

Arizona State University (ASU) COM312 Communication, Conflict, and Negotiation Exam 1 Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

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1. How can establishing common goals affect negotiations?
 - A. By creating conflict
 - B. By enabling a collaborative environment
 - C. By restricting possible outcomes
 - D. By promoting individual agendas
2. Which of the following is a sign of ineffective conflict management?
 - A. Seeking understanding and resolution
 - B. Quickly apologizing to avoid conflict
 - C. Encouraging open communication
 - D. Fostering a collaborative environment
3. What do dysfunctional cycles in conflict often lead to?
 - A. Effective solutions and resolutions
 - B. Heightened tension and unresolved issues
 - C. Improved understanding of viewpoints
 - D. Strengthening of relationships
4. What is one key advantage of collaborative negotiation?
 - A. It avoids any call for transparency
 - B. It may leave relationships unchanged
 - C. It builds trust and strengthens relationships
 - D. It focuses solely on financial outcomes
5. Which of the following is an example of a barrier to effective communication in negotiations?
 - A. Active listening
 - B. Clear ground rules
 - C. Emotional reactivity
 - D. Shared interests

6. In negotiation, why is it important to establish clear expectations?
- A. To ensure parties remain passive
 - B. To maintain focus on the negotiation process
 - C. To minimize emotional responses
 - D. To avoid any agreement
7. What characterizes an external attribution during conflict?
- A. Assigning blame to others
 - B. Avoiding ownership of one's mistakes
 - C. Giving credit to situational factors
 - D. Assuming the worst intentions
8. In Social Exchange Theory, what does the Comparison Level (CL) represent?
- A. The monetary value of a relationship
 - B. The standard for evaluating relationship satisfaction
 - C. The length of time in the relationship
 - D. The number of conflicts experienced
9. Which of the following is NOT one of the "Four Horsemen" of the Apocalypse in conflict?
- A. Criticism
 - B. Defensiveness
 - C. Revisionism
 - D. Stonewalling
10. Why is the understanding of each other's emotions important in conflict management?
- A. It complicates the negotiation process
 - B. It reduces the likelihood of resolution
 - C. It fosters empathy and aids in resolution
 - D. It creates additional barriers to communication

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. B
4. C
5. C
6. B
7. C
8. B
9. C
10. C

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Explanations

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1. How can establishing common goals affect negotiations?

- A. By creating conflict
- B. By enabling a collaborative environment
- C. By restricting possible outcomes
- D. By promoting individual agendas

Establishing common goals significantly impacts negotiations by enabling a collaborative environment. When parties in a negotiation identify shared objectives, it fosters a sense of teamwork and encourages open communication. This collaboration helps to build trust and rapport among the participants, making it easier to navigate differences and work toward mutually beneficial solutions. Having common goals shifts the focus from competition to cooperation, allowing negotiators to explore creative options and compromise. It empowers both sides to align their interests, leading to outcomes that satisfy the needs of all parties involved. This collaborative approach is essential for resolving conflicts effectively and can result in long-lasting agreements that benefit everyone, rather than just one side winning at the expense of the other. In contrast, the other options reflect scenarios that are less conducive to successful negotiations. Creating conflict, restricting possible outcomes, or promoting individual agendas can lead to adversarial relationships, hinder collaboration, and ultimately derail the negotiation process.

2. Which of the following is a sign of ineffective conflict management?

- A. Seeking understanding and resolution
- B. Quickly apologizing to avoid conflict
- C. Encouraging open communication
- D. Fostering a collaborative environment

Quickly apologizing to avoid conflict is indeed a sign of ineffective conflict management. When an individual rushes to apologize without genuinely addressing the underlying issue, it can lead to unresolved tensions and resentment. This behavior often reflects a desire to sidestep the discomfort that conflict brings, rather than engaging in productive dialogue about the root cause of the disagreement. In contrast, seeking understanding and resolution, encouraging open communication, and fostering a collaborative environment are all strategies that effectively manage conflict. These approaches promote healthier interactions by allowing all parties to express their feelings, share perspectives, and work together towards a solution. They facilitate deeper understanding and can ultimately strengthen relationships rather than leave problems unaddressed.

3. What do dysfunctional cycles in conflict often lead to?

- A. Effective solutions and resolutions
- B. Heightened tension and unresolved issues
- C. Improved understanding of viewpoints
- D. Strengthening of relationships

Dysfunctional cycles in conflict often result in heightened tension and unresolved issues because they create a repetitive pattern of behavior that can exacerbate disagreements rather than resolve them. In these cycles, parties may engage in negative communication styles, such as blaming or dismissing each other, which increases emotional responses and can lead to more entrenched positions. This escalation can prevent constructive dialogue, making it difficult to reach effective solutions or mutual understanding. As the conflict continues without resolution, the initial issues often fester, creating a climate of frustration and dissatisfaction. Consequently, participants may feel increasingly alienated from one another, further complicating the situation and solidifying their conflicting stances. Establishing effective conflict management strategies becomes crucial for breaking these dysfunctional cycles and steering interactions toward positive outcomes.

4. What is one key advantage of collaborative negotiation?

- A. It avoids any call for transparency
- B. It may leave relationships unchanged
- C. It builds trust and strengthens relationships
- D. It focuses solely on financial outcomes

Collaborative negotiation emphasizes mutual interests and seeks solutions that benefit all parties involved rather than only one. This approach inherently fosters an environment of trust and encourages open communication, which is essential for maintaining and strengthening relationships. By focusing on collaboration rather than competition, negotiators can create agreements that not only satisfy immediate needs but also pave the way for ongoing cooperation in the future. When participants feel heard and valued, relationships are likely to flourish, leading to long-term partnerships and better outcomes in subsequent negotiations or conflicts. This aspect of collaborative negotiation stands in stark contrast to methods that prioritize zero-sum outcomes, where one party's gain is directly linked to another's loss, which can damage relationships rather than build them.

5. Which of the following is an example of a barrier to effective communication in negotiations?

- A. Active listening
- B. Clear ground rules
- C. Emotional reactivity
- D. Shared interests

Emotional reactivity is indeed a barrier to effective communication in negotiations because it can significantly hinder objective dialogue and problem-solving. When individuals become emotionally reactive, they may allow their feelings—such as anger, frustration, or anxiety—to dominate their responses. This can lead to misunderstandings, resistance to opposing viewpoints, and can create an adversarial atmosphere that obstructs collaboration and negotiation. In contrast, active listening and clear ground rules are techniques that facilitate communication rather than impede it. Active listening fosters better understanding and ensures that all parties feel heard, while clear ground rules provide structure and a mutual framework for the discussion, enhancing clarity and focus. Shared interests can also promote effective communication, as they highlight common goals and help to build rapport between negotiating parties.

6. In negotiation, why is it important to establish clear expectations?

- A. To ensure parties remain passive
- B. To maintain focus on the negotiation process
- C. To minimize emotional responses
- D. To avoid any agreement

Establishing clear expectations in negotiation is crucial because it helps maintain focus on the negotiation process. When all parties involved understand what is expected—such as the goals, requirements, and parameters of the discussion—they can more effectively navigate through the negotiation. This clarity provides a structured framework, allowing negotiators to concentrate on reaching a resolution and reduces the potential for misunderstandings that can lead to conflict. Setting clear expectations fosters an atmosphere of transparency and alignment, facilitating productive dialogue and collaboration. It aligns the participants on common objectives and guides the negotiation toward mutually beneficial outcomes. When expectations are outlined, it also promotes accountability, as each party knows what is expected of them, which can streamline the negotiation and help prevent it from derailing. Other options do not capture the primary reason for establishing clear expectations. For instance, while minimizing emotional responses or avoiding agreement may be relevant in certain contexts, they do not directly relate to the foundational purpose of fostering a focused and effective negotiation process.

7. What characterizes an external attribution during conflict?

- A. Assigning blame to others
- B. Avoiding ownership of one's mistakes
- C. Giving credit to situational factors
- D. Assuming the worst intentions

An external attribution during conflict is characterized by giving credit to situational factors to explain behavior or outcomes. This perspective focuses on the context or circumstances surrounding a person's actions rather than solely on inherent traits or intentions. For example, if someone fails to meet a deadline, an external attribution might consider factors such as unexpected challenges or lack of resources, rather than simply labeling the person as careless or incompetent. This approach can promote understanding and empathy, facilitating more constructive communication and resolution in a conflict situation. It shifts the focus from personal blame to the complexities of the situation that might have influenced actions and decisions. Such attributions can lead to collaborative problem-solving, as they encourage individuals to look for solutions together rather than simply pointing fingers or assigning fault.

8. In Social Exchange Theory, what does the Comparison Level (CL) represent?

- A. The monetary value of a relationship
- B. The standard for evaluating relationship satisfaction
- C. The length of time in the relationship
- D. The number of conflicts experienced

The Comparison Level (CL) in Social Exchange Theory refers to the standard by which individuals evaluate the satisfaction and quality of their relationships. It serves as a reference point against which the perceived rewards and costs of a relationship are assessed. Essentially, individuals use their Comparison Level to determine whether the benefits they receive from a relationship meet or exceed their expectations based on past experiences, social norms, or personal preferences. When people are satisfied with their relationship, it usually means that the rewards outweigh the costs when compared to their established standard (the CL). If the relationship falls short of this comparison level, individuals may feel dissatisfied or consider alternatives. This concept is integral to understanding how and why people stay in or leave relationships, as it emphasizes personal perceptions and norms rather than objective metrics, such as monetary value, duration, or specific conflicts encountered. These factors may influence a relationship but do not define the emotional and psychological evaluation that the Comparison Level represents.

9. Which of the following is NOT one of the "Four Horsemen" of the Apocalypse in conflict?

- A. Criticism
- B. Defensiveness
- C. Revisionism
- D. Stonewalling

The correct answer is "Revisionism" because it is not one of the recognized "Four Horsemen" identified by psychologist John Gottman, who studied relationship dynamics and conflict. The "Four Horsemen" are specific behaviors that tend to predict relationship breakdown and conflict escalation. They are: Criticism, Defensiveness, Contempt, and Stonewalling. Criticism involves attacking a partner's character or personality rather than focusing on specific behaviors. Defensiveness is a response aimed at protecting oneself from perceived attacks, often leading to further conflict rather than resolution. Stonewalling is when one partner emotionally withdraws from the interaction, creating a barrier to communication. Understanding these behaviors is crucial for addressing and mitigating conflict in relationships, highlighting the importance of constructive communication strategies. In contrast, "Revisionism" does not fit into this framework and is not associated with the specific types of negative interactions that can lead to the deterioration of relationships. This makes it the correct choice for the question regarding which option is NOT among the "Four Horsemen."

10. Why is the understanding of each other's emotions important in conflict management?

- A. It complicates the negotiation process
- B. It reduces the likelihood of resolution
- C. It fosters empathy and aids in resolution
- D. It creates additional barriers to communication

Understanding each other's emotions is crucial in conflict management because it fosters empathy and aids in resolution. Recognizing and acknowledging the emotional states of all parties involved allows for a more compassionate approach to the conflict. When individuals feel understood on an emotional level, they are more likely to engage in constructive dialogue and collaborate towards finding common ground. Empathy plays a significant role in effective communication during conflict situations. It helps to create an environment where each party feels valued and heard, which can de-escalate tensions and pave the way for positive interactions. By understanding how others feel, negotiators can tailor their responses and proposals to address not just the logical arguments but also the emotional needs at play, ultimately leading to more sustainable and satisfactory resolutions. In contrast, other options suggest that emotional understanding complicates the negotiation process or creates barriers, which does not recognize the fundamental role that empathy plays in conflict resolution. Instead, acknowledging emotions often clarifies issues and promotes a more open exchange of perspectives, facilitating a path toward resolution rather than detracting from it.