



A Universal Framework For Addressing The Entire Spectrum of Human Conflict

Vistelar is a global consulting and training organization **focused on addressing the entire spectrum of human conflict**—from interpersonal discord, verbal abuse and bullying—to crisis communications, assault and physical violence.

Our clients come from a variety of organizations where human conflict is prevalent: business, healthcare, education, public safety and government. In all these organizations our training helps prevent conflict, reduce emotional and physical violence, improve cooperation and collaboration, lower customer complaints, avoid litigation and increase overall safety.

In addition, we train individuals from all walks of life to address verbal abuse and bullying, maintain emotional safety in dealing with others and stay physically safe at work, at home and in their social life.

Vistelar’s primary purpose is to help keep people safe by teaching them how to prevent conflict from occurring, verbally de-escalate conflict if it occurs and physically defend themselves if attacked.

Vistelar’s subject matter experts have been actively involved in preventing and managing conflict for more than three decades—both in their jobs and as professional instructors to a wide range of audiences.

Drawing on this collective experience, and in partnership with academic researchers, Vistelar has developed **a comprehensive, structured framework for preventing and managing all forms of human conflict.**

There are many causes of conflict—the Centers for Disease Control has identified dozens of risk and protective factors (goo.gl/kRKW22), which are represented by the side bars in our Causes Of Conflict chart. However, **Vistelar’s primary focus is understanding the causes of conflict at the point of impact** — the few to several minute period during an interaction when a situation can escalate to emotional or physical violence.

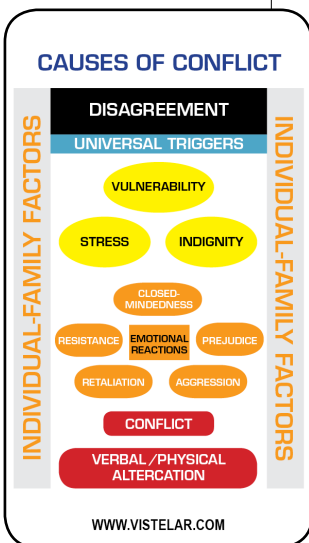
For this point-of-impact conflict, Vistelar has identified three universal triggers to conflict: stress, indignity and vulnerability.

- **Stress** — from such factors as relationship difficulties, financial problems, work demands, drugs and alcohol, job insecurity, and physical threats — that can heighten the risk of conflict.
- **Indignity** — that results from insults, put-downs and humiliation — that can provoke retaliation and revenge.
- **Vulnerability** — being perceived as less-than by others — that can result in being the target of bullying, verbal abuse and harassment.

All of these triggers can lead to a range of emotional reactions that can then lead to an impulsive reaction and, then, to conflict.

From this understanding of conflict’s causes, Vistelar has developed a structured methodology for addressing conflict that is based on **treating people with dignity by showing them respect.**

Many conflict management programs focus on trying to resolve disagreements by finding shared values. However, this approach breaks down in situations where conflict is most likely: **when personal beliefs, cultural norms and ethical frameworks clash.** Therefore, a universal bridge is need to manage conflict — **and treating people with dignity is that bridge.**



Treating People with Dignity by Showing Them Respect

FIVE MAXIMS
FOR TREATING PEOPLE WITH DIGNITY BY SHOWING THEM RESPECT

1. Listen with all your senses
2. Ask, don't tell, others to do something
3. Explain why they are being asked
4. Offer options, not threats
5. Give a second chance

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Vistelar's structured methodology for preventing and managing conflict begins with the **Five Maxims, a universal set of practices for HOW to show people respect.**

When applied consistently, the Five Maxims promote compliance, cooperation, and collaboration in nearly every imaginable environment—from prison riots to playground bullying.

Beyond the Five Maxims, Vistelar has developed a set of tactical charts that outline how to address conflict across four skill sets:

- **Communicating Under Pressure** — the skill set for how to verbally respond to conflict in the heat of the moment
- **Personal Power** — the skill set for how to not be perceived as vulnerable by others
- **Bystander Mobilization** — the skill set of establishing social norms that discourage conflict and enable witnesses to safely and effectively intervene when others are being victimized
- **Personal Defense Options** — the skill set of safely dealing with situations of impending or actual violence when words alone fail

COMMUNICATING UNDER PRESSURE

The Communicating Under Pressure chart lays out the tactics necessary to successfully manage conflict in the heat of the moment, all while treating people with dignity.

The starting point for all interactions in which there is a risk of conflict is to **be alert and decisive** and to **respond, don't react**. It's essential to be alert to what's going on in the environment and quick to decide a course of action, if things go bad. Then, with whatever happens, a thoughtful response is necessary — ideally one that is pre-planned and practiced, rather than an impulsive reaction.

During the encounter, there are several tactics available to successfully manage the situation:

- **"Showtime" Mindset** prepares you to face conflict in a confident, professional manner
- **Universal Greeting** establishes a supportive atmosphere while defusing initial resistance
- **Beyond Active Listening** is an easy-to-remember process for gaining a deep understanding of the other person's perspective
- **Redirections** are simple tactics for shutting down verbal abuse
- **Persuasion Sequence** is a five-step communication process for gaining compliance, cooperation, and collaboration in the face of continued opposition
- **Bystander Mobilization** (see Bystander Mobilization below)
- **When Words Alone Fail** (see Personal Defense Options below)

COMMUNICATING UNDER PRESSURE

FIVE MAXIMS

"SHOWTIME" MINDSET

BE ALERT & DECISIVE (Vertical text on left)

RESPOND, DON'T REACT (Vertical text on right)

- UNIVERSAL GREETING
- BEYOND ACTIVE LISTENING
- REDIRECTIONS
- PERSUASION SEQUENCE
- WHEN WORDS ALONE FAIL
- BYSTANDER MOBILIZATION
- REVIEW + REPORT

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Then, following any conflict situation, it's important to **Review and Report** on the event to learn how to do things better next time and, depending on the situation, document what happened.

Creating an Environment That Deters Conflict

PERSONAL POWER

The Personal Power chart explains how some people seem to naturally avoid conflict, while others constantly find themselves targeted by verbal and physical abuse.

When people are perceived as less-than by others, they are more vulnerable to targeting by bullies and abusers. In contrast, those who project their personal power radiate an aura of confidence that deters aggression.

By wearing a **Professional Face** that maintains self-respect while showing respect to others and having a **“I Got This” Mindset**, individuals exude a strong presence that can prevent conflict.

The tactics that are effective in reducing verbal and physical abuse in the lives of those who find themselves vulnerable are:

- **“You Control” behaviors** help individuals not project vulnerability
- **Stack Your Blocks** help individuals look, feel and become more confident
- **Emotion Guards** help individuals stay above the fray
- **“I” Statements** communicate concern without disrespecting others
- **Redirections** disrupt attacks and keep the situation focused on a successful resolution



BYSTANDER MOBILIZATION

The Bystander Mobilization chart describes the components of Vistelar’s training program that mobilize bystanders to stand up for others.

Bystanders play a critical role in preventing and de-escalating conflict, if they’re motivated to get involved to **support the target** and, if necessary, **engage the aggressor**.

By establishing a **Social Contract** where verbal and physical abuse is not tolerated, everyone in the community accepts their responsibility to help enforce this expectation.

Having a **“Protector” Mindset** enables each member of a group feels like the rest of the group is safer due to their presence — an essential attitude for everyone’s safety.

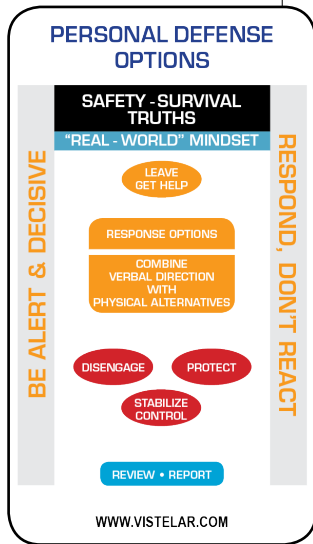
The bystander-mobilization tactics start with **observing and evaluating** the situation to determine if further action is required and, if so, to **assume responsibility** to take the necessary action.

The possible options for actions are listed in orange and red in the chart.

Then, following any bystander-mobilization situation, it’s important to **Review and Report** on the event to learn how to do things better next time and, depending on the situation, document what happened.



Maintaining Safety When Words Alone Fail



PERSONAL DEFENSE OPTIONS

The Personal Defense Options chart describes what to do when **words alone fail**.

Although most conflicts can be successfully avoided or managed through the above tactics, it is important to be prepared for situations in which verbal tactics have been ineffective.

When it becomes necessary to take action, the priority needs to be on maintaining safety for yourself and others.

Just as in a verbal interaction, it's critically important to **be alert and decisive and to respond, don't react**.

Then, it's essential to have a **"Real-World" Mindset**. If the situation turns physical, people's lives might be on the line so its important to have a realistic view of what could happen (when, then versus if, then thinking). The actual tactics deployed will depend on the situation — but to leave and get help is the first option to consider unless your job requires you to stay. If that's not possible, these options are available:

- Disengage
- Stabilize & Control
- Protect

Then, as explained with the Communicating Under Pressure and Bystander Mobilization charts, it's important to **Review and Report** on the event to learn how to do things better next time and, depending on the situation, document what happened.

ABOUT VISTELAR

Vistelar is a global consulting and training organization focused on addressing the entire spectrum of human conflict—from interpersonal discord, verbal abuse and bullying—to crisis communications, assault and physical violence.

This brochure provides an overview of Vistelar's **comprehensive, structured framework for preventing and managing conflict**, which is the foundation for all of Vistelar's many training programs.

Vistelar's programs are all designed to address the **physical, organizational, legal and emotional** impact of poorly-managed conflict.

Please contact us to learn more:

Email: info@vistelar.com

Call: 887-690-8230



877-690-8230
fax: 866-406-2374

1845 N. Farwell Ave.,
Suite 210
Milwaukee, WI 53202

www.VISTELAR.com