



StanfordSOCIAL  
INNOVATIONReview

A stylized white graphic of a bridge with two arches, positioned above the word 'DIVIDE' in the main title.

**BRIDGING**  
**THE DIVIDE**

September 13-15, 2022

# How to Manage Internal Conflicts

September 13, 2022 | 12:10 pm - 1:00 pm



## Priti Pradhan Shah

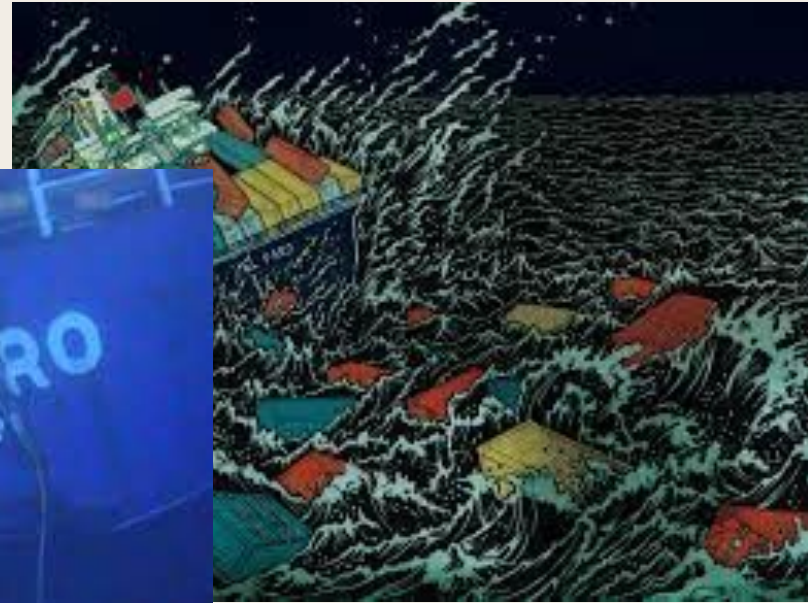
*Professor in the Department of  
Work and Organizations, Carlson  
School of Management, University  
of Minnesota*

[@CarlsonNews](#)

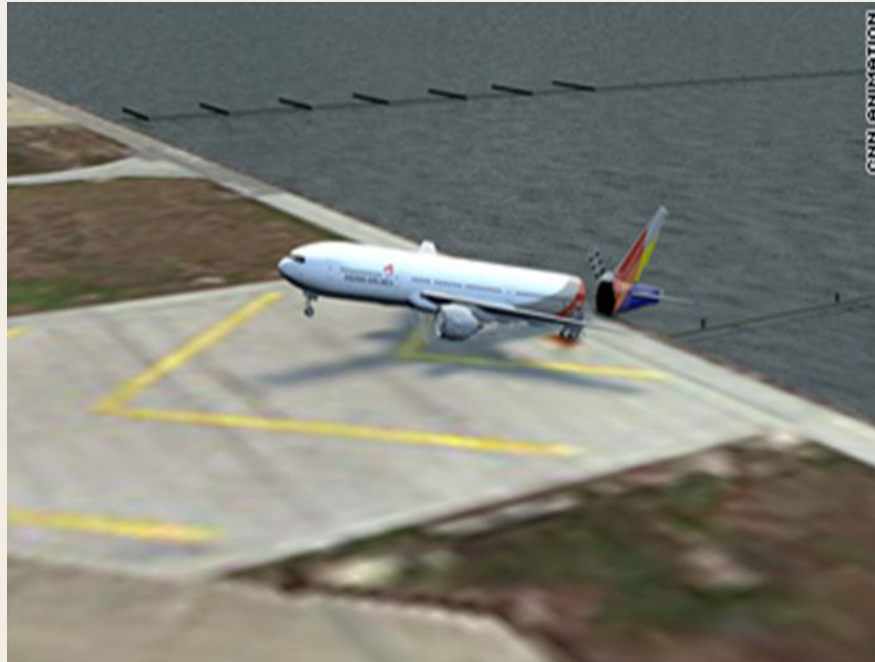
# The Perils of Ignoring Conflict



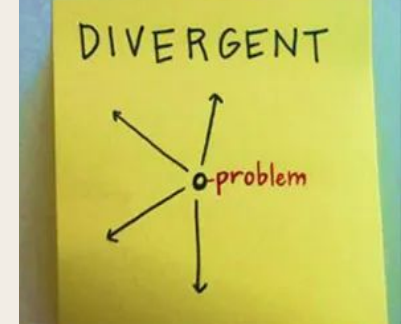
01/11/2015 19:05:14  
CV: El Faro  
Dive: 02  
CURV: 21  
USN SUPSALV



# The Perils of Ignoring Conflict



# Why is Conflict important?



# But... we are often ambivalent when it comes to conflict



# Causes of Conflict Ambivalence



# Causes of Conflict Ambivalence





# Conflict Types

# Task Conflict



# Relationship Conflict



# Status Conflict



# Logistical Conflict



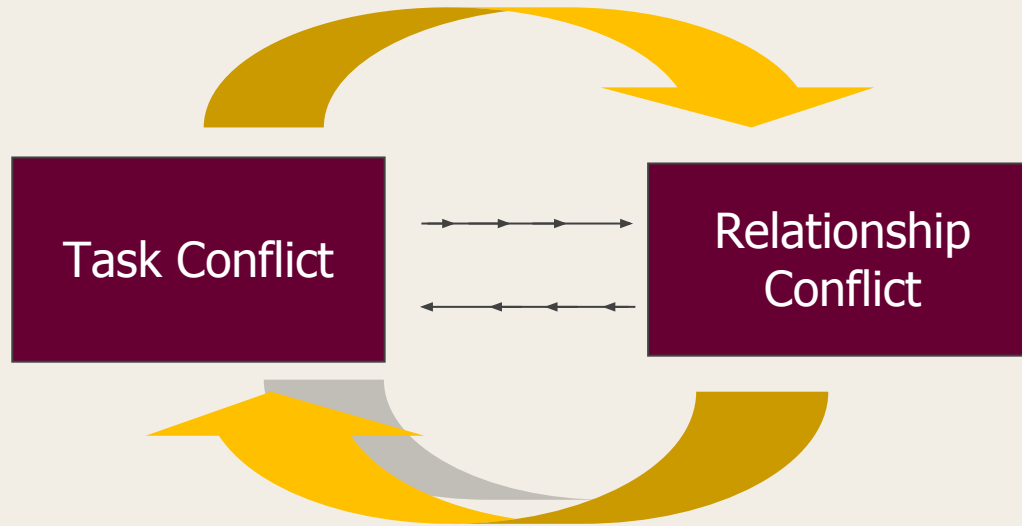
# Contribution Conflict



# Focus on Task & Relationship Conflict



# Conflict Spirals





# Breaking the Cycle



# Past Conflict Research



# New Conflict Research



Individual



Dyad

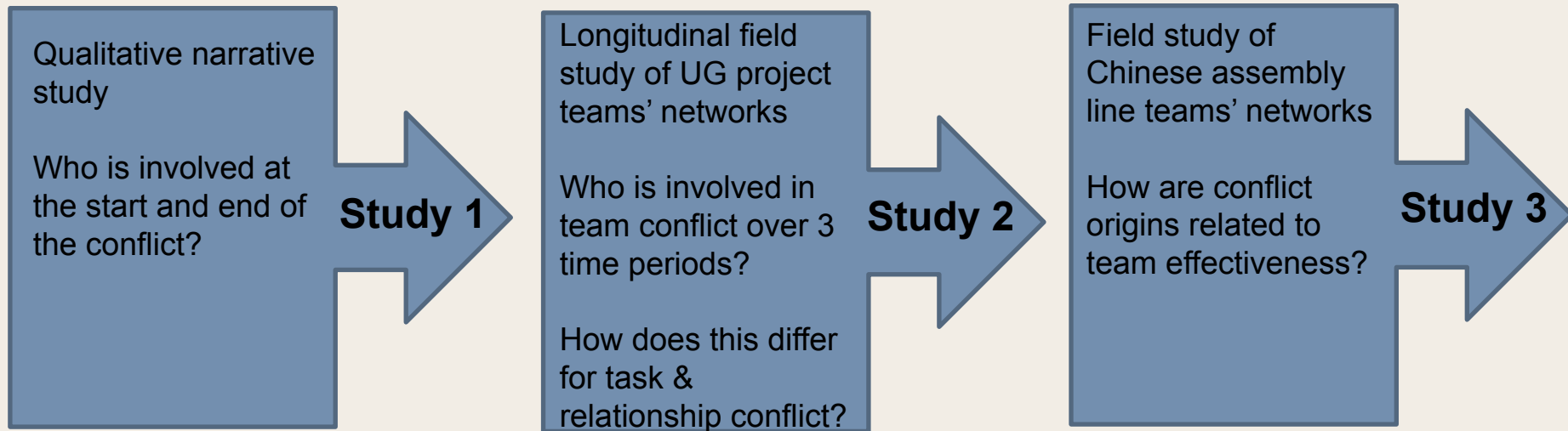


Sub-Group



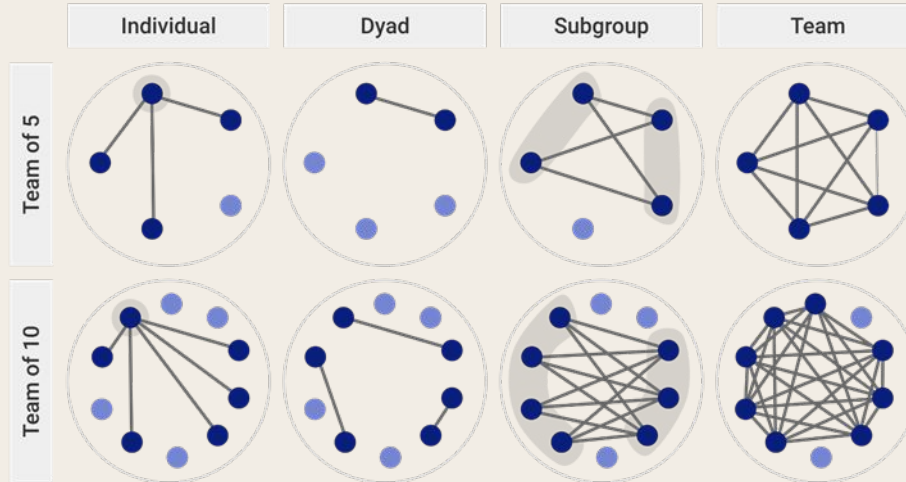
Team

# New Conflict Research



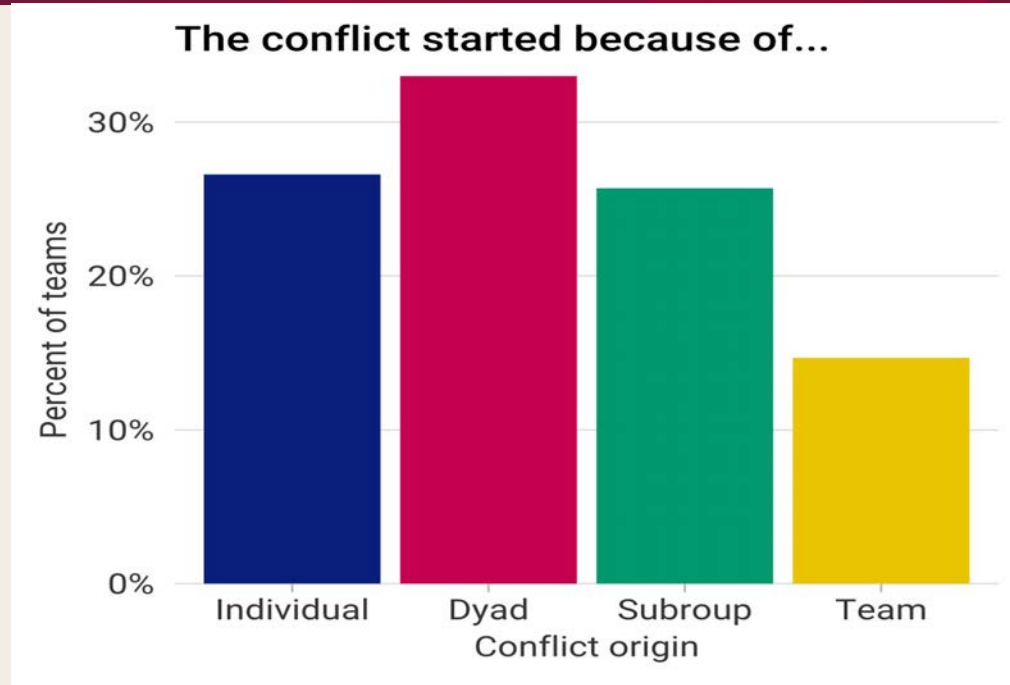
“Things are not always what they seem” The origins & evolution of intragroup conflict” By Shah, Peterson, Jones & Ferguson –Administrative Science Quarterly 2021

# New Conflict Research



\* Each circle depicts a team conflict network. Darker network nodes represent team members who are behaviorally involved in the conflict; lighter nodes represent team members who are observers of the conflict. Network ties represent conflict between teammates. The shaded areas in the first and third columns highlight the team members that define the individual or subgroup origins.

# Study 1- Conflict Origins Frequency



UG v. Exec:  $\chi^2(5) = 6.60, p = .25$

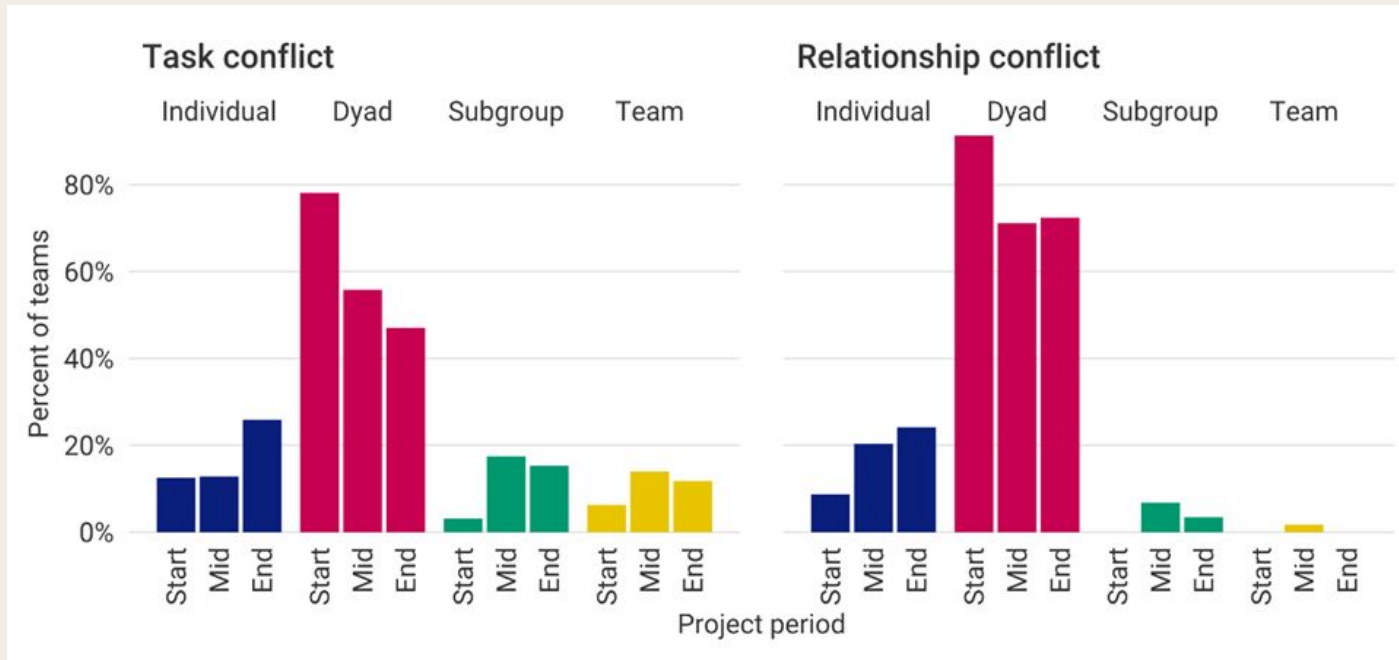
# Study 1- Conflict Origins Frequency

The conflict started because of...	And later involved...			
	Individual	Dyad	Subgroup	Team
Individual	<b>18%</b>	1%	0%	7%
Dyad	3%	<b>17%</b>	9%	5%
Subgroup	0%	0%	<b>24%</b>	2%
Team	0%	0%	1%	<b>14%</b>

N = 109 papers

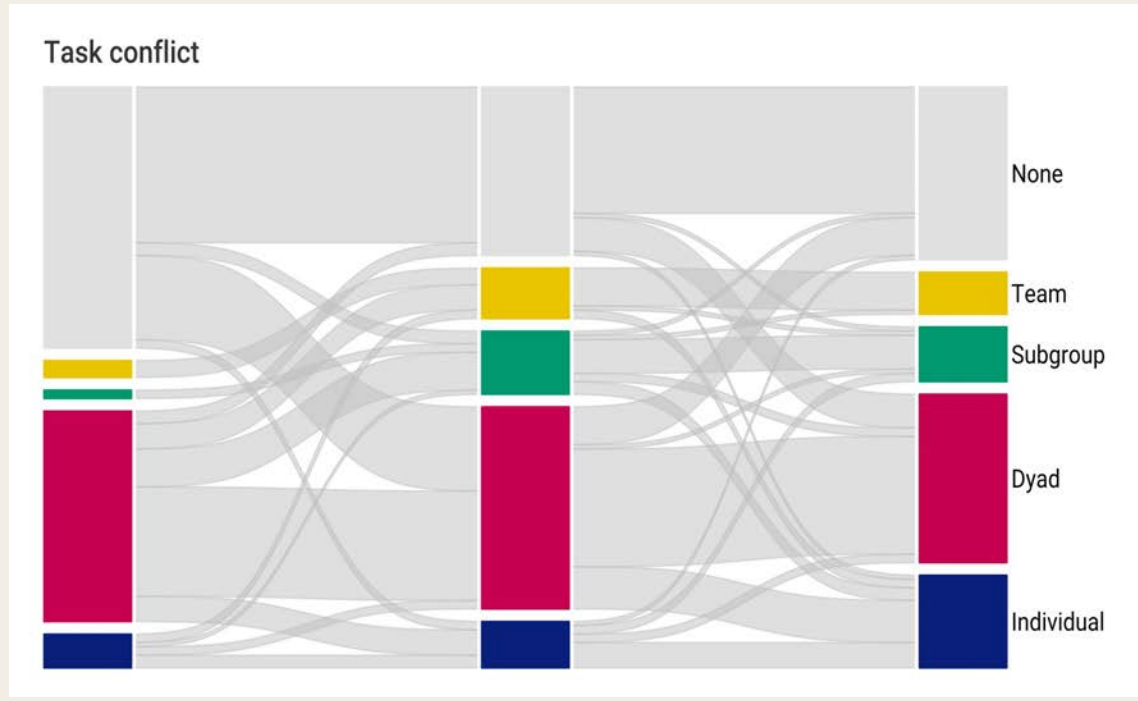
UG v. Exec:  $\chi^2(11) = 11.84, p = .38$

# Study 2: Origin & Evolution of Conflict

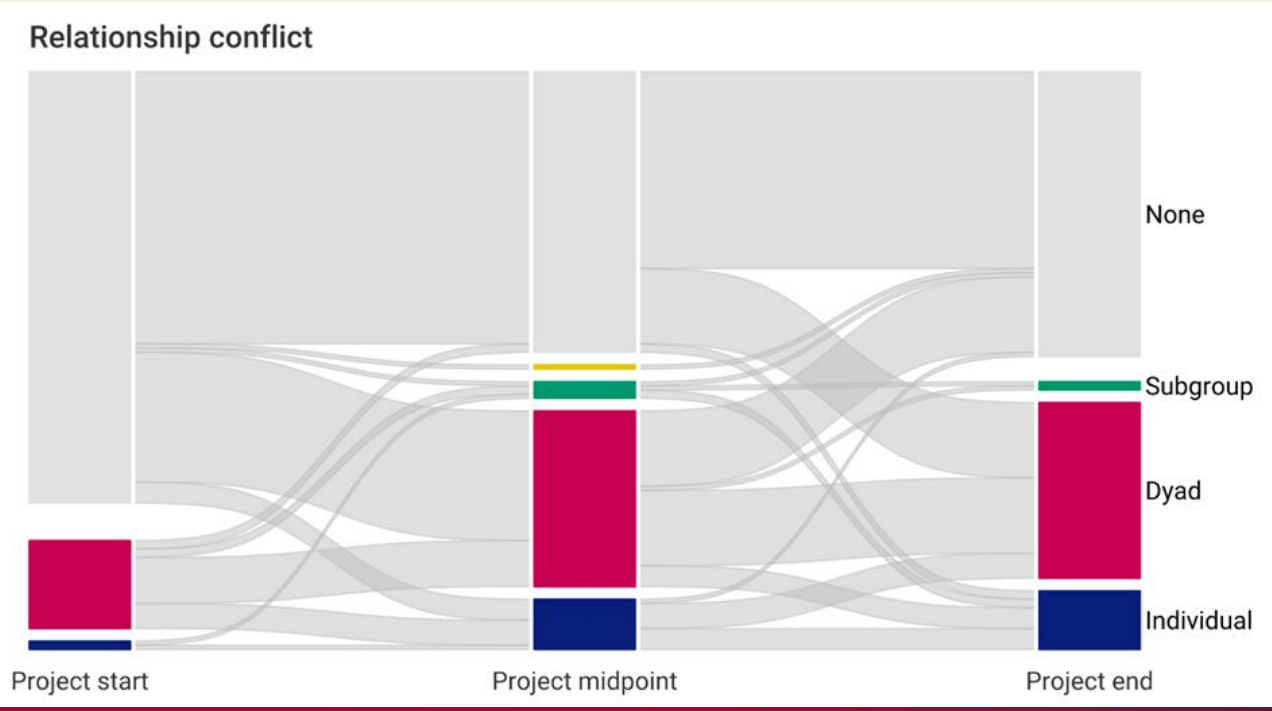




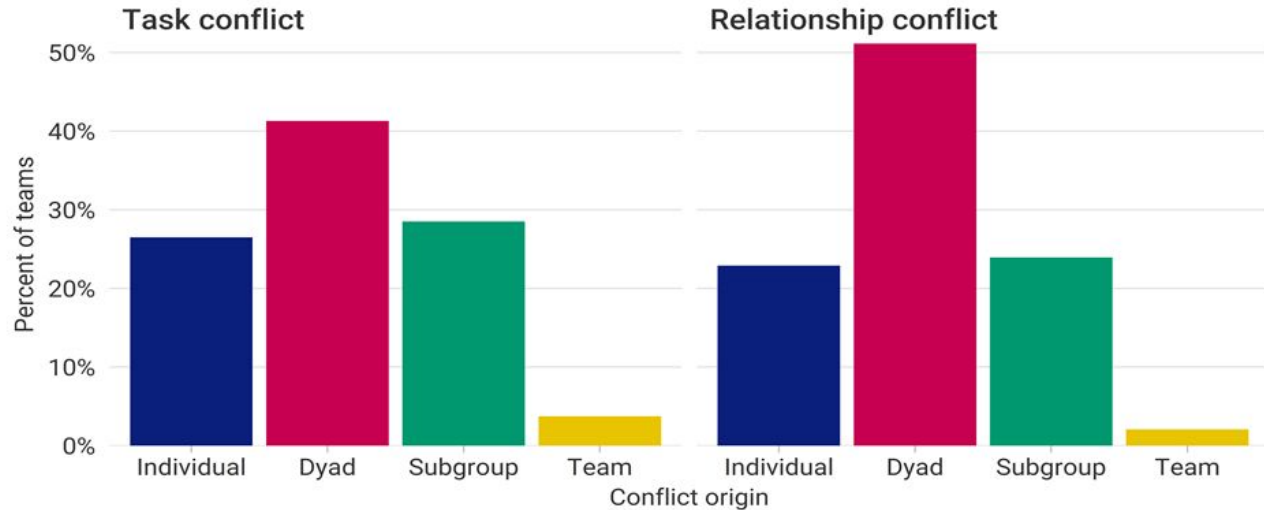
# Study 2: Origin & Evolution of Task Conflict



# Study 2: Origin & Evolution of Relationship Conflict



# Study 3: Conflict Origins & Task Performance



# Implications for Navigating Conflict

- When managed effectively, task conflict has performance benefits
- Team conflict is a phenomenon that is not what it seems... shared, uniform & static, but rather is unique, disproportionate & dynamic
- Understanding where conflict resides is important - Very few teams truly experience team-level conflict, in contrast to individuals, dyadic or subgroup conflict & it tends to be sticky
- Individual and dyadic task conflict origins are related to team effectiveness

# THANK YOU!