

# TKI European Data Supplement 2015

John Hackston and Tatiana Gulko



The Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) was developed to help people deal more effectively with conflict situations. The TKI measures preferences for five different modes of handling conflict, related to assertiveness (the extent to which a person tries to satisfy their own concerns) and cooperativeness (the extent to which they try to satisfy the concerns of another person):



## TKI European Data Supplement 2015

The questionnaire was the result of 40 years of research and implementation by the authors, Ken Thomas and Ralph Kilmann. Since 2003 it has been available via OPP's online questionnaire administration and reporting system, OPPassessment. Using this data, we can say something about how the English language version of the TKI works in Europe, and to answer questions such as:

- What sorts of people have completed the questionnaire?
- Are the existing norms suitable for the OPPassessment group?
- What differences in conflict modes do we see between men and women, different ages, different job roles and different job levels?

This document sets out the answers to these questions.

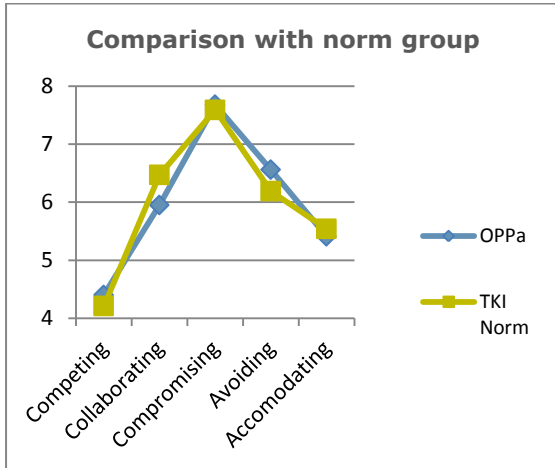
© Copyright 2015 OPP Ltd. All rights reserved.

® Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Myers-Briggs and MBTI are trade marks or registered trade marks of the MBTI Trust, Inc. in the USA and other countries. OPP is licensed to use these trade marks in Europe.

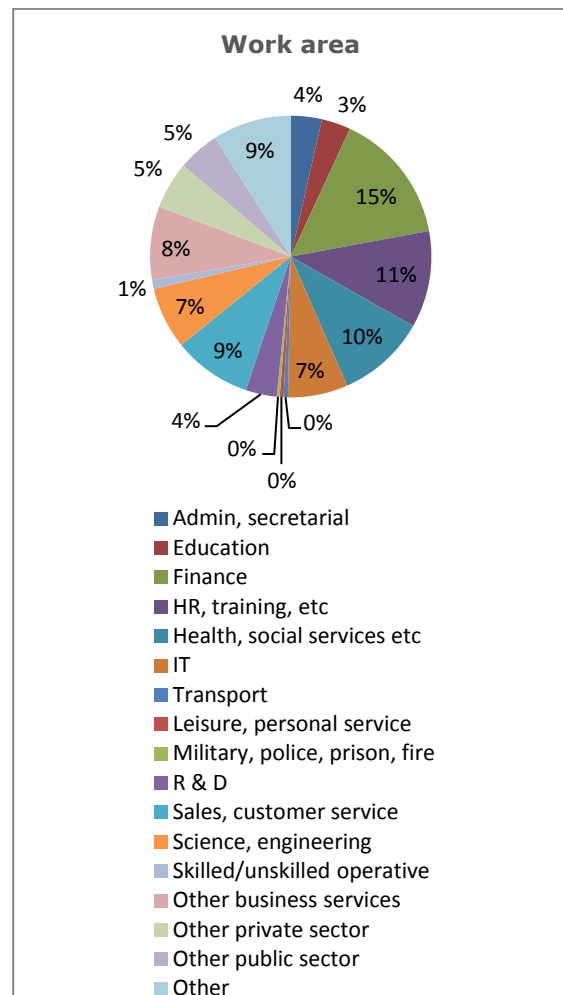
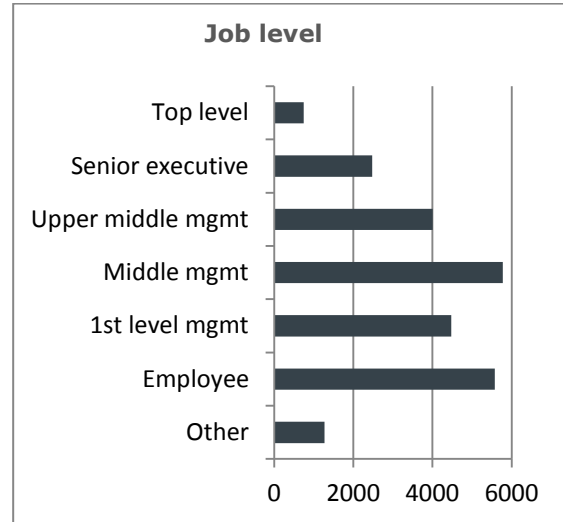
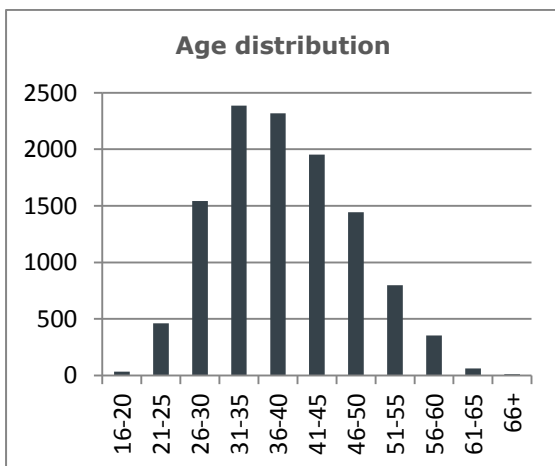
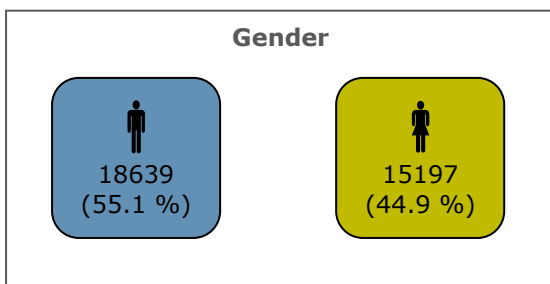
® 16PF is a registered trade mark of the Institute for Personality and Ability Testing, Inc. (IPAT) in the United States and other countries. Distributed by OPP Ltd under licence from IPAT.

## The sample

In total, 33,836 people have completed the TKI in English via OPPassessment. The average (mean) scores of this group on the five TKI modes are very close to those of the TKI norm group, confirming that the current norms are suitable for OPP clients to use.



The group covers a wide range of ages, job levels and work areas:



## Group differences

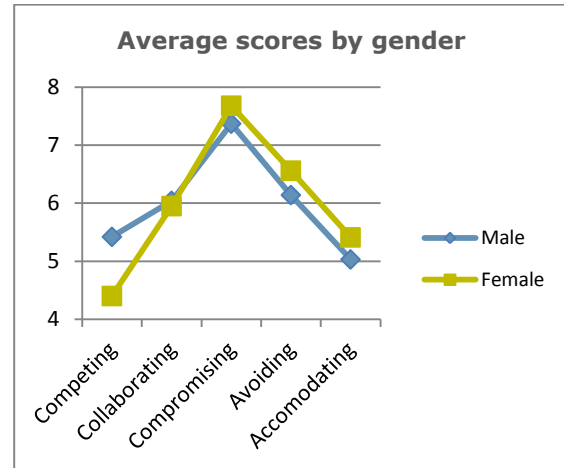
### Summary

The data was analysed to look for differences in conflict mode scores by gender, age, job type and job level. The differences are shown graphically on the following pages; but in summary:

- Men score on average slightly higher on Competing, although the difference is small in practical terms
- Age shows very little relationship with any of the TKI scales
- There are a number of differences in the average profile of people in different types of job:
  - Those working in leisure, transport, and sales and customer service have the highest average score on Competing
  - The military, police, prison, and fire group have the highest score on collaborating
  - Average scores on Compromising do not vary greatly across job types
  - Those in administrative or secretarial roles are the most likely to use Avoiding, and the most likely to use Accommodating
- Competing, Avoiding and Accommodating show clear differences by job level:
  - Each job level scores higher on average on Competing than does the preceding level
  - Lower level groups are significantly more likely to use Avoiding, and to use Accommodating, than higher-level groups.

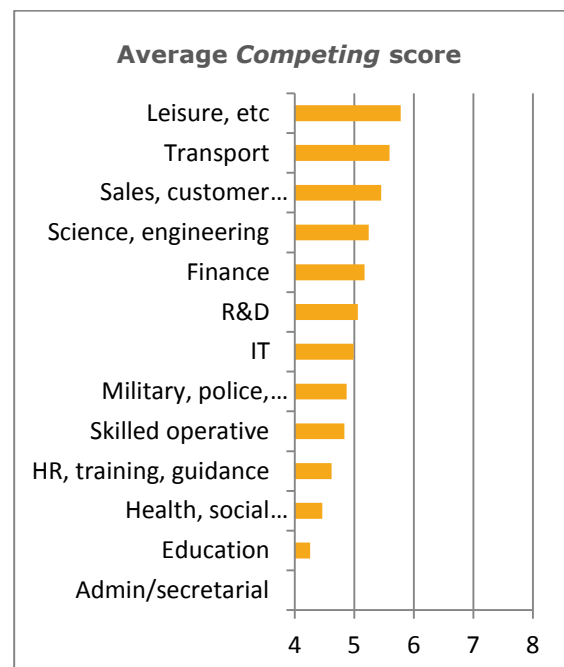
### Detailed results: gender

On average men score slightly higher than women on Competing.



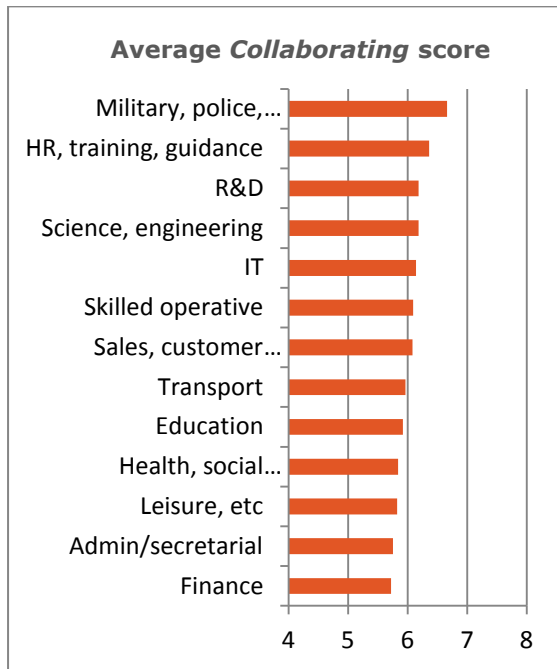
### Detailed results: job type

On average, those working in leisure, transport and sales have the highest scores on Competing.

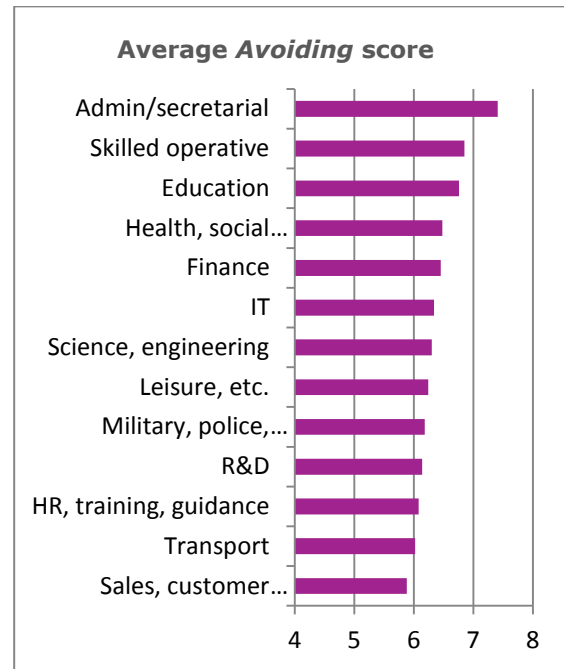


*(Note that generalised 'other' categories have been omitted from the analysis)*

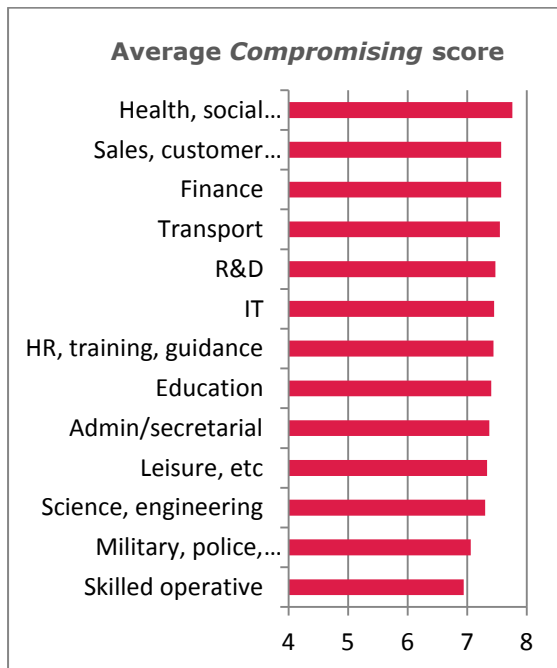
The military, police, prison, and fire group have the highest score on Collaborating.



Those in administrative or secretarial roles are the most likely to use Avoiding.



Average scores on Compromising do not vary greatly across job types.

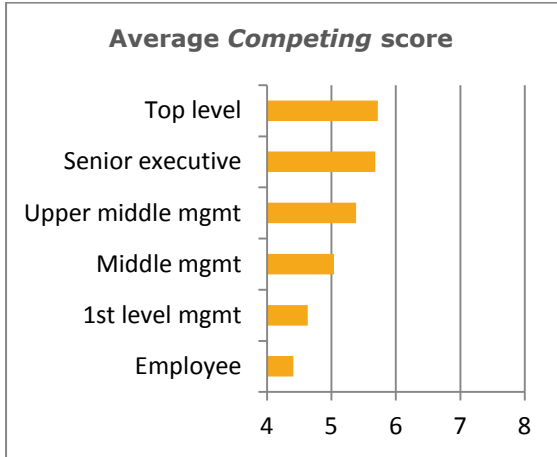


Those in administrative or secretarial roles are the most likely to use Accommodating.

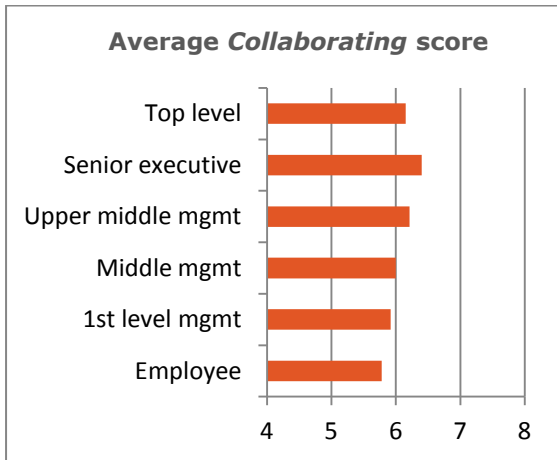


**Detailed results: job level**

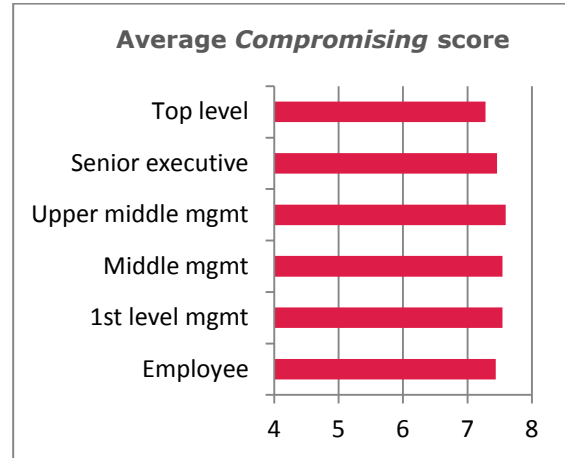
On average, each job level scores higher on Competing than does the preceding level.



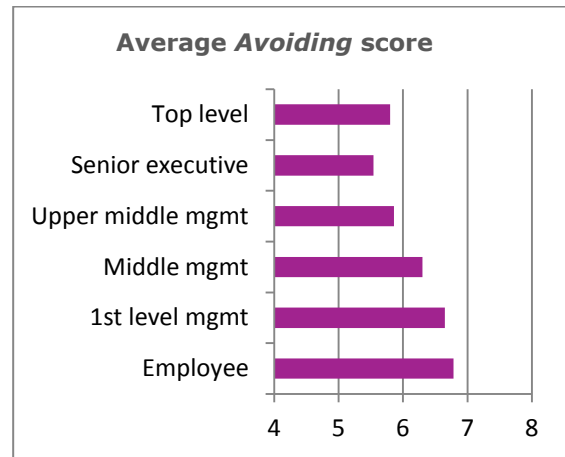
Senior executives are the most likely group to take the Collaborating approach; employees are the least likely.



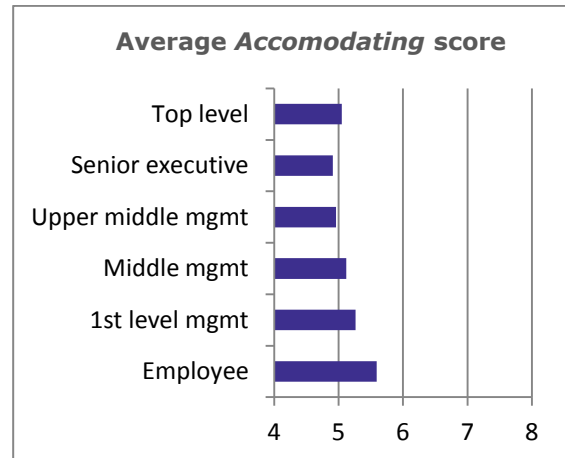
There are few significant differences between job levels on Compromising, although the upper middle management group score higher than employees or top level.



Lower level groups are significantly more likely to use Avoiding than higher-level groups.



Lower level groups are significantly more likely to use the Accommodating mode.



## Conclusion

Each of us has the potential to use all five of the conflict modes, depending on the situation. However the findings of this research show that different groups in the workplace may be more likely to use one mode in particular.

For example, more senior managers, executives and leaders are the most likely to use the Competing approach. This conflict mode can be particularly appropriate when quick, decisive action is vital, but will be less useful when tension needs to be reduced, or when the views of others need to be taken into consideration.

Similarly, those at employee level are the most likely to use the Avoiding and the Accommodating mode. These may to some extent be realistic choices for those with less power in an organisation, but could mean

that valuable information and opinions are not presented to or heard by those in positions of authority.

The differences between people at particular job levels may be intensified by the culture and characteristics of different industries, and by the effect of gender. For example, men working in higher-level roles in leisure, transport or sales and customer service are particularly likely to favour a Competing approach; administrative staff working in lower level jobs are particularly likely to take an avoiding or accommodating approach.

Where our natural preferences, learned behaviours and organisational culture are all pushing us in the same direction, it may be particularly difficult for us to adopt different approaches to conflict; this is where understanding more about our conflict styles may be particularly useful.



## **About OPP**

OPP specialises in personality assessment, enabling people and organisations around the world to increase their effectiveness through the innovative application of psychological tools and techniques.

The company's market-leading psychometric tools include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® and the 16PF® assessment, which provide high-impact results for recruitment and personal development, such as teambuilding, leadership development, communication and conflict resolution.

With more than 20 years' experience providing consultancy services and training programmes, our assessment tools and resources have transformed the businesses of thousands of organisations globally, including the majority of the FTSE 100.

[www.opp.com](http://www.opp.com)

**Oxford, UK – Chicago, USA – Paris, France – Amsterdam, The Netherlands**

