



Mountains Into Molehills

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Mountains Into Molehills aims to build understanding of self and others. It integrates relevant theory with practical step by step guides to coping with stressful situations, and handling difficult situations assertively.

Chapter Four – Conflict

Part A Of interest to everyone

1. Conflict – A typical escalation
2. Aspects of the way we are which cause conflict
3. Unconscious internal processes leading to conflict
4. Building Rapport

Part B Additional Material For Managers

5. Communication Styles Theory
6. Personality factors
7. Approaches to resolving conflict
8. How Mediation works
9. Causes of conflict in organisations
- 10 Rapport for managers
11. Emotional Intelligence
12. Negotiation Skills
13. Negotiating Styles
14. Dirty tricks
15. Reading list

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Access my other book '[The Anger Management Programme](#)' at
www.angermanagementprogramme.co.uk .

FOUR BOOKS IN ONE

- Module One: Anger Management & Impulse Control**
- Module Two: Anger Release & Self Calming**
- Module Three: Conflict Resolution Skills for Couples**
- Module Four: Advice for Couples in Conflict**

1. Conflict – A typical escalation

- There is a stimulus – an incident, or an issue arises. This may be a simple misunderstanding
- This results in an aggressive act – 'the first stone is cast'

OR

The offended party stores the hurt 'collects an Anger Stamp' and begins to act in Passive Aggressive ways i.e. ways that do nothing to solve the problem such as sulking, being unfriendly or uncooperative.

- The other party, usually unaware of the original stimulus, detects the behaviour, doesn't understand it, feels hurt by it, and retaliates
- From then on the parties only notice what confirms their negative feelings about the other

- Constructive communication ceases
- This leads to further incidents
- Anger and resentment deepens
- Paranoia sets in
- Destructive behaviours increase
- The parties seek allies: the conflict widens

CONFLICT REDUCTION CAN BE ACHIEVED BY ASSERTIVE EXPRESSION OF FEELINGS AT AN EARLY STAGE, IDEALLY ONCE THE VERY FIRST STIMULOUS OCCURS

2. Aspects of the way we are, and the way we think, that cause conflict

In conflict we tend to assume that 'Its not me, it's the other so and so'. Usually this not true, or is only partly true. As a mediator I am not interested in apportioning blame but I have a working assumption that the party least to blame is at least 30% to blame. **If you are in conflict it may be that the other party started it, but the question is ' what are you doing to help keep it going?'**

Key to understanding, avoiding, and resolving conflict is an understanding of how self and others function and is also covered in **Chapter One 'Emotional Intelligence: Understanding Self & Others'**.

3. Unconscious Internal Process Leading To Conflict

Here are some of our unconscious internal processes when relating to others. These drive our behaviour and thinking without our being aware of their impact on the way we are. We all, more or less:-

1. Clash with some personality types
2. Collect Anger Stamps
3. Are envious
4. Filter reality to confirm our views
5. Generate self fulfilling prophecies
6. Have a unique view of reality based on our unique personal 'Map Of The World'
7. Have an incomplete and distorted personal 'Map of the World'
8. Have more than one state of mind depending on the situation [Ego States: TA]
9. Inconsistent
10. Instinctively judgmental.
11. Intolerant
12. Prone to jumping to conclusions
13. Less socially skilled when stressed
14. Mind readers
15. Paranoid
16. Passive aggressive
17. Pessimistic
18. Poor listeners
19. Programmed to fight, run, or freeze in the face of fear
20. Prone to irrational fears
21. Prone to displace our anger onto someone innocent
22. Prone to stereotyping
23. Resistant to change
24. Seeing only what we expect to see
25. Prone to stick Horns or Halo's on others without justification [Transference]
26. Stressed when insecure
27. To some degree intolerant of difference and diversity; prejudiced
28. Unable to stop our body revealing how we feel

For further comment on of some of these terms please refer to Chapter One 'Emotional Intelligence: Understanding Self & Others'.

4. Building Rapport

RAPPORT – A DEFINITION

‘A close and harmonious relationship in which there is a common understanding’

Rapport can only be achieved when at least one of the parties has positive intent towards the other

How to build rapport

1. Develop Our Listening Skills [Please see Chapter Five 'Listening Skills: The Key To Many Doors']. Developing empathy skills is especially important aspect of listening skills. This enables us to provedemonstrate we understand their point of view, how they feel, even if we don't agree with it, and can't give them what they want. This is especially important in handling someone who is angry. People are less resentful if they feel understood. Advanced empathy is at the heart of person centred counselling and is the nearest we ever get to mind reading, to being able to hear what people are thinking [Recommend film comedy ‘What Women Want’]

2. Be Assertive Although there is more initial risk in choosing to be assertive rather than passive, relationships built on passivity are built on sand. Skill in being assertive also gives us a choice in any given situation – we can choose to be passive, assertive, or aggressive depending on appropriateness to the specific situation. **Please see Chapters Seven 'How to be more assertive' and Chapter Eight 'Difficult Conversations'**. One of the foundations blocks of assertive communication is being more open about how you feel.

3. Adopt a win/ win approach Success in building rapport depends on a Win Win approach by both parties but can be initiated by one of the parties. The opposite of Win Win is selfish pursuit of one’s own interests, a desire to win regardless of the needs and the rights of the other person.

4. Accept our contribution to poor relationships In disputes which I mediate I use a rule of thumb that the party least to blame for problems is at least thirty percent to blame. Somebody else may ‘have started it’ but once a poor relationship develops both parties fuel the flames. **Think of a relationship you would like to improve. What are you doing to keep it a poor relationship?**

6. Try not to be judgmental Remember that each of us has a unique view of things as a result of our unique life experience. Judging and stereotyping stops us listening. It is enormously helpful to maintain a state of curiosity, trying to figure out how people got to think the way they do, instead of judging. **'Don't be furious, be curious'**

7. Risk rejection Be the first to smile, the first to say hello.

8. Find reasons to feel respect: show respect. The person we are in conflict with is unlikely to be without any merit whatsoever. Rapport is impossible where one party holds another in contempt.

9. Model the behaviour you want Behave towards the other person as we would wish them to behave towards us.

10. Stroke the behaviour you want A key behaviour influencing tactic which works well most of the time! Whenever the other person does something you want them to do more often – draw attention to it, be complimentary.

11. Find and acknowledge some grain of truth in what the other person is saying, even when you feel that what they are saying overall is wrong, unreasonable, irrational, or unfair.

12. Find something you have in common Draw attention to it. This is a good bridge builder

13. Be aware that often people are simply responding to our signals to them We don't like someone. Maybe its because we think they don't like us. Our non-verbal communication leaves them in no doubt that we don't like them. They respond accordingly. The question we may never answer is 'Who sent the first signal?' Regardless of who did, there is now a self perpetuating cycle of negative vibes and responses. **Are you prepared to break the cycle?**

14. Change what you expect Because we tend to only notice what supports our beliefs, if we expect someone to be uncooperative, unfriendly, self interested, we find the evidence that supports our view and are often blind to any contradictory evidence. We then treat the person according to our negative view and, surprise, surprise, they react appropriately and we get what we expected. Change what you expect and, despite your initial scepticism at the suggestion, you may well be pleasantly surprised by the result.

15. Watch what invitations you are issuing – people treat us the way we invite. If we are passive, submissive, a push over, people will tread all over us. If we are aggressive people will respond with aggression or passivity both of which can be very unhelpful to the cause of open communication. **What invitations are you issuing?**

16. Learn to respond appropriately to others emotions

Anger When we are angry we become deaf to reason until we feel that we have been heard and our anger is being taken seriously. When we are angry we need to be listened to, need to feel heard.

Fear When we are afraid we need reassurance.

Sadness When we are sad we need someone to be there for us. Often, no words are needed

Joy When we are happy about something, and people are obviously happy for us too, bonding takes place.

17. Be Self Aware: Become Emotionally Literate

- Learn to spot when your feelings of dislike, irritation, frustration etc have no obvious basis in the reality of the other person.
- Be aware how your irrational feelings about the other person are affecting your behaviour.
- Be aware of your impact on others by observing their body language in response to your presence and to what you say and do.

5. Communication Styles Theory

Despite the complexity of personality types and personality adaptations and the different theories [which are dealt with later in this chapter] there is a generally accepted model of Communication Styles.

Communication Styles Are Situational

Whilst we all have a dominant and preferred communication style we also employ a blend of all the main communication styles depending on the situations we find ourselves in. At any one time we can be aggressive, assertive, passive, or passive aggressive. The question is 'Which is your dominant, most used, style

Assertive Assertive types communicate clearly and confidently about their needs, wants, and feelings whilst remaining aware of [but not necessarily trying to satisfy] the needs wants and feeling of others [See Chapters Seven & Eight]

Aggressive Extreme aggressive types can be domineering; dictatorial; bullying; excessively ambitious; projected self confidence; opinionated; bad tempered; critical; selfish; self centred; main interest in personal achievement; lacking in empathy; insensitive; sometimes cowardly when challenged. Aggressive communication is often a mask for hidden emotions such as fear, or hurt. Aggressive people sometimes have low self esteem at an unconscious level.

Passive Extreme passive types are often apologetic; back down easily; don't not speak out for their rights; don't not express their feelings openly; can have difficulties in expressing themselves; keep their ideas to themselves; do not express strong opinions; don't complain when they should; don't criticise; don't ask for help; don't display temper. Often stressed as a result of keeping things bottled up and collecting anger stamps. However passive people have strengths too. Their drive to please others makes them very cooperative, helpful, and willing to listen to other people. They are socially highly acceptable but pay a high price by not getting their needs met.

Passive Aggressive Passive in this context means 'not doing anything to solve the problem'. So passive aggressive types can be very demonstrative and openly angry but their non-passive behaviour can make matters worse not better. At the other extreme they can get even and block progress in ways that people aren't able to attribute to them and/or by subliminal destructive behaviours.

Indications of passive aggressive tendency:

- Finds ways of avoiding blame for resisting the completion of tasks
- Complains of being misunderstood and unappreciated by others
- Is sullen and argumentative
- Unreasonably critical and scornful of authority
- Expresses envy and resentment towards others perceived to be more fortunate
- Voices exaggerated and persistent complaints of personal misfortune
- Alternates between hostile defiance and trying to make up for it.

6. Personality Factors

Personality – A Definition

'The combination of characteristics or qualities that form an individual's distinctive character'

Source: Test Your own Aptitude by Barrett & Williams]

We are all different, but in some ways we are the same!

With over six billion people on the planet [at the time of writing], and each of us having a unique personal 'Map of the World' which drives our behaviour, thoughts, and feelings, it is clearly impossible to 'pigeon hole' people into this category or that. It is, however, a feature of the human race that although we are each unique we also share common traits with other groups. Personality theory identifies and labels groups of personality traits to make up personality types. By doing this we can simplify our understanding of how some groups of people 'tick' and relate to them more appropriately.

Personality Clash

Personality clash may simply be a label, shorthand, for two people in conflict for any one of many reasons. Genuine personality clash occurs when one party has difficulty in relating to the other party because their personality traits are very different [or sometimes because they are too alike!].

In marriage the partner who is expressive and open, and likes to talk things out [more usually the woman] soon runs into problems with a partner who tends to withdraw when there are problems [more usually the man] [Suggested reading 'Men Are From Mars Women Are From Venus' by John Gray]

When people are too alike it can also cause personality clash. For example two people of Driver Type [both tending to be autocratic] are soon likely to hit conflict.

There are a number of widely accepted classifications of personality

6a. SOCIAL STYLES THEORY [Wilson Learning Corporation & others]

Categorises people as primarily Analytical, Amiable, Driver, or Expressive.

- Analytical types are systematic, indecisive, measure their success in the respect they receive, and always strive to be accurate
- Amiable types are supportive, passive, try to be agreeable, and need approval
- Driver types are focussed, autocratic, try to be efficient, and thrive on results
- Expressive types are motivators, will attack, seek recognition, and try to stimulate.

6b. MYERS BRIGGS & OTHERS

A classification of sixteen personality types based on combinations of the following traits:

- Introversion v extroversion
- Sensing v intuitive
- Thinking v feeling
- Judging v perceiving.

By selecting one of the two traits on each line we arrive at sixteen possible combinations

E.G. Introvert, sensing, thinking, perceiving [all one personality type]

E.G. Extrovert, Intuitive, thinking, perceiving [again all one personality type]

[Work It Out by Sandra Krebs Hirsh ISBN 0-89106-088-X]

6c. PERSONALITY ADAPTATIONS Vann Joines, Ian Stewart and others

'Personality Adaptations' by Ian Stewart and Vann Joines is 'a practical guide to understanding personality' – a guide which transcends the theoretical boundaries of Transactional Analysis.

According to Stewart & Vann Joines 'Understanding someone's personality adaptation gives a quick and reliable insight into:

- The persons typical mode of relating to others
- Their approach to problem solving
- The communication style they prefer
- Their preferred way of contact [thinking, feeling, or behaviour] to achieve rapport
- The typical life patterns that the person is likely to play out both long and short term
- The principle issues likely to arise for them in the process of personal change
- How therapists can most effectively work with them to achieve the changes they wish'

Key ideas of the Personality Adaptations model

According to Ian Stewart and Vann Joines there are six basic personality adaptations that individuals develop mainly as a result of their genetic programming and their early life experiences. These adaptations are said to be universal in that everyone will possess some combination of them

Each person will possess at least one preferred **'surviving' adaptation** developed as a means of taking care of oneself when trust in the environment breaks down e.g. when stressed. Each person will also possess one preferred **'performing' adaptation** originally developed in order to meet the expectations within their family.

In 1983 Paul Ware gave the personality adaptations a formal name drawn from traditional psychiatric practice. They are the 'Negative Aspects' which follow. The positive aspect for each was added later in recognition that every adaptation has both positive and negative aspects :

Negative Aspect

Hysteric Over Reactor
Obsessive Compulsive
Paranoid
Schizoid
Passive Aggressive
Antisocial

Positive Aspect

Enthusiastic
Responsible Workaholic
Brilliant Sceptic
Creative Daydreamer
Playful Resister
Charming Manipulator

6d. OTHER PERSONALITY CLASSIFICATIONS

There are other classifications too, notably Belbin, which focus on the match between personality and team roles. For example an Analytical Type would be appropriate for an accountant or planner, an Amiable Type for a customer facing role, and a Driver Type for the leadership role.

SUMMARY

I have included the examples of different classification systems to give a flavour of the diversity of personality types theory and to point the way for further research that the reader may wish to undertake. Personality difference can be a source of enormous strength in a team or partnership if each party understands, and plays to the strengths of, the other team, members. For example the Managing Director who is an expressive risk taker has much to gain from an Accountant who is conservative and analytical.

As is written a number of times in 'Mountains Into Molehills' - its not the difference between us that's the problem, its our intolerance of the difference and failure to seize the opportunity that difference presents.

7. Approaches to resolving conflict

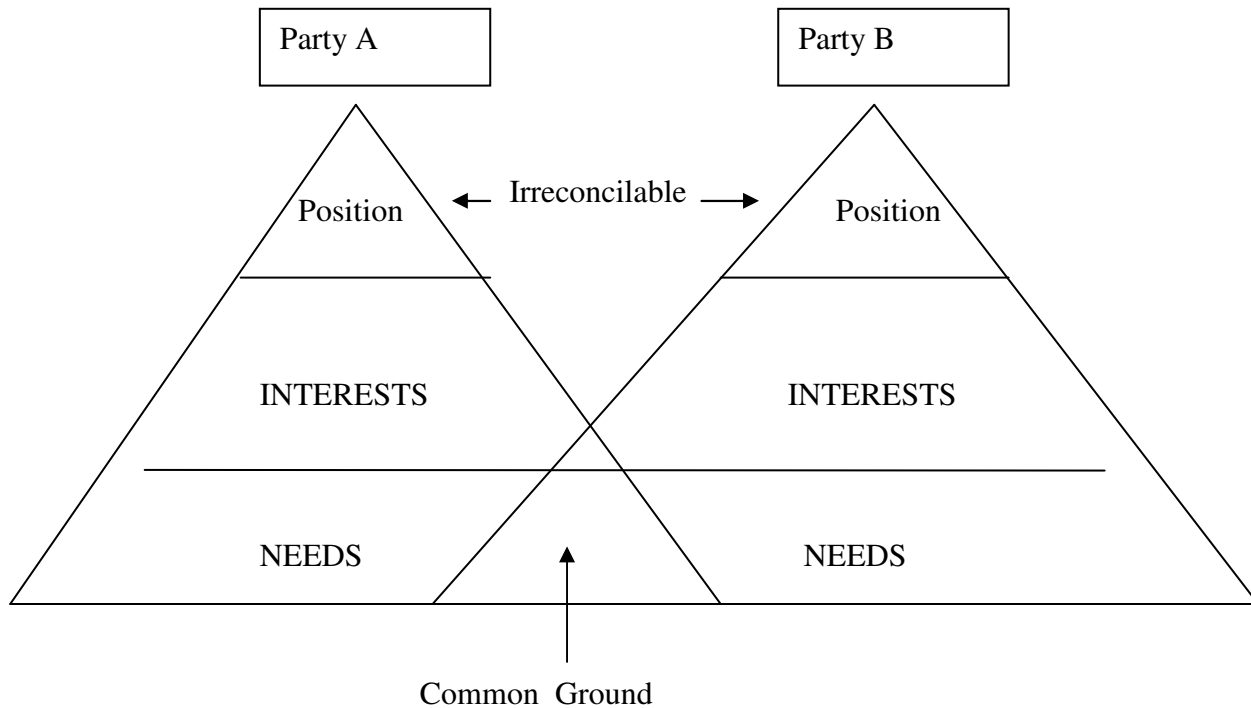
Abandoning Positions and Satisfying Needs

When we are in conflict we take POSITIONS which are often irreconcilable. Unless there is some change in POSITION by one or both parties no agreement will be possible. Maybe the party with the strongest hand will win [Win/ Lose outcome]. If the relative power positions are near enough equal stalemate may result [Lose/ Lose outcome].

Compromise is when one or both parties give up something they value in order to get something they value more - nevertheless they may feel cheated. This can lead to future problems.

Principled negotiation seeks a win/ win solution where both parties feel that they have achieved a successful outcome. Such a result cannot be achieved while the parties cling to their opening positions.

Mediation pursues a win win approach trying to identify the INTERESTS behind the POSITIONS. With persistence and skill it is usually possible to identify some common ground at the INTERESTS level which will be a basis for amicable agreement.



Positions v Interests

Position: A fixed stance offered as the only solution by a party to conflict

Interest: A person's needs, fears, desires, and basic concerns which they are trying to satisfy by their fixed position. Paradoxically people often forget their underlying interest when they have taken up a fixed position. There are usually many ways of satisfying someone's interests not just the one position offered initially as the only solution

Example:

Opening Positions: Neighbour A takes fixed position 'They must be evicted' Neighbour B takes fixed position 'No, its they who must be evicted.'

Interests underlying opening positions Issues behind the fixed position of Neighbour A 'Their garden is a rubbish tip and I am afraid of rats and infestation health risks' Neighbour B 'They let their dogs roam loose and they crap over my front lawn where my grandchildren play. I am afraid of that eye infestation which can be got from dog faeces will cause my grandchildren to go blind'.

Solution: In this very simple [real] example the solution is for neighbour A to keep his dogs under control and neighbour B to keep his garden free of rubbish. At the fixed position level no solution was possible, yet mutual understanding of each others concerns [interests] leads to simple solutions.

10. Dispute resolution methods

Negotiation: The parties seek agreement directly between themselves. They may pursue win/win or win/lose. No-one else is involved. The parties themselves make the decision.

Arbitration: A third party hears the evidence and make a decision, usually binding, which is thought to be fair to both parties.

Litigation: A judge, magistrate, or tribunal hears the evidence. Each party seeks to discredit opposing evidence. Other than giving evidence the parties have no influence on the decision.

Mediation: A win/win agreement is sought through the help of an impartial third party using a proven structure. The mediator helps people communicate and work towards agreement. The parties themselves make the decision.

How mediation works

Mediation is the intervention of a neutral, independent, impartial, third party into a dispute or conflict situation. The mediator role is to encourage the parties to reach their own solution. Mediation is about win/ win.

Mediation seeks to:

- Change disputing behaviour
- Resolve conflict
- Generate realistic workable solutions
- Maintain parity between the parties
- Treat people fairly

Round Table Mediation provides opportunities for people to:

- Communicate – speak and listen
- Exchange ideas, feelings, and perceptions
- Negotiate
- Make their own decisions

Mediation is:

- A voluntary process
- Constructive
- Future focussed
- Informal – in that the agreements reached are voluntary and not enforceable

- Staged – taking a step by step approach starting with shuttle mediation where the parties do not have contact and the mediator 'shuttles' between the parties searching for solutions and building empathy between the parties.
- Non-judgmental [No allocation of blame, no investigation, by the mediator].
- Confidential
- Flexible – able to deal with a range of issues

Shuttle Mediation Process

- Initial meetings with both parties separately.
- At the initial meeting understanding of the mediation process is checked/explained.
- Party A gives their account of the situation and says what they want to achieve from the mediation process
- Mediator establishes empathetic understanding of Party A position, clarifies the issues, and helps re-frame any destructive language.
- Process is repeated with Party B
- Shuttling between the parties, mediator aims to build mutual understanding and close the gap between opening positions.
- Process may be repeated over several sessions
- At some stage there will be either a written agreement, agreement to go to Round Table Mediation, or breakdown of the process.

Round Table Mediation – Should ideally be preceded by Shuttle work

- Neutral Venue
- Parties have separate waiting areas
- Parties join mediator who explains/ checks understanding of the process
- Code Of Behaviour agreed [see below]
- Uninterrupted speaking time allowed to each party in turn
- Mediator summarises what each party has said
- Direct exchange between parties takes place
- Mediator allows emotions to run but manages escalation
- Mediator captures interests, lists issues, and explores solutions
- Parties discuss possible solutions and agree way forward
- Voluntary Agreement captured and signed
- Review and monitoring arrangements are included in the agreement

Code of Behaviour for Round Table Mediation

- Parties commit to 'stick at it' until mutual solutions identified
- Parties to respect the role of the Mediator in managing their interactions
- No attempt by the Mediator to attribute blame
- Equal 'Uninterrupted Speaking Time' for opening statements
- No interrupting or 'talking over' during subsequent exchanges
- Moderate language; no abuse
- Mediator will help parties to stick to the facts and to avoid opinions
- Parties remain seated during the meeting
- 'Time Out' at the request of either party or Mediator
- Focus on solutions after initial exchanges complete

9. Conflict in Organisations – Additional Factors

In addition to a host of psychological factors which we carry around with us there are additional factors in workplace situations which feed our psychological processes and lead to conflict. Here are a few of the main one's.

- Ambiguous agreements
- Broken agreements/ breach of faith
- Conflicting personal agendas
- Conflicting work agendas
- Fear of job losses
- Lack of informal processes to resolve conflict
- Processes not being used e.g. repeated misconduct getting stuck at the informal phase
- Climate hostile to openness [forces issues below ground] leading to pent up frustration
- Change of any kind
- Poor communication processes
- Communication skills deficiency e.g. how to express disagreement tactfully

Management Issues:

- Blame Culture
- Excessive focus on task at the expense of people
- Failure to deal decisively with Conduct/ Performance issues
- Feedback and open communication not encouraged
- Inconsistency in treatment of individuals
- Low Emotional Competency
- Nit Picking approach to financial control
- Objectives not harmonised
- Organisation design faults
- Controlling leadership style – compulsion focussed
- Poor communication, facilitation, and motivational skills

10. Rapport needs common interests – the need for shared goals

Where there is conflict of interest rapport cannot be achieved. In organisations with overall low morale and low rapport between management and shop floor, morale and rapport can be high within groups of frustrated individuals who unite in opposition to management. Organisations can try create the climate for rapport by pursuing enlightened involvement and communication policies and by developing and deploying a mutual Vision, a Mission, or a Values Statement which also answers the question for employees 'What's in this for me' [the WIFM factor]

Rapport between a leader and team can only be achieved by spending time with people

If there is little face to face there is little opportunity to build bridges, and plenty of opportunity for misunderstandings, suspicion, uncertainty to grow – plenty of opportunity for paranoia to get to work. Bosses who stay in their office aren't going to build rapport.

The need for emotional literacy

Analysis of the Emotional Conflict Framework published by Daniel Goleman in his book 'Working With Emotional Intelligence' [and reproduced as the next page] reveals that the emotional intelligence concept puts more emphasis on self awareness, and insight into the emotions and emotional needs of others, than have many earlier models of leadership.

According to Goleman 'Its all about how you handle yourself, how you get along with people, how you work in teams, and how you get results from teams' 'In a time with no guarantees of job security, when the very concept of 'job' is being replaced by 'portable skills' these [emotional competencies] are the prime qualities that keep us employable'
Daniel Goleman

11. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Emotional Competence Framework

SELF AWARENESS

Emotional Awareness:	Recognising one's emotions and their affects
Accurate Self Assessment:	Knowing one's strengths and limits
Self Confidence:	A strong sense of one's self worth and capabilities

SELF REGULATION

Self Control:	Keeping one's disruptive emotions and impulses in check.
Trustworthiness:	Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity
Conscientiousness:	Taking Responsibility for personal performance
Adaptability:	Flexibility in handling change
Innovation:	Being comfortable with novel ideas', approaches, and new information

MOTIVATION

Achievement Drive:	Striving to improve, or to meet a standard of excellence
Commitment	Aligning with the goals of the group or of the organisation
Initiative	Readiness to act on opportunities
Optimism	Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks

EMPATHY

Understanding Others:	Sensing others feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns
Developing Others	Sensing others development needs and bolstering their abilities
Service Orientation	Anticipating, recognising, and meeting customer needs
Leveraging Diversity	Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people
Political Awareness	Reading a group's emotional interests and power relationships

SOCIAL SKILLS

Influence:	Using effective tactics for persuasion
Communications	Listening openly and sending convincing messages
Conflict Management	Negotiating and resolving disagreements
Leadership	Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups
Change Catalyst	Initiating or managing change
Building Bonds	Nurturing instrumental relationships
Collaboration/co-operation	Working with others towards shared goals
Team Capabilities	Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals

Source: Working With Emotional Intelligence Daniel Goleman ISBN 0 7475 4384

12. Negotiation Skills

Key Points to Observe in Negotiating

- Prepare thoroughly
- Know your 'bottom line' how far you are prepared to go in making concessions
- Don't reveal your bottom line before, during, or after
- In preparation concentrate on the other parties BATNA – what is their Best Alternative To A Negotiated Agreement and your BATNA – your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Settlement
- Don't get fixated on their **position** which may be totally irreconcilable with yours. Try to understand **why** they are taking the position they are. Having understood that try to work out what their REAL INTEREST is. **Identifying and satisfying REAL INTERESTS is the basis for success.** Often you will find that you have a REAL INTEREST in common. This is the area to identify and explore
- Decide whether your approach will be Hard, Soft, or Principled] [see below] Decide your tactics accordingly
- Ask for more than your bottom line position so giving the other party something to win
- Make concessions slowly and in small steps – this helps convince the other party of the strength of your position. A willingness to stick on small points has the same psychological impact.
- Use 'I don't understand' to give thinking time and to give the impression that their offer is so unacceptable that you are having difficulty grasping what they are saying
- Use the stuck record technique see Chapter Eight 'Difficult Conversations'
- Remember that there is a better deal for both parties if you search hard enough
- Remember – they are not mind readers. You will be more aware of the weaknesses in your position than they are. Look at your hand from their perspective not yours
- Be careful to avoid unconsciously giving away the fact that you are happy with their offer by saying 'when' and 'how will we' rather than 'if' and 'how would we'
- If they ask very detailed/minor questions about your offer it can indicate they have decided to accept even though they are not telling you. Also, the other party accidentally using 'when' and 'will' indicates that they are of a mind to accept your offer
- Have a strong real or fictional person you have to satisfy. This will enable you to bluff with things like 'If it was up to me I would agree but 'he' would throw me out if I told me that I had agreed that
- You can aspire to do better if the other party is backed up against a deadline or their need is urgent
- You have to be prepared to walk away, even if its only posturing

13. Negotiating Styles: What sort of negotiator to be?

SOFT

Participants are friends

The aim is agreement

Make concessions to build the relationship

Be soft on the people and on the the problem

Trust others

Change your position easily

Make offers

Disclose your 'bottom line'

Accept one sided losses to reach agreement

Search for the solution they will accept

Insist on agreement

Try to avoid a power struggle

Yield to pressure

HARD

Participants are adversaries

The aim is victory

Demand concessions as a condition of the relationship

Be hard on the problem and the people

Distrust others

Dig in to your position

Make threats

Mislead as to your bottom line

Demand one sided gains as the price for agreement

Search for the solution you you will accept

Insist on your position

Use power to win

Apply pressure

PRINCIPLED

Participants are problem solvers

The aim is satisfaction of both parties with the outcome

Separate the people from the problem

Be soft on the people, hard on problem

Proceed independent of trust

Focus on interests, not position

Explore interests

Do not reveal your bottom line

Create options for mutual gain

Develop multiple options to negotiate around

Use objective criteria

Aim for a fair and mutual result independent of power balance

Yield to reason and principle not pressure

When a SOFT or PRINCIPLED negotiator meets up with a hard negotiator the hard negotiator will normally prevail. However the cost of victory may be high and the hard approach may rebound in the future. The British miners used power to get victory over successive governments. When they took on Margaret Thatcher she was well prepared for a long fight. The miners were defeated after a long, ruinous and divisive struggle which split their union permanently and left a residue of bitterness and hate amongst miners.

Being tough in response to tough risks war, but if you don't you are going to lose every time!

14. 'Dirty Tricks' which some hard negotiators use

- Get all the concessions you can in the posture that you can decide then announce that you have to get someone else's approval before you can agree. They come back for more
- Promise a victory, to your boss/ board/ committee/electorate so you have no room to negotiate
- Be aggressive/abusive to the other party
- Use threats
- Pretend that you want to negotiate when you have no intention of making any concessions from your opening position. You are just trying to wring concessions from the other party
- Keep introducing additional demands as the negotiation proceeds
- Introduce new demands at the eleventh hour when the other party has become convinced that they have a deal
- Play for time so that your opponents are backed up against a deadline
- Withhold agreement on a big issue, or an unrelated issue, in order to win small concessions
- Be determined to be seen as victorious, the winners of the negotiation. Seek victory regardless of loss of face by your opponents
- Stand the other side up or arrive late for meetings
- Leak confidences

If you are faced with someone using dirty tricks the best thing to do might be to complain - and tell them you are not going to play!

[Thanks to Lee for teaching me these things]

15. Reading List

Getting To Yes Negotiating an agreement without giving in
Roger Fisher and William Ury ISBN 0 09 92484

Difficult Conversations
Douglas Stone & others Penguin 1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

Working With Emotional Intelligence
Daniel Goleman Bloomsbury ISBN 0 7475 4384 4

Successfully Dealing With Difficult People
Brian Slater & Naomi Langford Wood ISBN 0 340 72076 X

Work It Out Myers Briggs based Types Analysis
Sandra Krebs Hirsh ISBN 0-89106-088-X