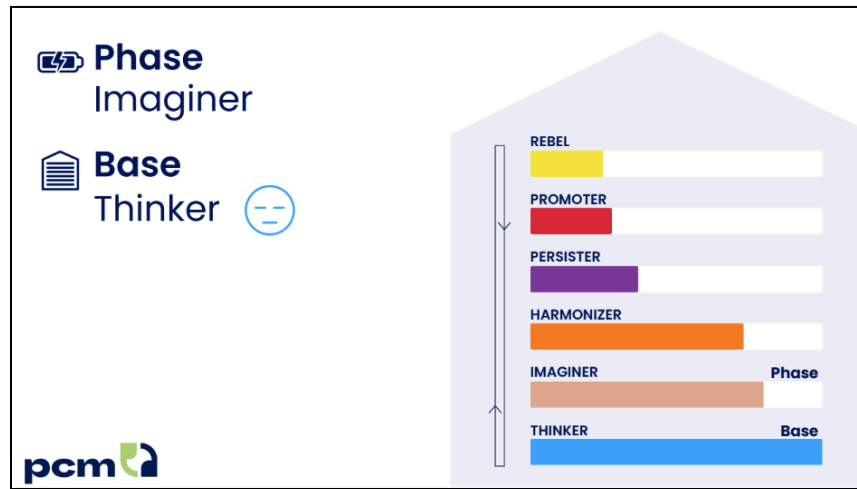




Dr. Lori Katz, Mt. Vernon Middle School

Year 1 Action Research Narrative



Purpose

As I prepare for my professional day, my Thinker Base strengths can feel in direct conflict with my Imaginer Phase needs. While my thinker base should revel in prioritizing tasks so that I can meet goals and obligations for the day, my Imaginer Phase drives a need to have unstructured, uninterrupted time to myself. I have to find a way to balance planning my day in an organized way while still allowing myself unstructured time to prepare mentally. This is difficult for me when I know I am facing a day laced with conflict. I need to play to my strengths across these PCM aspects, so that I can create a more balanced, effective approach to managing adult conflict. This alignment will not only improve conflict outcomes but also strengthen professional relationships and trust.

PCM Background

My base is Thinker; my Thinker strengths include being logical, organized, and responsible. I am a leader who understands the data and formulates a plan to meet goals. My gift is developing strategies and structures to improve efficiency and

execution. I care deeply about meeting goals and obligations. However, I may focus too heavily on facts and solutions, potentially overlooking emotional cues. There is an opportunity for me to use my natural analytical abilities to create structured approaches to conflict resolution, while consciously incorporating emotional awareness.

My phase is Imaginer; I crave solitude to recharge. I need unstructured and uninterrupted time to myself with no expectations so that I begin my professional day with a full tank. This allows me to maximize my strengths of creativity, vision, and ability to step back and reflect. However, if I don't meet this need, there is a risk of disengagement under stress or in high-pressure conflict. I have to utilize my imaginative skills to envision win-win scenarios and long-term solutions.

My first condo floor is Harmonizer. When faced with conflict, I have an innate desire to lean into my strengths of empathy, warmth, and emotional connection. However, I have a strong tendency to avoid conflict or prioritize harmony over resolution. I need to refine my ability to lean into empathy to build trust while balancing it with my Thinker's ability to address issues directly and in a timely manner.

Wondering

I wondered: how can my PCM strengths make conflict less about tension and more about problem-solving and growth without draining me or causing me to be distracted throughout my day? I was also curious to know the following:

- How can I incorporate structured tools (Thinker) that also prioritize emotional intelligence (Harmonizer)?
- What frameworks for conflict resolution align with a Phase Imaginer's reflective style?
- How do I integrate logic and empathy in conflict management so that I can become a more confident, regulated, and successful leader?

Method

I need to create a method to help me standardize the way I approach conflict. The first part of the method was to Build a Pre-Conflict Habit. I needed to continue to fulfill my need for unstructured solitude to start my day, but when conflict arises, I will pause for a moment to engage my strengths intentionally. Using my Imaginer Phase Strength, I will visualize how resolving the conflict could benefit relationships or goals by pausing to reflect and ask what could a positive resolution look like for

everyone? Using my Thinker Base Strength, I will identify the key facts or data relevant to the conflict by planning a simple, logical structure and asking what's the issue, what are the options, and what's a logical way to frame the conversation? I must learn to pause and be intentional in implementing this prior to engaging in conflict, if possible.

During the conversation, I will intentionally activate my strengths. I will use my Imaginer strength by using reflective pauses if emotions escalate ("Let me take a moment to think about this.") and consider creative solutions or ideas ("What if we approached this from a different angle?"). I will use my Thinker strength by sticking to clear, factual framing ("Here's the main issue and what we know.") and offer options for structured steps forward ("One possible solution is A; another is B. What do you think?"). Additionally, I will be sure to listen fully and paraphrase the speaker's concerns to maximize clarity in the conversation.

After the conflict situation and conversation are complete, I will take time to reflect on the conflict. I will consider the following questions:

- How did I use my creativity (Imaginer) to visualize the best possible outcome?
- How did I structure the conversation (Thinker) to lead to resolution?
- When did I feel most confident? (Using logic? Imagining solutions?)
- What drains me? (Emotional tension? Lack of clarity?)

Data

I will collect data using a Google Form. Instead of a broad daily log, I will focus narrowly on how I use my strengths during conflict by documenting the conflict scenario, if I used my Imaginer and/or Thinker strengths and how, the outcome, my confidence level, and anything that made me hate the conflict less. At the end of each day, I will track how I engaged with conflict. I will keep it simple, succinct, and specific to my strengths.

I will track conflict through the last three weeks of the second quarter of the school year and the first three weeks of the third quarter of the school year. This will allow me to track and reflect on how I can use my strengths to maximize my confidence in conflict management. Additionally, this will allow me time to reflect and refine my practice prior to impending staffing changes in my district.

Each week, I will review my daily logs to look for patterns. Specifically, I want to look at my strengths and determine if creative pauses or logical structure is serving to help me manage the conflict conversation at a higher level. I want to identify if certain conflicts are harder for me to manage or approach. And I want to continue to

refine my approach to determine how I might create a system to make conflict more manageable and palatable.

Reflection

I am reflective to a fault and identify strongly with my first-degree distress – the thought that I must be perfect to be worthwhile. After each conflict, I will ask myself the following questions:

- What part of this conflict helped me grow?
- How did I use my unique strengths to create something positive?

As part of managing conflict without hating it, I need to reframe the emotional narrative I tell myself by replacing phrases like “Conflict is stressful and draining.” with phrases like “Conflict is a way for me to use my creativity and logic to strengthen relationships and build solutions.” My hope is to use this process to reframe how I view and manage conflict.

Playing to my strengths in order to create a more balanced, effective approach to managing adult conflict



Dr. Lori A. Katz
Principal, Mt. Vernon Middle School

Background Leading to This Inquiry

THINKER BASE STRENGTHS: Logical, Organized, and Responsible

- ★ Understands the data and formulates a plan to meet goals
- ★ Gift is developing strategies and structures to improve efficiency and execution.
- ★ Care deeply about meeting goals and obligations.

IMAGINER PHASE MOTIVATOR: Solitude

- ★ Need unstructured and uninterrupted time to myself with no expectations
- ★ Allows me to maximize my strengths of creativity, vision, and reflection
- ★ Utilize my imaginative skills to envision win-win scenarios and long-term solutions

Harmonizer First Condo Floor

- ★ Innate desire to lean into my strengths of empathy, warmth, and emotional connection
- ★ Strong tendency to avoid conflict or prioritize harmony over resolution
- ★ Find balance to address issues directly and in a timely manner

The Purpose of This Inquiry

An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road that snakes through a dry, hilly landscape. A single white car is visible on the road, moving towards the bottom left. The terrain is rugged with sparse vegetation and some small structures or buildings visible in the distance on the right side.

As I prepare for my professional day, my Thinker Base strengths can feel in direct conflict with my Imaginer Phase needs.

I have to find a way to balance planning my day in an organized way while still allowing myself unstructured time to prepare mentally. This is difficult for me when I know I am facing a day laced with conflict.

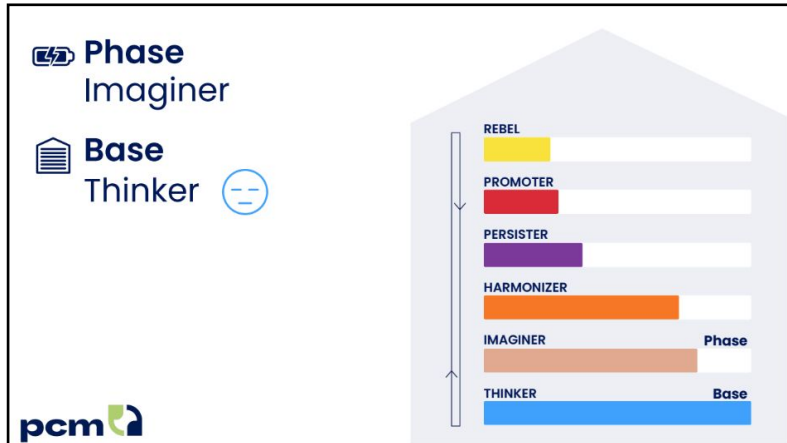
While my Thinker Base should revel in prioritizing tasks so that I can meet goals and obligations for the day, my Imaginer Phase drives a need to have unstructured, uninterrupted time to myself.

I need to play to my strengths across these PCM aspects, so that I can create a more balanced, effective approach to managing adult conflict. This alignment will not only improve conflict outcomes but also strengthen professional relationships and trust.

My Wondering

How can my PCM strengths **make conflict less about tension and more about problem-solving and growth** without draining me or causing me to be distracted throughout my day?

- How can I incorporate **structured tools (Thinker)** that also prioritize **emotional intelligence (Harmonizer)**?
- What frameworks for conflict resolution align with a **Phase Imaginer's** reflective style?
- How do I integrate logic and empathy in conflict management so that **I can become a more confident, regulated, and successful leader?**



My Actions

Build a Pre-Conflict Habit

Imaginer Phase Strength:

- Visualize how resolving the conflict could be beneficial
- Pause to consider what a positive resolution could look like for all

Thinker Base Strength:

- Identify key facts relevant to the conflict
- Consider the issue, the options, and a logical way to frame the conversation

My Actions

Practice Conflict Conversation

Imaginer:

Use reflective pauses if emotions escalate

Let me take a moment to think about this.

Consider creative solutions or ideas

What if we approached this from a different angle?

Thinker:

Stick to clear, factual framing

Here's the main issue and what we know.

Offer options for structured steps forward

One possible solution is A; another is B. What do you think?

My Actions

Reflect After Conflict Arises

Imaginer:

- How did I use my creativity to visualize the best possible outcome?

Thinker:

- How did I structure the conversation to lead to resolution?
- When did I feel most confident? (Using logic? Imagining solutions?)
- What drains me? (Emotional tension? Lack of clarity?)

Data Collection

Narrow focus: How do I use my strengths during conflict?



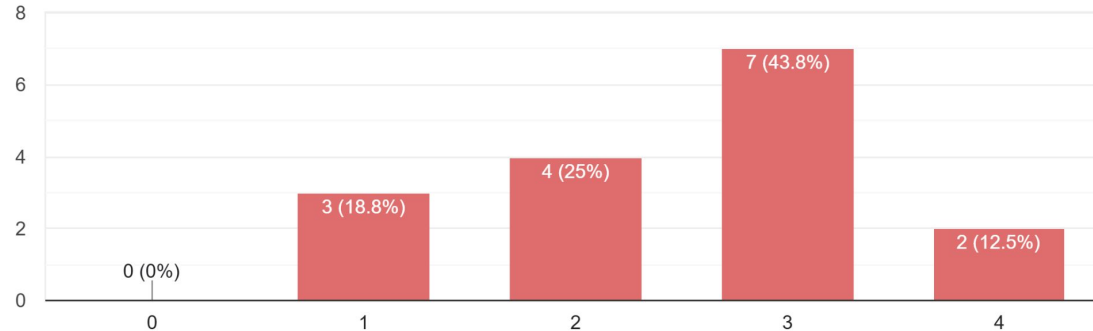
- ☐ Conflict scenario,
- ☐ Usage of my Imaginer and/or Thinker strengths and how,
- ☐ Outcome,
- ☐ My confidence level, and
- ☐ Anything that made me hate the conflict less.

My Data

Track and reflect on how I can use my strengths to maximize my confidence in conflict management

How I Felt (1-10)

16 responses



My Discoveries

A person in a dark long-sleeved shirt and dark pants stands with their back to the camera on a rocky, light-colored shore. They are looking out over a calm body of water towards a range of large, hazy mountains under a bright sky. The scene is peaceful and scenic.

Strengths:

- ☐ Pause and listen thoroughly
- ☐ Logical and direct “Let’s do this and then that...”
- ☐ Stated truth without judgement “This isn’t about me. I didn’t do anything wrong.”
- ☐ Clear and direct with reasons, information “We can A or B or C...”

Stressors:

- ☐ Procrastination
- ☐ Withholding my truth

Refinement:

- ☐ Find ample time
- ☐ Listen to understand; project understanding
- ☐ Prepare information to maximize clarity
- ☐ Jump in!

Where I Am Heading Next?



**“Conflict is stressful
and draining.”**

**“Conflict is a way for me to use my creativity and logic
to strengthen relationships and build solutions.”**