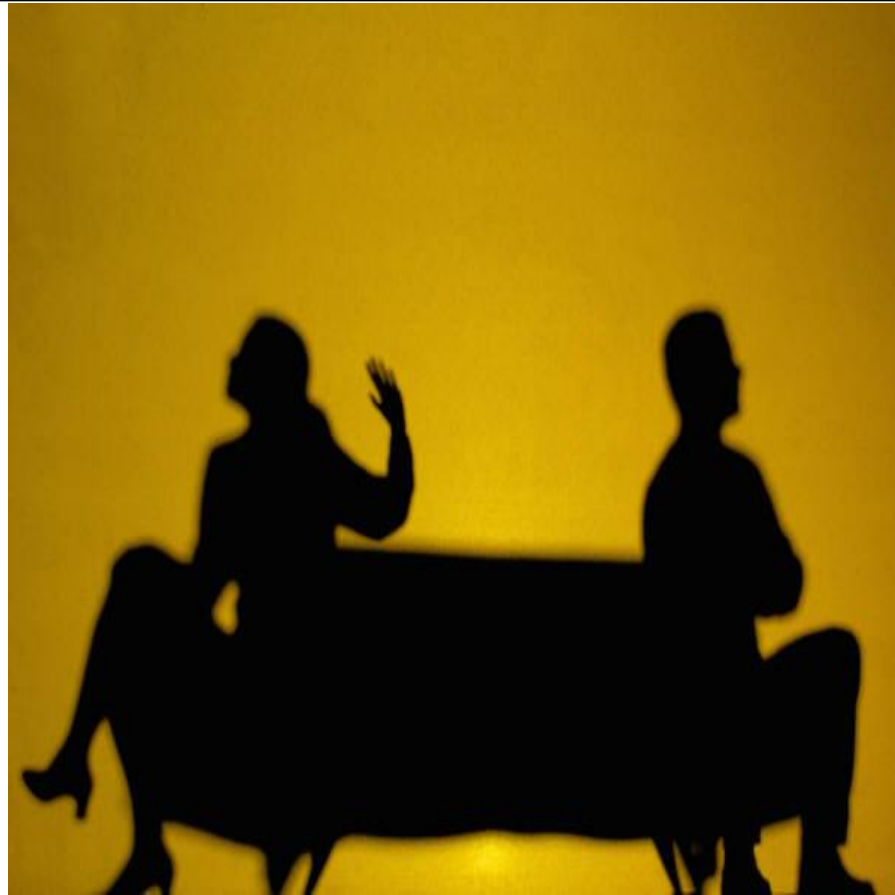


Mediating Conflict with Others





Agenda

1. Introduce the **4M strategy** of dealing with conflict
2. Define conflict in the workplace
3. Identify levels of conflict and what approach is appropriate
4. Review skills for resolving conflict
5. Discuss importance of **Modeling**
6. Understand the importance of **Mentoring** and coaching employees to manage conflict effectively
7. Learn the skill of third-party **Mediation**
8. Know when to **Mandate** a resolution of the business problem



4-M Strategy

- **Modeling** – practicing what you preach
- **Mentoring** – teaching employees how to self mediate
- **Mediating** – being a third party facilitator
- **Mandating** – requiring behavioral change with note to consequence if there is failure to follow through



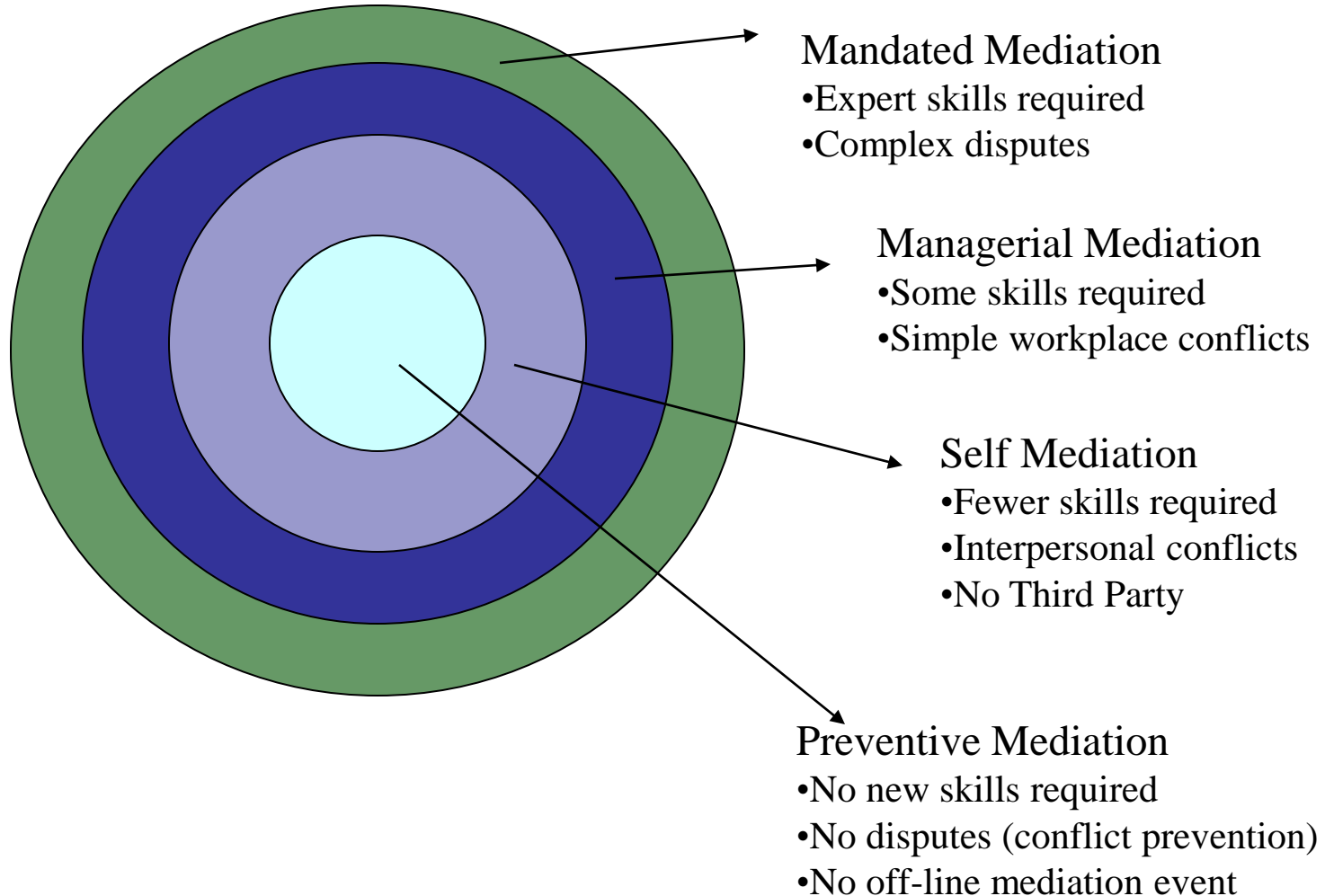
Defining Conflict

Q: How do you know there is a conflict?

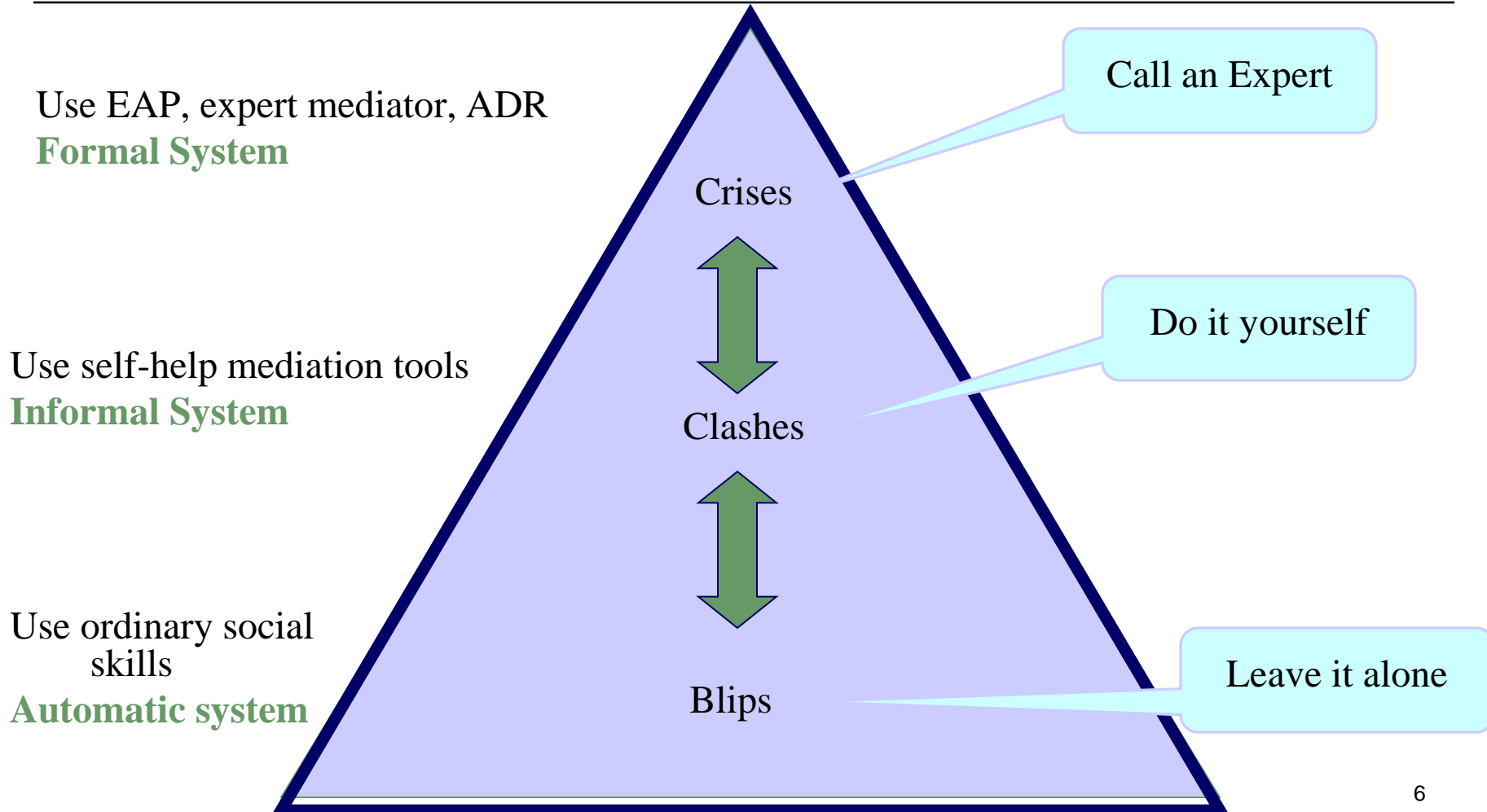
A: The situation involves people who are task interdependent, where one or both feel angry, find fault with the other, and use behaviors that cause a **business problem**.

What about... indecision? disagreement? stress?

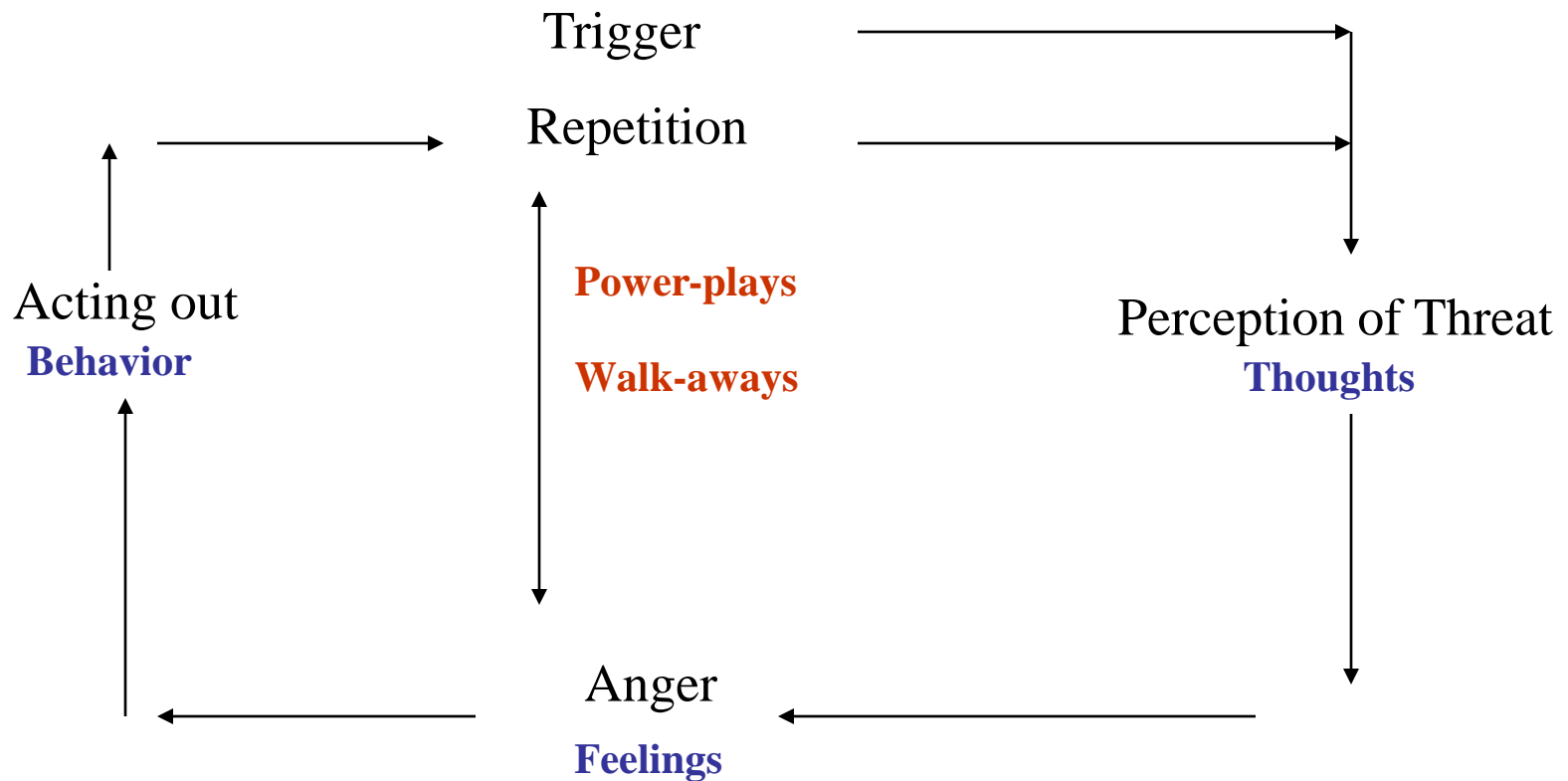
Levels of Mediation



Levels of Severity of Conflict



The Retaliatory Cycle





Discovering our “Wrong reflexes”

Intentional behaviors

- Avoiding
- Withdrawing
- Withholding information
- Not returning messages
- Silent treatment
- Threatening
- Pre-empting
- Getting others to take sides
- Shouting
- Hostile gestures

Unintentional behaviors

- Facial expressions
- Agitation
- Body posture
- Fidgeting
- Perspiring

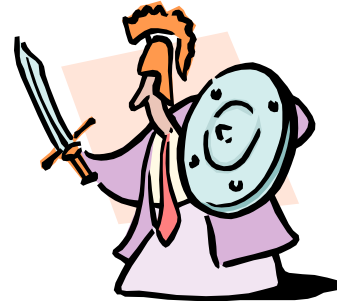
Discovering our “Wrong reflexes”

“Flight”



- **Avoiding**
- **Withdrawing**
- **Withholding information**
- **Not returning messages**
- **Silent treatment**

“Fight”



- **Threatening**
- **Pre-empting**
- **Getting others to take sides**
- **Shouting**
- **Hostile gestures**



What is your *Conflict* Style?

The 5 Thomas-Kilmann Conflict-Handling Modes: (looks at assertiveness and cooperation)

- Competition
- Accommodation
- Avoidance
- Collaboration
- Compromise



What is your *Conflict* style?

- A **COMPETITIVE** style looks at conflict as a fight where I WIN and YOU LOSE. Not interested in looking at the other point of view, unless it is to learn ways to gain advantage.
- An **AVOIDANCE** style looks at conflict as something to avoid at all costs. Not interested in looking at the other's point of view or examining his or her own, the avoider tries to escape the uncomfortable situation that conflict creates.
- A person with an **ACCOMMODATING** style is interested in what the other person wants and is likely to sacrifice her or his own wishes. Sometimes referred to as YOU WIN/I LOSE style.
- A **COLLABORATIVE/COMPROMISING** style looks at conflicts as problems that can be solved by taking both parties' interests into account. Collaborators usually try negotiation FIRST.



Competition

Advantages

Focused

Decisive

Direct communication

Disadvantages

Hinder people around you

Less information gathered

Uses

Emergent situations

Cost-cutting

Discipline



Accommodation

Advantages

Learn from others

Reasonable

Approachable

Disadvantages

Ideas don't always get attention they deserve

Lose respect and influence

Uses

When competing is damaging desired outcome

Satisfy needs of others

Preserve harmony



Avoidance

Advantages

Allows cool down

Gather information

Disadvantages

Stirs hostilities

Leads to other issues

Become overwhelmed

Uses

No chance of satisfying concern

Confrontation cost outweighs benefit

Someone else better able to resolve issue



Collaboration

Advantages

Understand views of others

Reveals hidden agendas

Gain commitment of others

Develop better relationships

Disadvantages

Too much discussion

Taken advantage of

Time consuming

Not good in emergencies

Uses

Developing teamwork

Developing interpersonal relationships

When issue is too important to be compromised



Compromise

Advantages

Arrives at expedient solution in a timely manner

Resolution in competitive disputes

Allows Closure

Disadvantages

Can give a mediocre solution

Do not promote creativity

Uses

Bargaining

When only means to effect change

Foster cordial behavior

A Paradigm Shift

Changing how we think about conflict so we can take effective action to resolve it.



The old “mechanistic” paradigm.



The new “organic” paradigm.



Mentoring = Teaching Self Mediation

- Being able to coach employees how to resolve conflicts on their own will allow you more time to be a more efficient manager.
- Giving your employees the tools to handle conflicts allows you the opportunity to show an investment in your employees.



What is Self Mediation?

- A communication tool
 - No new skills are needed
- Mediation without a third-party
 - Learn in one day
 - Simple “self-help” mediation
 - The initiator wears two hats: Negotiator and Mediator
- A way to get others to work with you, not against you
 - Even “difficult people” (“different people”)
- A core workplace competency
- A life skill



When to Use Self Mediation

- ❑ On-going interdependent relationship
- ❑ Two people in the dialogue
- ❑ Clash level of severity
- ❑ No/low risk of reprisal from initiating dialogue
- ❑ No risk of physical violence

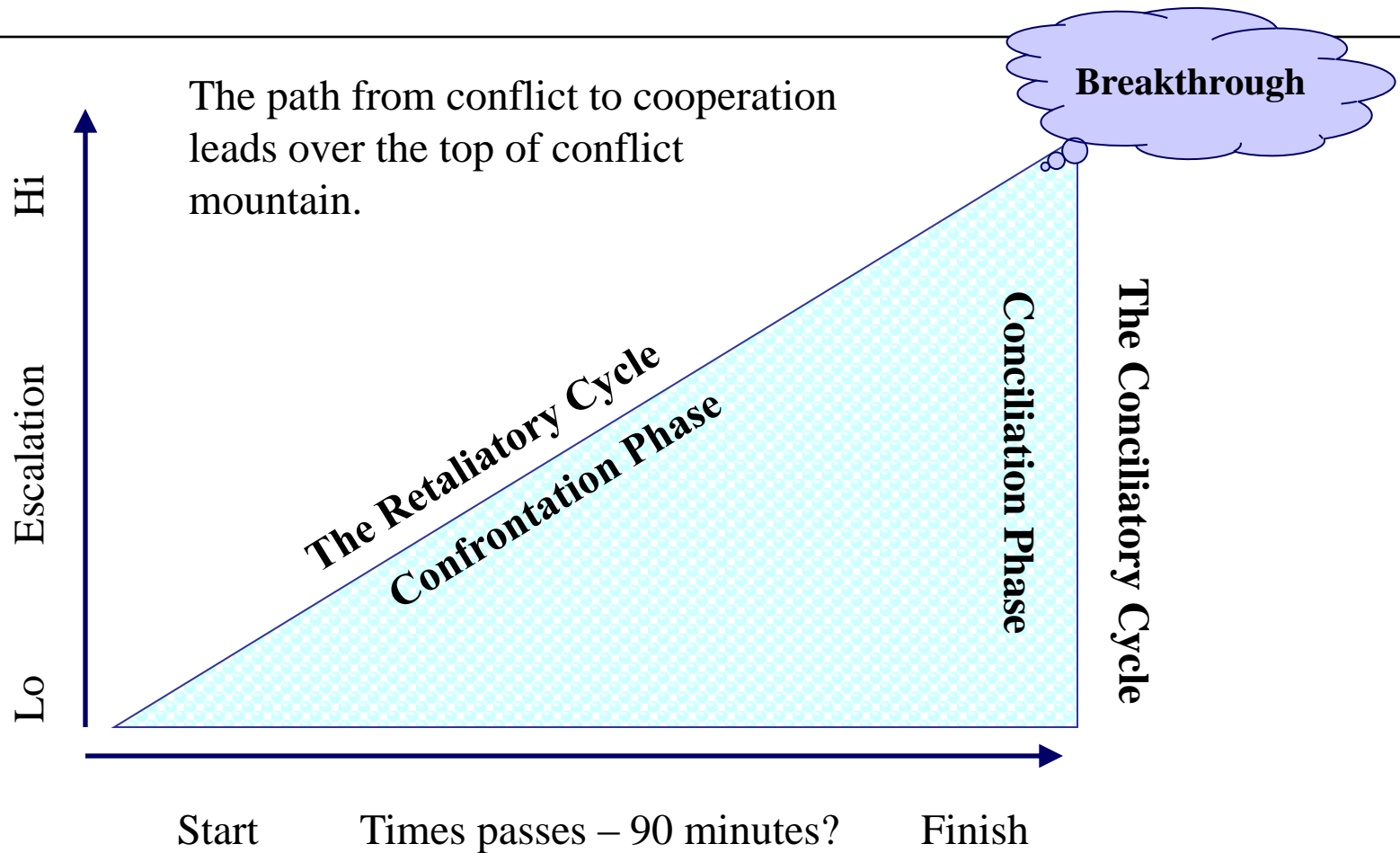
A Better Strategy: The Essential Process

An alternative to our reflexive strategies of Distancing and Coercion is the **Essential Process** of mediation:

Face-to-Face talking about the problem
without interruption
long enough to find a solution.



Conflict Mountain





Find a Time to Talk

- Approach – choose when and where.
- Issue Statement – reason we need to talk.
- Request – ask for willingness to meet.
- Sell It – if other party objects initially, show benefit of talking and ask again.
- Rules – if you feel it is needed, tell other party you'd like it if there were no walk-aways or power-plays.
- Review – review the time and place.



Create an Effective Issue Statement

- Objective
- Specific
- Resolvable
- Concise



The Cardinal Rules of Dialogue

The Essential Process requires the **Cardinal Rules**:

1) No Walk-aways

We must stay in the Essential Process

2) No Power-plays

We must not impose one-sided solutions



Plan the Context: Things to Look for

- Privacy
- No telephones/pagers
- No walk-ins
- Enough time (90 min.)
- Try to find an isolated room
- No scheduling conflicts
- Appropriate seating
- Liquids
- Tissues
- Try to protect the meeting from all interruptions.



Talk It Out

- ❑ Express appreciation and optimism
- ❑ Review cardinal rules (*let's not quit until we agree, let's not push a one-sided resolution*)
- ❑ State the issue
- ❑ Invite dialogue (*help me understand you*)
- ❑ Remain in the Essential Process
- ❑ Breakthrough



Make A Deal

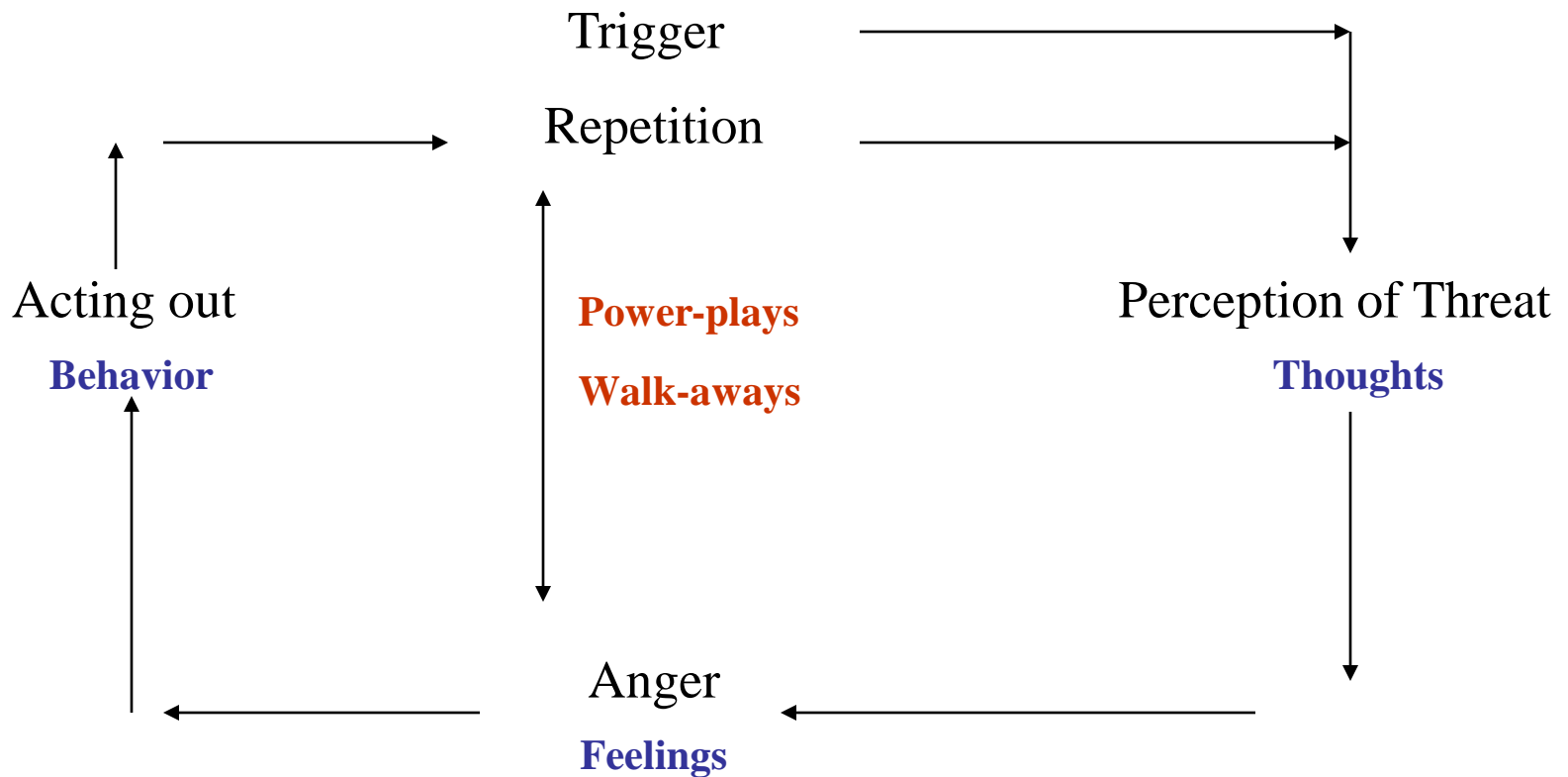
- **Balanced** (*both benefit, share sacrifice and compromise*)
- **Behaviorally specific** (*what we will do, not what we may think or feel*)
- **Written** (*clear agreement form*)



Managerial Mediating Requires Skill

- Know the Retaliatory Cycle
- Understand the Essential Process
- Understand Conciliatory Gestures
- Identify the Breakthrough

The Retaliatory Cycle



A Better Strategy: The Essential Process

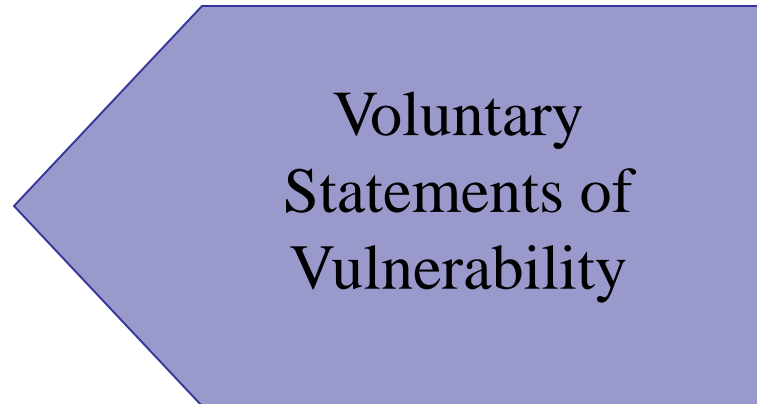
An alternative to our reflexive strategies of Distancing and Coercion is the **Essential Process** of mediation:

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Conciliatory Gestures

- Apologizing
- Owning responsibility
- Conceding
- Self-disclosing
- Expressing positive feelings
- Initiating both-gain



The magic ingredient of the mediation process

Breakthrough

*A mutual attitude shift from
“me against you”
to
“us against the problem”*

The moment of Breakthrough:

- Cannot be forced.
- Cannot be willed (consciously chosen).
- Happens naturally.

BREAKTHROUGH



Overview of Managerial Mediation

- Step 1: Decide to mediate
 - Make an informed decision
- Step 2: Hold preliminary meetings
 - Prepare the parties
- Step 3: Plan the context
 - Protect the meeting
- Step 4: Hold the three-way meeting
 - Do four simple tasks
 - Use natural forces toward harmony to produce the Breakthrough
- Step 5: Follow-up
 - Support the Deal



Decide to Mediate

- ❑ Conflict is causing a business problem
- ❑ They are unable and/or unwilling to self-mediate
- ❑ They have an interdependent relationship



When Not to Mediate

- ❑ As a substitute for discipline
- ❑ As a substitute for EAP services
- ❑ To address a poorly defined problem
- ❑ When there is a significant power differential



Preliminary Meetings

- ❑ Define the business problem to be solved.
- ❑ Hear each person's side of the story.
- ❑ Explain key information (rules) about the three-way meeting.
- ❑ Secure the person's commitment to attend.



The Three-Way Meeting

1. Keep employees engaged in the Essential Process
 - Prevent violations of Cardinal Rules
2. Support Conciliatory Gestures
 - Pay attention to statements of voluntary vulnerability
3. Wait for the Breakthrough
 - “Why Am I Talking?”
 - Don’t take responsibility for the solution
4. Capture the deal on the clear agreement form
 - Make sure it is fair and balanced
 - Make it behaviorally specific



Opening the Meeting

- Show appreciation for their willingness to meet.
- “I’m concerned about the business outcome risk. I’ve noticed evidence (observable behavior) of the problem. We’re here to find a way for the two of you to address the difficulty you are having in working together to ensure the business outcome.”
- Remember, its purpose is to plan the future, not judge the past.

Performing the Primary Tasks of the Manager-as-Mediator

Primary Tasks	Behavioral cues	Sample responses
#1 Stay in the Essential Process	Talking to the mediator Avoiding the subject Trying to quit	“Please speak to her.” “Is this related to X?” “Let’s keep talking.”
#2 Support Conciliatory Gestures	Statements of voluntary vulnerability	Say to the offerer: “Please say more about that.”
#3 Wait	They are in the Essential Process AND There are no unanswered Conciliatory Gestures	



The Follow Up: Supporting the Deal

- Hold 1 or more follow-up meetings to:
 - Troubleshoot the *Deal*
 - Convey your continued interest
- Timing
 - Long enough to allow a fair test
 - Not long enough to allow failure
- Not a return to the *Essential Process*
- Supervision of their relational performance



What If Mediation Fails?

- Refer to EAP for further mediation
- Final offer selection
- Mandate a solution



Consultation

- ❑ Employee/Labor Relations
- ❑ Employee Assistance Program
- ❑ Direct Supervisor



Mandating Cooperation

- Meet with each uncooperative employee individually.
- Ask for an explanation.
- Tell the person what he or she must do.
- Monitor situation and follow-up.



Summary: 4-M Strategy

Modeling
entoring
mediating
andating