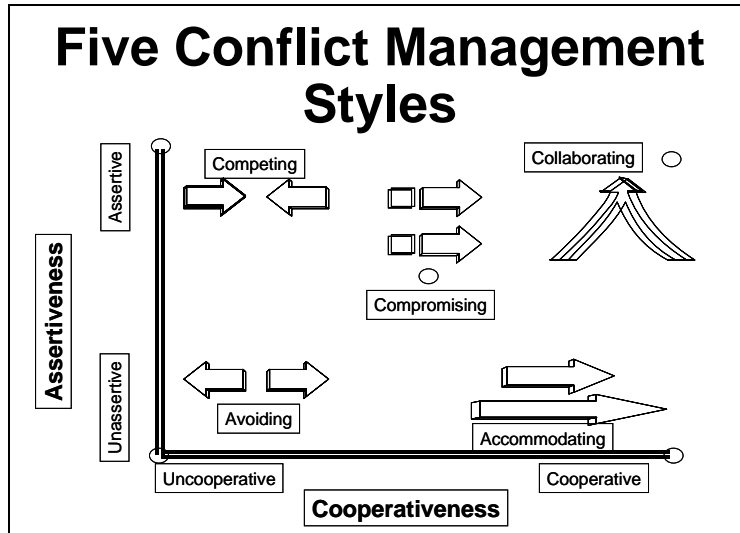


## Sources of conflict

- Organizational hierarchy
- Competition for scarce resources
- Self-image & stereotypical views of others
- Differing goals & objectives
- Failures & resultant blame fixing
- Poor coordination of activities

## Conflict Management Styles

- Avoiding** - deliberate decision to take no action on a conflict or to stay out of a conflict
- Accommodating** - concern that the other party's goals be met but relatively unconcerned with getting own way
- Competing** - satisfying own interests; willing to do so at other party's expense
- Compromising** - each party gives up something to reach a solution
- Collaborating** - arriving at a solution agreeable to all through open & thorough discussion



The process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party

“A process which begins when one party perceives that the other is frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of his (or her)”

- Perceived by the parties
- Parties are in opposition to one another
- At least one party is blocking the goal attainment of the other party
- Goals can be tangible or psychological
  - Money
  - Task Achievement
  - Happiness

**Types of Conflict**

- **Task conflict**  
Conflict over content and goals of the work
- **Relationship conflict**  
Conflict based on interpersonal relationships
- **Process conflict**  
Conflict over how work gets done

**Nature of Organizational Conflict**

**Conflict** - any situation in which incompatible goals, attitudes, emotions, or behaviors lead to disagreement or opposition between two or more parties

- **Functional Conflict** - a healthy, constructive disagreement between two or more people
- **Dysfunctional Conflict** - an unhealthy, destructive disagreement between two or more people.

**Forms of Conflict in Organizations**

**Interorganizational Conflict** - conflict that occurs between two or more organizations

**Intergroup Conflict** - conflict that occurs between groups or teams in an organization

**Interpersonal Conflict** - conflict that occurs between two or more individuals

**Intrapersonal Conflict** - conflict that occurs within an individual

**Interrole Conflict** - a person’s experience of conflict among the multiple roles in his/her life

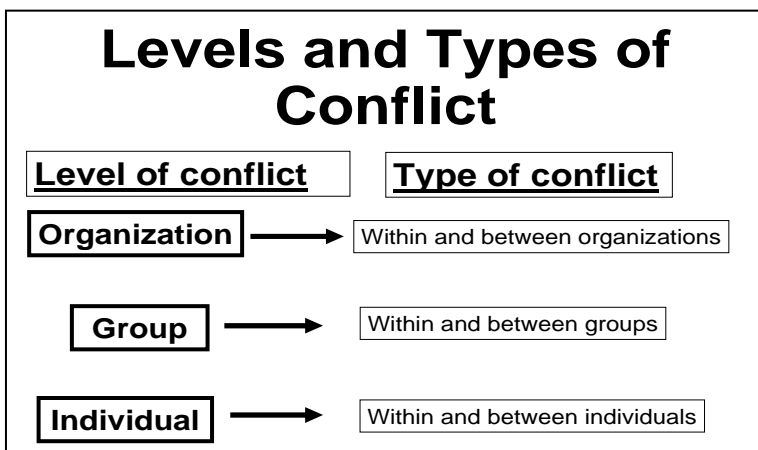
**Intrarole Conflict** - conflict that occurs within a single role, such as when a person receives conflicting messages from role senders about how to perform a certain role

**Person-role Conflict** - conflict that occurs when an individual is expected to perform behaviors in a certain role that conflict with his/her personal values

First is the presence of conditions that create opportunities for conflict to arise. Three general categories: communication, structure, and personal variables

1. *Communication*

- Communication as a source of conflict represents those opposing forces that arise from semantic difficulties, misunderstandings, and “noise” in the communication channels.



- Differing word connotations, jargon, insufficient exchange of information, and noise in the communication channel are all barriers to communication and potential antecedents to conflict.
- Semantic difficulties are a result of differences in training, selective perception, and inadequate information.
- The potential for conflict increases when either too little or too much communication takes place.
- The channel chosen for communicating can have an influence on stimulating opposition

## 2. Structure

The term structure includes variables such as size, degree of specialization, jurisdictional clarity, member-goal compatibility, leadership styles, reward systems, and the degree of dependence.

- Size and specialization act as forces to stimulate conflict. The larger the group and more specialized its activities, the greater the likelihood of conflict.
- The potential for conflict is greatest where group members are younger and turnover is high.
- The greater the ambiguity in responsibility for actions lies, the greater the potential for conflict.
- The diversity of goals among groups is a major source of conflict.
- A close style of leadership increases conflict potential.
- Too much reliance on participation may also stimulate conflict.
- Reward systems, too, are found to create conflict when one member's gain is at another's expense.
- Finally, if a group is dependent on another group, opposing forces are stimulated.

## 3. Personal variables

- Include individual value systems and personality characteristics. Certain personality types lead to potential conflict.
- Most important is differing value systems. Value differences are the best explanation for differences of opinion on various matters.

### **B. Stage II: Cognition and Personalization**

- Antecedent conditions lead to conflict only when the parties are affected by and aware of it.
- Conflict is personalized when it is felt and when individuals become emotionally involved.
- This stage is where conflict issues tend to be defined and this definition delineates the possible settlements.
- Second, emotions play a major role in shaping perceptions.
- Negative emotions produce oversimplification of issues, reductions in trust, and negative interpretations of the other party's behavior.
- Positive feelings increase the tendency to see potential relationships among the elements of a problem, to take a broader view of the situation, and to develop more innovative solutions.

### **C. Stage III: Intentions**

- Intentions are decisions to act in a given way.
- Why are intentions separated out as a distinct stage? Merely one party attributing the wrong intentions to the other escalates a lot of conflicts.
- One author's effort to identify the primary conflict-handling intentions is represented.
- *Cooperativeness*—"the degree to which one party attempts to satisfy the other party's concerns."

- *Assertiveness*—“the degree to which one party attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns.”

*Five conflict-handling intentions can be identified as:*

- *Competing*: When one person seeks to satisfy his or her own interests, regardless of the impact on the other parties to the conflict
- *Collaborating*: When the parties to conflict each desire to fully satisfy the concerns of all parties. The intention is to solve the problem by clarifying differences rather than by accommodating.
- *Avoiding*: A person may recognize that a conflict exists and want to withdraw from it or suppress it.
- *Accommodating*: When one party seeks to appease an opponent, that party is willing to be self-sacrificing.
- *Compromising*: When each party to the conflict seeks to give up something, sharing occurs, resulting in a compromised outcome. There is no clear winner or loser, and the solution provides incomplete satisfaction of both parties' concerns.

Intentions provide general guidelines for parties in a conflict situation. They define each party's purpose, but they are not fixed. They might change because of re-conceptualization or because of an emotional reaction. However, individuals have preferences among the five conflict-handling intentions. It may be more appropriate to view the five conflict-handling intentions as relatively fixed rather than as a set of options from which individuals choose to fit an appropriate situation.

#### **D. Stage IV: Behavior**

- Stage IV is where conflicts become visible. The behavior stage includes the statements, actions, and reactions made by the conflicting parties. These conflict behaviors are usually overt attempts to implement each party's intentions.
- Stage IV is a dynamic process of interaction; conflicts exist somewhere along a continuum.
- At the lower part of the continuum, conflicts are characterized by subtle, indirect, and highly controlled forms of tension.
- Conflict intensities escalate as they move upward along the continuum until they become highly destructive.
- Functional conflicts are typically confined to the lower range of the continuum.

#### **E. Stage V: Outcomes**

Outcomes may be functional—improving group performance, or dysfunctional in hindering it.

- *Functional outcomes*
- How might conflict act as a force to increase group performance?
- Conflict is constructive when it:
  - a. Improves the quality of decisions.
  - b. Stimulates creativity and innovation.
  - c. Encourages interest and curiosity.
  - d. Provides the medium through which problems can be aired and tensions released.
  - e. Fosters an environment of self-evaluation and change.
- The evidence suggests that conflict can improve the quality of decision-making.
- Conflict is an antidote for groupthink.
- Conflict challenges the status quo, furthers the creation of new ideas, promotes reassessment of group goals and activities, and increases the probability that the group will respond to change.
- Research studies in diverse settings confirm the functionality of conflict.

- a. The comparison of six major decisions made during the administration of four different US presidents found that conflict reduced the chance of groupthink.
- b. When groups analyzed decisions that had been made by the individual members of that group, the average improvement among the high-conflict groups was 73 percent greater than was that of those groups characterized by low-conflict conditions.
- Increasing cultural diversity of the workforce should provide benefits to organizations.
  - a. Heterogeneity among group and organization members can increase creativity, improve the quality of decisions, and facilitate change by enhancing member flexibility.
  - b. The ethnically diverse groups produced more effective and more feasible ideas and higher quality, unique ideas than those produced by the all-Anglo group.
- Similarly, studies of professionals—systems analysts and research and development scientists—support the constructive value of conflict.
  - a. An investigation of 22 teams of systems analysts found that the more incompatible groups were likely to be more productive.
  - b. Research and development scientists have been found to be most productive where there is a certain amount of intellectual conflict.

### Transitions in Conflict Thought

- 1) The traditional view of conflict argues that it must be avoided—it indicates a malfunctioning with the group.
- 2) The human relations view argues that conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group and that it need not be evil, but has the potential to be a positive force in determining group performance.
- 3) The inter-actionist approach proposes that conflict can be a positive force in a group but explicitly argues that some conflict is absolutely necessary for a group to perform effectively.
- 4) This early approach assumed that all conflict was bad. Conflict was synonymous with such terms that reinforced its negative connotation. By definition, it was harmful and was to be avoided.
- 5) This view was consistent with the prevailing attitudes about group behavior in the 1930s and 1940s. Conflict was seen as a dysfunctional outcome resulting from poor communication, a lack of openness and trust between people, and the failure of managers to be responsive to their employees.

### Functional vs. Dysfunctional Conflict



1. Not all conflicts are good. Functional, constructive forms of conflict support the goals of the group and improve its performance. Conflicts that hinder group performance are dysfunctional or destructive forms of conflict.
2. What differentiates functional from dysfunctional conflict? You need to look at the type of conflict.
3. Task conflict relates to the content and goals of the work. Low-to-moderate levels of task conflict are functional and consistently demonstrate a positive effect on group performance because it stimulates discussion, improving group performance.
  - *Relationship* conflict focuses on interpersonal relationships.
    - a. These conflicts are almost always dysfunctional.
    - b. The friction and interpersonal hostilities inherent in relationship conflicts increase personality clashes and decrease mutual understanding.
  - *Process* conflict relates to how the work gets done.
    - a. Low-levels of process conflict are functional and could enhance team performance.
    - b. For process conflict to be productive, it must be kept low.
    - c. Intense arguments create uncertainty.

### Causes of conflict

- **Vertical conflict.**
  - Occurs between hierarchical levels.
- **Horizontal conflict.**

- Occurs between persons or groups at the same hierarchical level.
- **Line-staff conflict.**
  - Involves disagreements over who has authority and control over specific matters.

### **How can conflict be managed successfully?**

Pondy's model suggests several methods to resolve conflicts. In collaboration, each side works toward a solution to satisfy its own goals plus the goals of the other side—both parties are better off after conflict resolution. In compromise, both parties negotiate to reach a mutually acceptable solution, but not necessarily one that achieves their goals

A primary responsibility of managers is to help subordinates resolve their disputes. Some managers spend much time managing conflict. Several techniques are helpful in managing conflict so that it results in functional rather than dysfunctional outcomes. These techniques concern changing attitudes and behaviors, changing task relationships, and changing the organizational structure or situation.

### ***Individual-Level Conflict Management***

Education and training helps resolve conflict. Sensitivity training or diversity awareness programs help employees appreciate different attitudes.

Job rotation and temporary assignments in other departments help people see another perspective. Promotions, transfers, and firings remove individuals from conflict situation.

### ***Group-Level Conflict Management***

At the group level, physically separating groups or changing task relationships means they no longer interact. Contact between groups occurs through people with integrating roles. Managers develop rules, procedures, and common goals to coordinate group activities.

These methods temporarily resolve a conflict because the underlying causes are not addressed. Many organizations resolve conflict at its source, through individual-level conflict management techniques or letting the groups to work out a joint solution.

Negotiation is a process in which groups with conflicting interests meet to make offers, counteroffers, and concessions to resolve differences. Negotiations may include a *third-party negotiator*—an outsider skilled in handling bargaining and negotiation—who helps find a solution.

The third party acts as a *mediator*, taking a neutral stance and helping parties reconcile their differences. If no solution is reached, the third party acts as an *arbiter*, or judge, imposing a solution.

Two processes occur in any negotiation situation: (1) distributive bargaining, in which parties decide how resources are distributed, and (2) attitudinal structuring, in which parties try to influence their opponent's attitudes, perhaps appearing aggressive to increase their resource share or by appearing conciliatory to preserve a relationship.

Negotiation and bargaining are difficult processes in which a lot of give-and-take and posturing occurs. The process usually takes several months because the parties discover what they can and cannot get.

### **Organizational-Level Conflict Management**

Conflict can be managed by changing the organization's structure and culture to lessen conflict. Managers can clarify task and reporting relationships, change differentiation (e.g., move from a functional to divisional

structure), increase integration, or use culture to create values and norms shared by people in different functions and divisions. These methods eliminating some conflict and increasing communication.

Although conflict can never be eliminated, conflict management techniques directed toward the individual, group, and organizational levels make conflict more functional.

**The issue of “who wins?”**

- **Lose-lose conflict.**
  - Occurs when nobody gets what he or she wants.
  - Avoidance, accommodation or smoothing, and compromise are forms of lose-lose conflict.
  -
- **Win-lose conflict.**
  - One part achieves its desires at the expense and to the exclusion of the other party’s desires.
  - Competition and authoritative command are forms of win-lose conflict.
- **Win-win conflict.**
  - Both parties achieve their desires.
  - Collaboration or problem solving are forms of win-win conflict.

## What is negotiation?

1. *Negotiation* is a “process in which two or more parties exchange goods or services and attempt to agree upon the exchange rate for them.” We use the terms *negotiation* and *bargaining* interchangeably.
  
2. Negotiation permeates the interactions of almost everyone in groups and organizations. For example, labor bargains with management. \
  
3. Not so obvious, however,
  - a. Managers negotiate with employees, peers, and bosses.
  - b. Salespeople negotiate with customers.



- c. Purchasing agents negotiate with suppliers.

A worker agrees to answer a colleague's phone for a few minutes in exchange for some past or future benefit.

**Negotiation** - a joint process of finding a mutually acceptable solution to a complex conflict

Useful under these conditions

- Two or more parties
- Conflict of interest between the parties
- Parties are willing to negotiate
- Parties prefer to work together rather than to fight openly, give in, break off contact, or take the dispute to a higher authority

### Approaches to Negotiation

1. There are two general approaches to negotiation: *distributive bargaining* and *integrative bargaining*.

2. ***Distributive bargaining***

- An example of distributive bargaining is buying a car:
  - a. You go out to see the car. It is great and you want it.
  - b. The owner tells you the asking price. You do not want to pay that much.
  - c. The two of you then negotiate over the price.
- Its most identifying feature is that it operates under zero-sum conditions. Any gain I make is at your expense, and vice versa.
- The most widely cited example of distributive bargaining is in labor-management negotiations over wages.
  - a. Parties A and B represent two negotiators.
  - b. Each has a target point that defines what he or she would like to achieve.
  - c. Each also has a resistance point, which marks the lowest outcome that is acceptable.
  - d. The area between these two points makes up each one's aspiration range.

As long as there is some overlap between A and B's aspiration ranges, there exists a settlement range where each one's aspirations can be met.

- When engaged in distributive bargaining, one's tactics focus on trying to get one's opponent to agree to one's specific target point or to get as close to it as possible.

### Integrative bargaining

- An example: A sales rep calls in the order and is told that the firm cannot approve credit to this customer because of a past slow-pay record.
  - a. The next day, the sales rep and the firm's credit manager meet to discuss the problem. They want to make the sale, but do not want to get stuck with uncollectable debt.
  - b. The two openly review their options.
  - c. After considerable discussion, they agree on a solution that meets both their needs. The sale will go through with a bank guarantee that will ensure payment if not made in 60 days.
- This example operates under the assumption that there exists one or more settlements that can create a win-win solution.
- In terms of intra-organizational behavior, all things being equal, integrative bargaining is preferable to distributive bargaining.
- Because integrative bargaining builds long-term relationships and facilitates working together in the future, it bonds negotiators and allows each to leave the bargaining table feeling victorious.
- Distributive bargaining, on the other hand, leaves one party a loser. It tends to build animosities and deepens divisions.
- Why do we not see more integrative bargaining in organizations? The answer lies in the conditions necessary for this type of negotiation to succeed.

- a. Parties who are open with information and candid about their concerns
- b. A sensitivity by both parties to the other's needs
- c. The ability to trust one another
- d. A willingness by both parties to maintain flexibility

## The Process of Negotiation

### 1. Preparation and planning:

- Do your homework. What is the nature of the conflict? What is the history leading up to this negotiation? Who is involved, and what are their perceptions of the conflict? What do you want from the negotiation? What are your goals?
- You also want to prepare an assessment of what you think the other party to your negotiation's goals are.
  - a. When you can anticipate your opponent's position, you are better equipped to counter his or her arguments with the facts and figures that support your position.
- Once you have gathered your information, use it to develop a strategy.
- Determine your and the other side's Best Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA).
  - a. Your BATNA determines the lowest value acceptable to you for a negotiated agreement.
  - b. Any offer you receive that is higher than your BATNA is better than an impasse.

### 2. Definition of ground rules:

- Who will do the negotiating? Where will it take place? What time constraints, if any, will apply?
- To what issues will negotiation be limited? Will there be a specific procedure to follow if an impasse is reached?
- During this phase, the parties will also exchange their initial proposals or demands.

### 3. Clarification and justification:

- When initial positions have been exchanged, explain, amplify, clarify, bolster, and justify your original demands
- This need not be confrontational.
- You might want to provide the other party with any documentation that helps support your position.

### 4. Bargaining and problem solving:

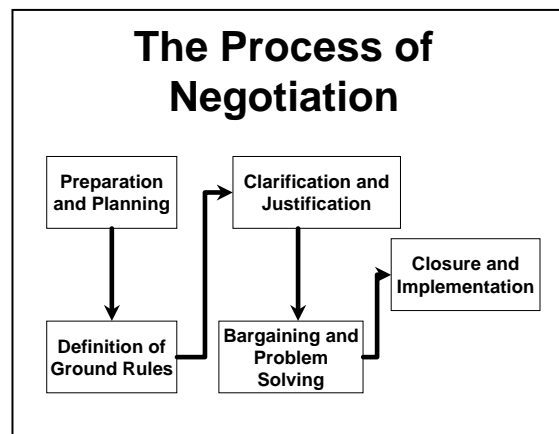
- The essence of the negotiation process is the actual give and take in trying to hash out an agreement.
- Concessions will undoubtedly need to be made by both parties.

### 5. Closure and implementation:

- The final step—formalizing the agreement that has been worked out and developing any procedures that are necessary for implementation and monitoring
- Major negotiations will require hammering out the specifics in a formal contract.
- For most cases, however, closure of the negotiation process is nothing more formal than a handshake.

## Mapping the Negotiation

- Describe the problem of the negotiation
- Identify the people involved
- Use empathy to analyze the situation
- Record participants' needs and fears about the problem



## Conducting the Negotiation

- Use an appropriate negotiation style
- Use suitable language
- Use effective responding and listening techniques
- Identify needs and wants
- Set up the negotiation
- Create the non-verbal environment
- Start the negotiation
- Deal with conflict during the negotiation
- Achieve a negotiated outcome

## Third-party negotiations

- When individuals or group representatives reach a stalemate and are unable to resolve their differences through direct negotiations, they may turn to a third party.
- A mediator is a neutral third party who facilitates a negotiated solution by using reasoning and persuasion, suggesting alternatives, and the like.
  - a. They are widely used in labor-management negotiations and in civil court disputes.
  - b. Their settlement rate is approximately 60 percent, with negotiator satisfaction at about 75 percent.
  - c. The key to success—the conflicting parties must be motivated to bargain and resolve their conflict, intensity cannot be too high, and the mediator must be perceived as neutral and no coercive.

## Issues in Negotiation

### *The role of personality traits in negotiation*

- Can you predict an opponent's negotiating tactics if you know something about his/her personality? The evidence says no.
- Overall assessments of the personality-negotiation relationship finds that personality traits have no significant direct effect on either the bargaining process or negotiation outcomes.

### *Gender differences in negotiations*

- Men and women do not negotiate differently.
- A popular stereotype is that women are more cooperative, pleasant, and relationship-oriented in negotiations than are men. The evidence does not support this.
- Comparisons between experienced male and female managers find women are:
  - a. Neither worse nor better negotiators.
  - b. Neither more cooperative nor open to the other.
    - a. Neither more nor less persuasive nor threatening than are men.
- The belief that women are “nicer” is probably due to confusing gender and the lack of power typically held by women.
  - a. Low-power managers, regardless of gender, attempt to placate their opponents and to use softly persuasive tactics rather than direct confrontation and threats.
- Women's attitudes toward negotiation and toward themselves appear to be different from men's.
  - a. Managerial women demonstrate less confidence in anticipation of negotiating and are less satisfied with their performance despite achieving similar outcomes as men.
  - b. Women may unduly penalize themselves by failing to engage in negotiations when such action would be in their best interests.

*Cultural differences in negotiations*

- Negotiating styles clearly vary across national cultures.
- The French like conflict.
  - a. They gain recognition and develop their reputations by thinking and acting against others.
  - b. They tend to take a long time in negotiating agreements, and they are not overly concerned about whether their opponents like or dislike them.
- The Chinese also draw out negotiations but that is because they believe negotiations never end.
  - a. Just when you think you have reached a final solution, the Chinese executive might smile and start the process all over again.
  - b. Like the Japanese, the Chinese negotiate to develop a relationship and a commitment to work together.
- Americans are known around the world for their impatience and their desire to be liked.
  - a. Astute negotiators often turn these characteristics to their advantage.

The cultural context of the negotiation significantly influences the amount and type of preparation for bargaining, the emphasis on task versus interpersonal relationships, the tactics used, etc.

**A study compared North Americans, Arabs, and Russians negotiating style, how they responded to an opponent's arguments, their approach to making concessions, and how they handled negotiating deadlines.**

- North Americans tried to persuade others by relying on facts and appealing to logic.
  - a. They made small concessions early in the negotiation to establish a relationship and usually reciprocated the opponent's concessions.
  - b. North Americans treated deadlines as very important.
- The Arabs tried to persuade by appealing to emotion.
  - a. They countered opponent's arguments with subjective feelings.
  - b. They made concessions throughout the bargaining process and almost always reciprocated opponents' concessions.
  - c. Arabs approached deadlines very casually.
- The Russians based their arguments on asserted ideals.
  - a. They made few, if any, concessions.
  - b. Any concession offered by an opponent was viewed as a weakness and almost never reciprocated.
  - c. Finally, the Russians tended to ignore deadlines.

A second study looked at verbal and nonverbal negotiation tactics exhibited by North Americans, Japanese, and Brazilians during half-hour bargaining sessions.

- Brazilians on average said "No" 83 times compared to five times for the Japanese and nine times for the North Americans.
- The Japanese displayed more than five periods of silence lasting longer than ten seconds during the 30-minute sessions.
- North Americans averaged 3.5 such periods; the Brazilians had none.
- The Japanese and North Americans interrupted their opponent about the same number of times, but the Brazilians interrupted 2.5 to 3 times more often.
- Finally, while the Japanese and the North Americans had no physical contact with their opponents during negotiations except for handshaking, the Brazilians touched each other almost five times every half-hour.