

Healthy Disagreement: Turning Conflict into Better Engineering

Problem	Warning Signs	Root Causes	Impact	Solutions	Workshop Prompt
Hero Developer / Rock Star	One person makes key decisions; others wait	Org rewards individuals; lack of knowledge sharing	Bottlenecks; burnout; low morale	Pair programming; rotate ownership; share knowledge	What happens if this person is unavailable?
Silent Agreement	Little debate; quick consensus	Low psychological safety; fear of conflict	Poor decisions; hidden risks	Encourage dissent; assign devil's advocate	What are we missing?
Opinion Wars	Arguments based on opinions	No frameworks; ego bias	Slow decisions; frustration	Use data; define principles; ADRs	What data would change your mind?
HiPPO Decisions	Senior voices dominate	Power distance; lack of facilitation	Missed ideas; low ownership	Anonymous voting; inclusive discussion	What if titles didn't matter?
Unstructured Conflict	Chaotic meetings	No structure; unclear decision process	Time wasted; delays	Agenda; facilitator; decision rules	What decision are we making?
Avoidance of Conflict	Unresolved issues	Fear; weak feedback culture	Hidden tensions; low trust	Encourage feedback; retrospectives	What are we not saying?