Understanding Conflict

Presented by: Human Resource Services

OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the nature, sources and developmental stages of conflict.
2. Identify the necessary components of an effective conflict resolution.
3. Describe the five basic styles of conflict resolution.
4. Explain each of the suggested steps in conflict resolution.

CONFLICT DEFINED

A clash between two or more opposing elements, ideas or persons.
ATTITUDES TOWARDS

**Negative**
- Abnormal
- Wrong
- Unproductive
- Should be suppressed
- Winner vs. loser

**Positive**
- Normal
- Natural
- Productive
- Healthy
- Lead to change

EFFECTIVE RESOLUTION

- Efficiently meet the interests of concerned parties
- Improve - or at least not damage - the relationships of those concerned

EFFECTIVE RESOLUTION

*Why worry about the needs of others?*

The other side cannot be expected to support a resolution that does not come close to meeting its interests.
**SOURCES OF CONFLICT**

- **Inter-Role**: Between two or more roles occupied by an individual.
- **Intra-Role**: Within a single role occupied by an individual.
- **Interpersonal**: Between two or more people.
- **Intragroup**: Between two or more factions within a common grouping.
- **Intergroup**: Between two or more readily identifiable, distinct groups.

**SOURCES OF CONFLICT**

- **Group Breakout**

**STAGES OF CONFLICT**

- **Latent**: Not yet aware of the conflict.
- **Perceived**: Become aware of conflict.
- **Felt**: Develop stress and anxiety.
- **Manifest**: Conflict is open and observed.
- **Aftermath**: Outcome of conflict, resolution or dissolution.
TYPES OF CONFLICT

- Facts or Data
- Methods or Practices
- Goals or Purposes
- Values or Philosophies

TWO ASPECTS OF ANY

- Substance
- Feelings

Truly resolving a conflict requires dealing with both dimensions.

STAGES OF CONFLICT

Group Breakout
RESPONDING TO CONFLICT

- Identify your expectations
- Consider your responses
- Respect other points of view
- Practice empathy
- Be open to learning and change

DEFUSING CONFLICT

- Offer your hand
- Allow ventilation
- Eye contact
- Body Language
- Offer hospitality
- Take out a notebook
- Use plural pronouns
- Remain calm
- Use active listening
- Ask questions
- Make observations
- Use “I” statements

DEFUSING CONFLICT

The “I” Statement
Deflecting blame from the “problem person” while emphasizing a focus on the behavior at hand.
DEFUSING CONFLICT

The “I” Statement

1) Appropriately address the person
   “Bob – Dr. Jones – Ms. Miller,”
2) Describe how the behavior makes you feel
   “I feel frustrated and annoyed . . .”
3) Describe the behavior itself
   “when people use loud tones with me . . .”
4) Explain why it causes you to feel this way
   “because I feel personally attacked.”

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
 ASSESSMENT

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

- Avoidance
- Accommodation
- Competition
- Compromise
- Collaboration
### AVOIDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trivial issues</td>
<td>Restricts constructive input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk outweighs gains</td>
<td>Prevents problem solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More info is needed</td>
<td>Denies your own input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue represents larger problem</td>
<td>May require more energy than engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others can better resolve</td>
<td>Temporary solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You lack the authority</td>
<td>Decisions made by default</td>
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**Lose / Lose resolution**

### ACCOMMODATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When you are wrong!</td>
<td>Your interests are not met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When “giving in” is a viable solution</td>
<td>May add stress to relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To build up “credits”</td>
<td><strong>Never use when:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the issue is trivial</td>
<td>• Safety is jeopardized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When harmony is critical</td>
<td>• Goals, mission, values are jeopardized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To let others learn</td>
<td>• Ethical standards or legal mandates are compromised</td>
</tr>
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**Lose / Win resolution**

### COMPETITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When an immediate decision is required</td>
<td>Restricts exploration of other approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To protect others who might otherwise be used</td>
<td>You win at the expense of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On vital issues with compatibility is missing</td>
<td>Leaves a legacy of bitterness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When other styles are not working and a decision is needed</td>
<td>Results in minimum commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To enforce unpopular decisions</td>
<td>Often becomes a temporary solution</td>
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**Win / Lose resolution**
### COMPROMISE

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<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue is too volatile for collaboration</td>
<td>Does not promote team effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal opponents are immovable</td>
<td>The best resolution/decision may be lost in the bargaining (“the crumbs”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a temporary resolution is required</td>
<td>Can result in further “we vs. they” dichotomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To alleviate time pressures</td>
<td>Perception that other side got more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When other styles could compromise safety, goals, etc.</td>
<td>Neither side’s interests are fully met</td>
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Partial Win / Win  
Also Lose / Lose

### COLLABORATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Uses</th>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too important to compromise</td>
<td>Take time and effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment is critical</td>
<td>Requires sincere and active participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No clear policy or best decision</td>
<td>Requires a willingness to work toward a true resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex issue</td>
<td>Win / Win resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others share goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To explore alternatives</td>
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### CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

Group Breakout
FOUR PRINCIPLES

1) Separate the people from the problem
2) Focus on interests, not positions
3) Generate a variety of options before deciding
4) Seek objective standards

SEVEN STEPS

Assert Common Interests
Express Each Side’s Concerns and Interests
Develop Criteria For Good Solution
Generate Action Ideas
Develop Action Plans
Implement Best Suggestions
Evaluate Results

In conclusion . . .

1) Assess the situation
2) Separate relationship issues from substantive issues
3) Remind yourself that you will treat the person well - no matter what
4) Be unconditionally constructive
5) Stop wishing the people or situation were different!
6) Formulate a plan for resolution
The End