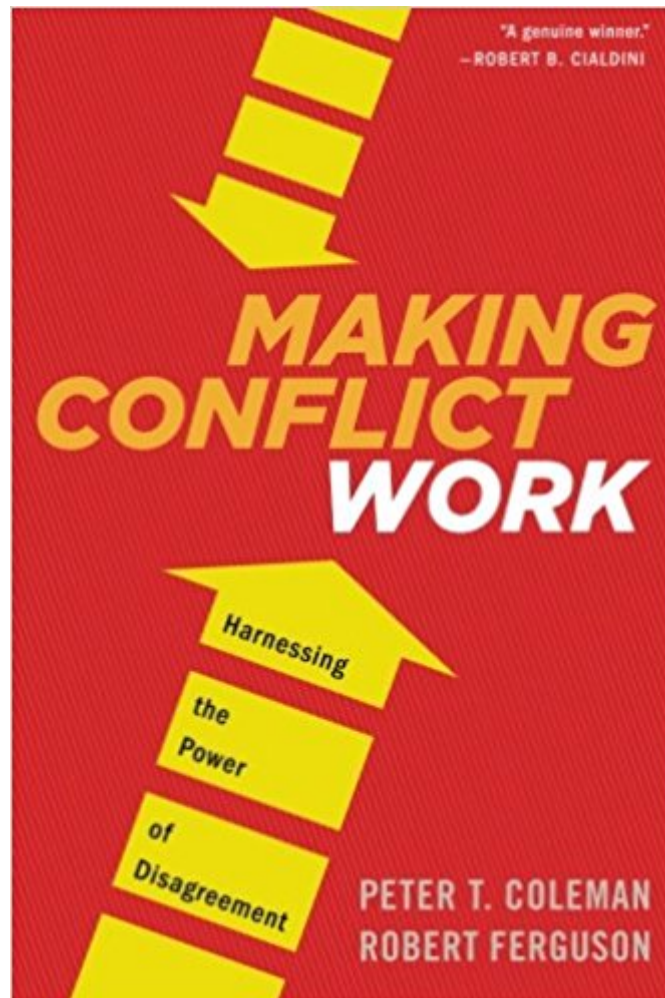




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# Making Conflict Work: Harnessing The Power Of Disagreement



## Synopsis

“This book is a necessity. Read it.”  
•Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate and Liberian peace activist  
“Innovative and practical.”  
•Lawrence Susskind, cofounder, Program on Negotiation, Harvard Law School  
Every workplace is a minefield of conflict, and all office tension is shaped by power. This book teaches you to identify the nature of a conflict, determine your power position relative to anyone opposing you, and to use the best strategy for achieving your goals. These strategies are equally effective for executives, managers and their direct reports, consultants and attorneys  
•anyone who has ever had a disagreement with someone in their organization. Packed with helpful self-assessment exercises and action plans, *Making Conflict Work* gives you the tools you need to achieve greater satisfaction and success.  
“Navigating conflict effectively is an essential component of leadership. *Making Conflict Work* illustrates when to compromise and when to continue driving forward.”  
•Honorable David N. Dinkins, 106th mayor of the City of New York  
“An excellent workbook-like guide.”  
•Booklist, *starred review*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An excellent workbook-like guide."  
•Booklist, *STARRED review* "A practical guide to redirecting energies from conflict toward the achievement of goals. Grounded in more than 15 years of research, Coleman and Ferguson's findings offer insight into the strategies and skills

necessary for managing work disputes and show how to make conflict work for you instead of against you...Full of valuable advice, this book will help readers develop better strategies for workplace disagreements." **•Publishers Weekly** "Coleman and Ferguson have done something remarkable: they've written an evidence-based book on the complex topic of conflict and made it easy to read, easy to understand and, best of all, easy to use. A genuine winner." **•Robert B. Cialdini, author, Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion** "Navigating conflict effectively is an essential component of leadership. Making Conflict Work illustrates when to compromise and when to continue driving forward." **•Honorable David N. Dinkins, 106th Mayor of the City of New York** "This book is a necessity. As someone who has navigated the traps of power and conflict across the globe, it is refreshing to find a book that calls it what it is, and offers useful advice on turning traps into prospects for change. Read it." **•Leymah Gbowee, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and Liberian peace activist** "Making Conflict Work gives us a way to think about how we deal with conflict in hierarchical organizations. Especially helpful are the chapters that link conflict intelligence to how we routinely deal with conflict to actionable strategies." **•Deborah M. Kolb, professor emerita, Simmons College Graduate School of Management** "Through a superb balance of interviews, case studies, and evidence-based insights, the authors provide valuable lessons on how leaders can manage conflict." **•Steve Cohen, executive director, The Earth Institute, Columbia University** "An innovative and practical look at how to navigate everyday disagreements to reach your goals, serving up examples of best practice drawn from the authors' decades of experience helping others cope with conflict, power and change." **•Larry Susskind, cofounder, Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School** "Managers who try to suppress conflict not only make things worse, but also stifle opportunities for creative problem-solving. Making Conflict Work should be essential reading for all managers." **•Michael Wheeler, retired professor, Harvard Business School; author, The Art of Negotiation** "How to manage conflict when there are differences in power has always been a tricky problem. Coleman and Ferguson bring coherence and highly constructive advice to dealing with these situations." **•Roy J Lewicki, Max M. Fisher College of Business, The Ohio State University** "Both intriguing and useful, Making Conflict Work invites readers to move beyond their comfort zones into new territories where personal responsibility makes the difference." **•Dr. Andrea Bartoli, School of Diplomacy and International Diplomacy, Seton Hall University** "Conflict is part of our lives and cannot be suppressed. This book provides the tools to manage it." **•Jean-Marie Guéhenno, former Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations at the United Nations** "Unless you

live in a cave and interact with no one, you need to read this book. Conflict is an inherent part of human society. Making Conflict Work turns it from a problem into an opportunity." —Zainab Salbi, Women for Women International; author, *Between Two Worlds*

—Coleman and Ferguson transform the world of conflict management with *Making Conflict Work*. By exploring the interaction of power and conflict, they open new insights into the causes and possible resolutions of conflict in organizational settings. This rich offering provides leaders and practitioners with highly practical tactics and techniques to address the inevitable conflicts they will face.

—Craig E. Runde, Center for Conflict Dynamics; author, *Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader*

—“Conflict is unavoidable, but the self-defeating strategies and limiting tactics we often turn to are avoidable. This wonderfully practical guide will expand your mindset and repertoire of skills, enabling you to turn conflict on its head and make it work for you instead of against you.”

—Rob Kaiser, author, *The Versatile Leader: Make the Most of Your Strengths Without Overdoing It*

—“Managing conflict is a critical skill for career progression. For women in leadership, getting it wrong can make them look too weak, or too aggressive. This innovative book adds a new level to the discussion: the role of power. I specifically like the lists of pragmatic tactics for addressing conflict in a power structure such as between a boss and a subordinate.”

—Wanda T. Wallace, author, *Reaching the Top: Five Factors that Affect the Careers and Retention of Senior Women Leaders*

—“Leadership puts you in position to make decisions. Having served in the Navy and the corporate world, I found *Making Conflict Work* to be the best book I’ve read on navigating conflict up and down the organization, key to making the best decision possible.”

—Captain John E. Cole USN (RET), former chief of staff, Commander Navy Reserve Forces Command

—“In an age when global and geopolitical tensions grab headlines, many of the most complex conflicts still occur in the battle of the boardroom and warfare of the workplace. *Making Conflict Work* provides critical strategies and tactics to transform even the most besieged organization. From practical self-assessments to cautionary reminders of the consequences of misusing each strategy, Coleman and Ferguson lay out a user-friendly framework to navigate the minefields of corporate politics and power.”

—Johnston S. Barkat, Assistant Secretary-General, Ombudsman & Mediation Services, United Nations

—“Differences of opinion are the root of innovation. Conflict is thus inevitable, and power is necessary — we need it to reach our goals. *Making Conflict Work* links these two fundamental dimensions of human interaction, pointing the way toward constructive achievement by individuals and organizations.”

—Pierre Naquet, President, European Institute for Workplace Dynamics

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I received this book from [redacted] and got as far as the introduction and the first chapter when I found the answer to a challenge I have been dealing with at the nonprofit where I serve on the board. I convened two meetings with the players involved in two different issues. I read to them from Chapter One about the concept of *“power with,”* and asked them to share with each other what challenges they were having, so we could look for solutions together. By the end of the day we found solutions well beyond anything we could have expected a day earlier. As I read the rest of the book, I found other strategies for managing difficulties involving employees and volunteers who just were not a good fit, and realized that sometimes I had to use *“power over”* to achieve the goals of the organization. The book put many different situations in perspective and inspired me to use different strategies in different conflicts. The big lesson I learned from the book is that power comes in different forms and I need to be flexible to use my power appropriately. A very practical book!

Having started and grown a successful business, I can attest to the importance of working with conflict as a fundamental leadership skill. While other books offer general advice, or assume that most people want to cooperate during a disagreement, this is the best book I’ve read for realistically addressing the many different kinds of conflict in the workplace, and for offering smart, practical advice on how to deal with every conflict situation. It is also the only book I have found that deals realistically and in detail with how to deal with differences in power within an organization when people disagree. On top of all this, the book is well written and full of entertaining stories. I highly recommend it.

The authors clearly and systematically elucidate the advantages and pitfalls of both high and low power in conflict, thereby empowering both superiors and subordinates to navigate conflict more effectively.

Well-grounded in research and illustrated with numerous real-world examples, this book offers practical strategies and tactics for dealing with conflict. It has application at many levels, from the interpersonal to the international arena. Although sophisticated in its analysis, the book is written in a highly accessible style *—* a good read for anyone interested in better understanding

and managing conflict.

If you are looking for a succinct compilation of research based strategies for navigating conflict, Making Conflict Work is just that.

Great book. I recommend this book for employees.

“Making Conflict Work: Harnessing the Power of Disagreement” by Peter T. Coleman and Robert Ferguson provides seven strategies and seventy tactics to make conflict work up and down the ladders of power in organizations. It’s backed with science, examples and illustrations of how the strategies and tactics work, as well as self-assessment evaluations to determine the strategies and tactics you use the most, and which you might want to incorporate more. This isn’t a “simple” book, but one that takes a serious look at conflict and deserves a serious read to incorporate the information provided effectively when dealing with conflict, especially in the workplace. The book is aimed at managers, mediators, consultants, and attorneys who deal with conflict, and I’d echo those as the target readers, but would also include anyone wanting to be in those positions or better understand conflict and how they can approach it differently to help increase the amount of positive resolutions. One of the things I really like about this book is that it looks at conflict, and the various ways you can deal with it for different outcomes. It allows the reader to choose strategies and tactics that will work the best in certain situations, while acknowledging that completely different strategies and tactics will be needed when in conflict with a different person or over a different matter. I also like the self-assessment exercises that provide insight to your own preferred conflict styles. Knowing this helps when making choices to best deal with disagreements and other conflicting situations. The book also discusses power imbalance and strategies and tactics geared toward being the person with more power, or the person with less power. I found this very informational, because most of the time there will be a power imbalance. How well you manage conflict with your boss or other superiors at work, or with the more difficult employees you need to supervise, will be an important consideration in your continued success. This book will help you assess and determine your own responses and outcomes when conflict is involved, and mastering the strategies and tactics will undoubtedly help you succeed in any organization or field that involves conflict.

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