

Dealing With Conflict

Why Use a Conflict-Resolution Procedure?

Groups with diverse personalities and ideas may benefit from a structured approach to mitigating conflict.

What is Conflict?

Two or more persons, ideas, or things attempting to occupy the same space at the same time. Conflict is inevitable - it is certain to happen. Conflict may or may not be resolved, but can be successfully managed using the following steps.

Basic Sources of Conflict

- Scarce and/or undistributable resources (e.g., time, money, people, material)
- Unmet expectations
- Unclear or different goals or values
- Jurisdictional ambiguity or lack of role clarity (e.g., whose job is it?)
- Different methods or styles

Options When Dealing With Conflict

1. Stay and do nothing.
2. Leave.
3. Change your attitude.
4. Change your behavior.

Ten Action Steps In Dealing With Difficult People

1. Weigh the value - is the disagreement necessary or useful?
2. Aim in a positive direction.
3. Summarize and post goals; direct conversation to reach the goals.

4. Pay close attention to the communication style of the people you're working with.
5. Think in terms of opportunities - what is available to help your group resolve issues?
6. Positively replay experiences.
7. Believe it's possible to get the results you want.
8. Give them a break; this will allow people to gather their thoughts.
9. Appreciate yourself.
10. Review program again.

Basic Communication Skills

- **PACING:** Create a shared experience that reduces the difference between you and others in order to increase the opportunities for cooperation.
- **NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:** 55% of communication. Shown in body postures, gestures, and facial expressions.
- **SOUND:** 38% of communication. Shown in voice tempo and voice volume.
- **WORDS:** 7% of communication. Shown in backtracking, clarification, and speaking your intent. Backtracking is when you repeat what someone says instead of what you think the message means. Effective clarification includes repeating what and who, where and when, and how. The most important part of the message is to speak your intent.

Four Basic Steps For Effectively Dealing With Difficult People

1. Know what you want.
2. Pay close attention.
3. Be flexible (having more than one choice).
4. Make the commitment.