

Conflict Resolution Participant Workbook

Introduction and disclaimer



Northwestern University

Northwestern



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Objectives

Objectives

This training is designed to help you:

- Define conflict
- Understand the dynamics of conflict
- Develop a personal style to deal with conflict
- Learn skills to manage conflict
- Identify ways to measure successful outcomes
- Practice conflict resolution

What would you like to get out of today's presentation?



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Components of professionalism

Components of professionalism

- Use appropriate language and tone
- Be aware of body language
- Take initiative
- Focus on solutions



How can your workplace's professionalism be improved?



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Defining conflict



Conflict is defined as:

- A fight, battle or struggle
- Strife
- Controversy
- Quarrel
- Discord of action or feeling
- Antagonism or opposition
- Incompatibility or interference

How does conflict typically manifest in your life?



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Dynamics of conflict

Dynamics of conflict

- It's normal
- Shouldn't be alarming
- Communication and understanding tend to go by the wayside
- May require a mediator
- Not all get resolved

What can be gained through conflict?



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Determining the root cause of conflict

Determining the root cause of conflict



What is typically the most common cause of conflict in your life?



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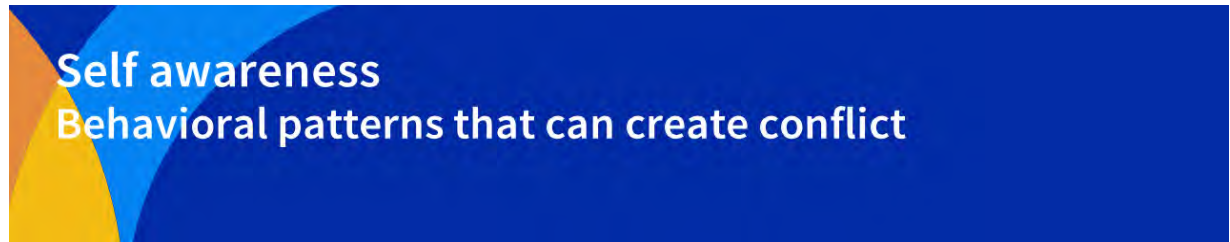
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Self awareness

Behavioral patterns that can create conflict



Are you, or someone you know, one of these personality types? How can you have effective discussions with them?



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Self awareness continued

Know your triggers

Self awareness continued Know your triggers

- Recognize how triggers affect your feelings and how to control them
- Defuse yourself before attempting to defuse someone else



What are some of your warning signs, symptoms or triggers?



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Conflict resolution styles

Firm

Conflict resolution styles

Firm

Wait it out

Smooth things over

Do it my way

Is your conflict resolution style more firm?



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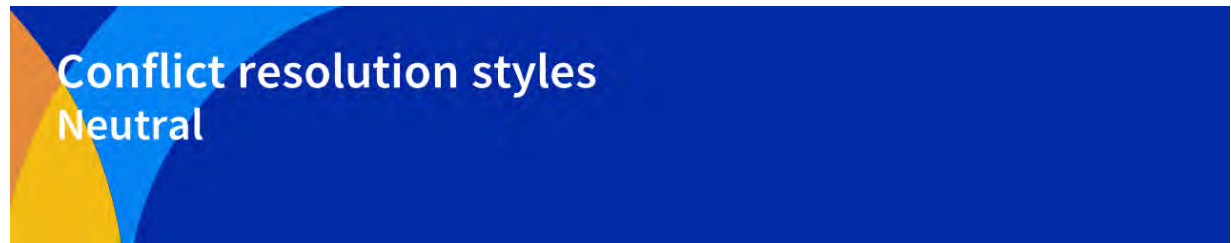
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Conflict resolution styles

Neutral



- Resolve by rules
- Agree to disagree
- Make a deal

Is your conflict resolution style more neutral?



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Conflict resolution styles

Flexible

Conflict resolution styles Flexible



Is your conflict resolution style more flexible?



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Understand the issue

Understand the issue

- Who is the conflict with?
- What is the issue?
- Where are the areas of disagreement?



How is this concept working, or not working, in your life?



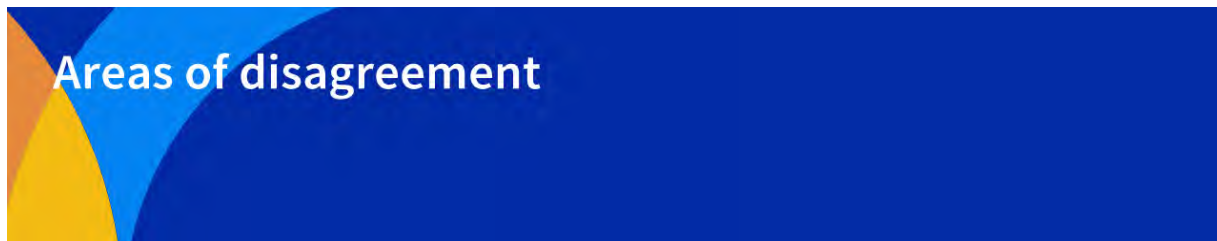
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Areas of disagreement



What can you do to recognize where someone is coming from?



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The interaction



- Choose your location**
 - Private area
 - Only those involved should be present
- Communication is key**
 - Send
 - Receive
 - Listen
- Choose your style**
 - Blend styles
 - Different styles for different situations

What can you do to prepare before and during the interaction to increase the likelihood of success?



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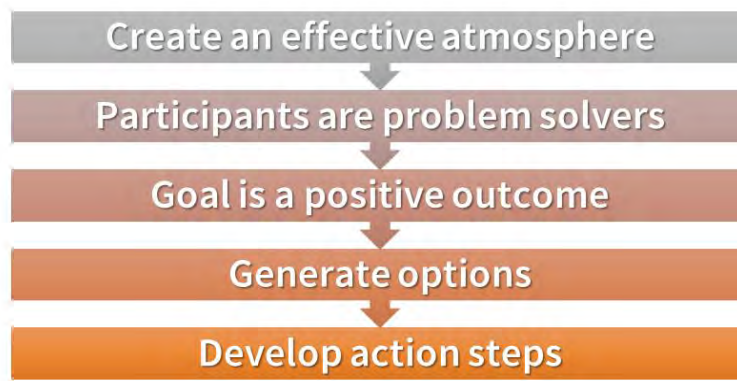
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Problem solving

Problem solving



What are some of the biggest barriers to implementing this?



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Resolving conflict



Find common ground

See different viewpoints

Preserve dignity and respect

How can you personally break some of those barriers down?



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Evaluate the outcome

Evaluate the outcome

- Did you accurately identify who the conflict was with?
- Did you accurately define the issue at stake?
- Did you determine where the areas of disagreement were?
- Was a resolution reached that was acceptable to all parties?

How can this apply in your workplace?



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Signs of success

Signs of success

- More creative and effective ideas and solutions
- Fewer conflicts
- Maintain positive relationships
- More win-win situations
- Choose conflict resolution skills

What does conflict resolution look like for you?



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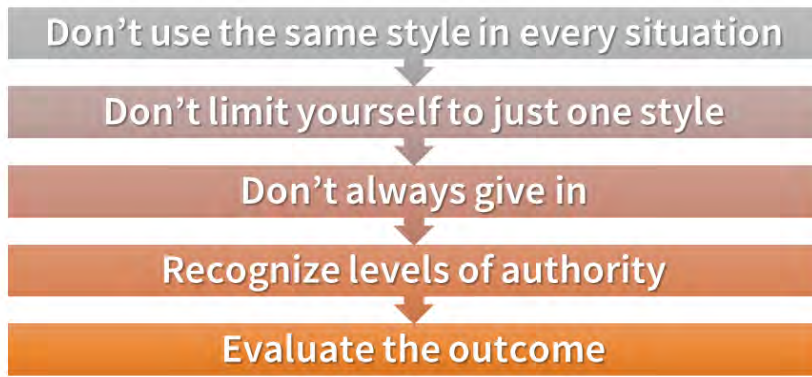
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Things to remember



Identify one or two ways you can apply these concepts in your life.



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Scenario #1

Scenario #1

You are frustrated because you believe your co-worker doesn't work as hard as you. They comes in late, takes long breaks in the bathroom, spends a lot of time chit chatting, and finds loopholes to avoid doing the work. You find yourself doing the bulk of the work and feel exhausted.

How do you address this?

How can you respond in this situation?



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Scenario #2

Scenario #2

You and your manager constantly clash. Your personalities and communication styles are different. Yesterday, the manager told you to hurry up. You feel disrespected when your manager doesn't even say hello and you feel they insinuated that you were slow.

How do you address this?

How can you respond in this situation?



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Scenario #3



You have been coming to work late recently because you have to drive the children to school and also have been taking your sick mother to the doctor. Your mother is elderly, and you are afraid to let her drive.

Your Human Resources calls you in for a meeting and warns you that if you are late again, you will be written up. You storm out of the room and can't believe they called you in since you've been a good, committed worker for many years.

How do you address this?

How can you respond in this situation?



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Scenario #4

Scenario #4

Recently, you shared with a co-worker who is also your friend that you are having marital issues. That afternoon, you overhear other co-workers talking about it in the break room. You no longer trust your co-worker and want to confront her. You are so upset that you want to leave work early to avoid people.

How do you address this?

How can you respond in this situation?



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Interactive toolkits



Mindfulness

www.mindfulness.tools

Practical tools and exercises for incorporating mindfulness into everyday life.

Resiliency

www.resiliency.tools

Skill development resources to help you 'bounce back' from challenging situations.

Meditation

www.meditate.tools

Easy-to-use collection of resources that includes guided meditations, tip sheets and more.

Sleep fitness

www.sleepfitness.tools

Information and resources to help you learn good sleep habits and achieve healthy sleep.

Visit the toolkits for self-care resources, that can help you be in a better state of mind to handle conflict.



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What is SupportLinc?

What is SupportLinc?

The SupportLinc Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a health benefit, separate from your medical insurance, offered by your employer to help you manage life's daily challenges.

SupportLinc can refer you to professional counselors, services and resources that will help you and your eligible family members resolve a broad range of personal and work-related concerns.

What services are included? Work-life benefits



Manager consultation

Expert guidance and referrals for: interpersonal communication, effective time management, conflict resolution, navigating team dynamics, cultural diversity in the workplace and more



Legal consultation

Free in-person or telephonic consultation with a licensed attorney
No employment law



Identity theft consultation

Free consultation with an identity theft recovery professional
Tailored recovery action plan



Financial consultation

Expert guidance and consultation from financial professionals



Dependent care referrals

Expert referrals to child and adult/elder care providers, facilities and other resources



"Convenience" referrals

Guidance and referrals to a variety of daily living resources: home improvement, entertainment services, pet care, auto repair, wellness, travel, handymen, volunteer opportunities etc.



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Getting started

Getting started



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SupportLinc

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Additional resources

Conflict is a normal, natural part of human relationships. People will not agree about everything all the time. In and of itself, conflict is not necessarily a negative thing. When handled constructively it can help people to stand up for themselves and others, and work together to achieve a mutually satisfactory solution. But if the conflict is handled poorly, it can cause anger, hurt, divisiveness and more serious problems. This guide discusses how to deal with conflict in a constructive manner.

Sources of conflict

There can be many causes or reasons for conflict. However, some of the most common include:

- Personal differences such as values, ethics, personalities, age, education, gender, social and economic status, cultural background, temperament, health, religion, political beliefs etc..
- A clash of ideas, choices or actions. For instance, conflict can occur when people have incompatible goals when they are in direct competition, or even when they have different work styles.
- Finally, poor communication or miscommunication is one of the biggest causes of conflict.

Preventing conflict

While it isn't possible to prevent all conflict, there are steps that you can take to try to keep conflict to a minimum. One way to manage conflict is to prevent it from occurring in the first place. Preventing conflict is not the same as avoiding conflict. Preventing conflict means behaving and communicating in a way that averts needless conflicts.

Consider the following tips:

- Respect differences. Many conflicts arise from differences in gender, generations, cultures, values etc.. We live in an increasingly diverse world. Learn to respect and celebrate peoples' differences and opinions.
- Treat others as you'd like to be treated. Regardless of your personal opinion of someone, be professional, courteous, respectful and tolerant, even when you're frustrated. If a person treats you disrespectfully, calmly tell them you do not appreciate it. Do not exacerbate the situation by retaliating with inappropriate behavior or comments.
- Keep negative opinions to yourself. Most people are put off by hearing negative comments about others—especially if it's about a personal issue. In the workplace, this may lead to disciplinary action. Friends and acquaintances may be equally "turned off" by negative comments about someone, particularly if they feel they are being drawn into a conflict or being asked to take sides. If you need to vent about a personal issue, do so outside of the workplace, keep it to a close, trusted friend or a loved one and keep it to a minimum.
- Keep your distance. Unfortunately, this is often easier said than done. Often the conflicts arise with those who are closest to us. It is often easier to get along if you respect one another's privacy and boundaries. Taking a break from each other, even if it is just for a few minutes to breathe and get some space, can go along way in keeping the peace.

Resolving conflict

Sometimes, conflict cannot — or should not — be avoided. Knowing how to deal with conflict is important for anyone. However, often people have not been given the tools to effectively deal with conflict. Consider the following tips:



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Additional resources

- Address the issue early. The longer you let an issue fester, the more time you waste and the greater chance you have of it spiraling into other problems.
- Address the issue privately. Set up a time to talk in a private place, where you won't be overheard or interrupted. Speak to the person with whom you have the conflict and try to resolve the issue one-on-one before involving others.
- Expect discomfort. You may have to say up front: "Although this is uncomfortable for me, if I don't address this, I'm afraid we will not meet our goal."
- Be specific and objective. Identify the specific issue at hand and the effect it is having. Avoid generalizing statements such as "always," "ever" or "never." Stick to the subject; try not to digress into broad personality issues or revive past issues.
- Focus on the outcome. Don't dwell on problems or blame. Keep the spotlight on finding solutions and how you will reach the desired outcomes. "In order to reach the goal of X, I think we need to do Y."
- Be open. Doing so establishes an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation. Listen to and consider others' opinions, points of view and ideas. Understand and appreciate that they think differently than you and may bring a greater, or different, understanding to the table that will help resolve the problem more quickly and effectively.
- Respond constructively. Let the other person know you value what he or she is saying, even if you don't agree. Try to avoid responding negatively or derisively, for example criticizing, ridiculing, dismissing, diverting (talking about yourself rather than about what the other person has said) or rejecting the other person or what they are saying.
- Know your triggers. Learn to recognize your personal warning signs for anger and figure out the ways that work for best for you to constructively control your anger.
- Maintain a sense of humor. Be willing to laugh, including at yourself. Maintaining a sense of humor can relieve stress and tension and help get you and others through a difficult time.
- Learn to compromise. Compromise is important in any relationship. If you disagree on an issue, discuss the problem calmly, allow each person to explain his or her point of view, and look for ways to meet each other in the middle.
- Don't attempt to resolve conflict when tempers are flaring. During an argument, often no one can agree on a reasonable solution. If that is the case, agree to take a break and come back to the problem later, when you have had time to settle down and think about the issue.
- Know when to retreat. The conflict resolution process will not always work. The level of the skills of some people may not be at the point where they can be full partners in this process. For example, you may have a spouse who does not want to or know how to, solve the problem. You may also have a conflict with a co-worker, boss or higher-up who is known for irrational outbursts. You must take all these factors into consideration and know when it may be more appropriate for you to cut your losses and retreat.
- Practice forgiveness. There may be times when someone makes a mistake or says or does something hurtful — whether intentionally or unintentionally. While it's okay to be angry, it's also important to let go of the anger and move on.



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Additional resources

Mutual conflict resolution

In most cases you should be able to resolve conflicts by working with others involved. Here are some steps to consider:

Step one: Identify the purpose and importance of the conflict—and your mutual desire to solve it.

Step two: Takes turns listening to each other's side. This is a very important step and one that requires good listening skills.

Step three: Once all the issues are discussed, repeat and summarize what was said. It may help to write this down or even create “minutes” to document issues discussed.

Step four: Ask questions as needed and encourage others to do the same. Do you understand their point of view? Are you sure they understand yours? Clarify as needed.

Step five: No matter how intense the conflict, you should always find issues or points that you agree upon. For instance, “we agree our goal is to increase sales by 10% this year.” Or, “we agree that we need to cut our household costs, we just don't agree on what costs we can cut.”

Step six: Next, list ALL Solutions— even those that may seem unrealistic, unreasonable or wrong.

Step seven: Review all the possible solutions and highlight those you find mutually acceptable. Hopefully, you will have at least one or two that you agree upon.

Step eight: Choose the one (or few) that you agree will work best.

Step nine: Put a plan into action. What steps will you take to implement? How will you review progress?

By creating step-by-step guidelines and mutually agreed upon solutions and action plans, you should be able to minimize conflict and achieve the desired goals.

For further resources, please go to your portal and use the search bar to type in “Conflict Resolution Flash Course.”



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