

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

# Understanding Conflict

Presented by: Human Resource Services

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OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the nature, sources and developmental stages 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.

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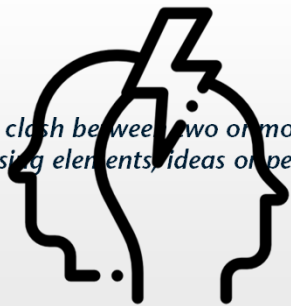
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CONFLICT DEFINED



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

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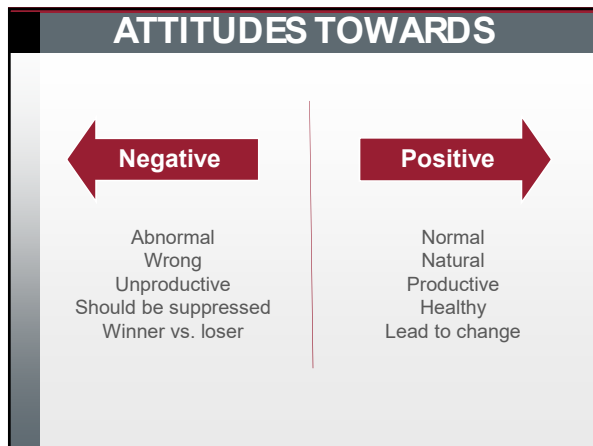
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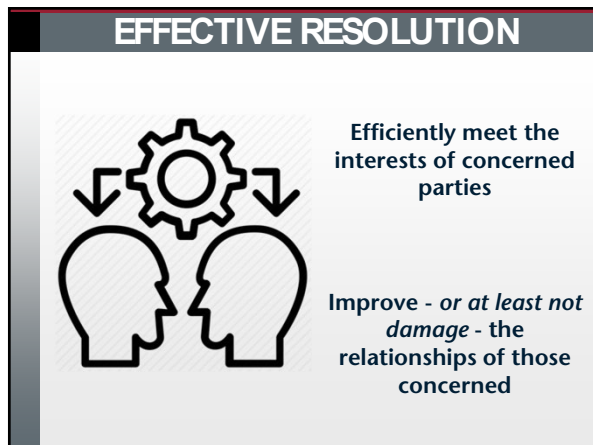
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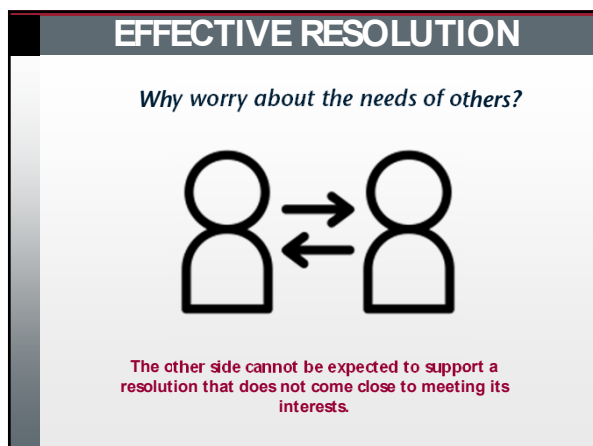
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SOURCES OF CONFLICT	
Inter-Role	Between two or more roles occupied by an individual.
Intra-Role	Within a single role occupied by an individual.
Interpersonal	Between two or more people
Intragroup	Between two or more factions within a common grouping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

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## SOURCES OF CONFLICT

### Group Breakout

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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

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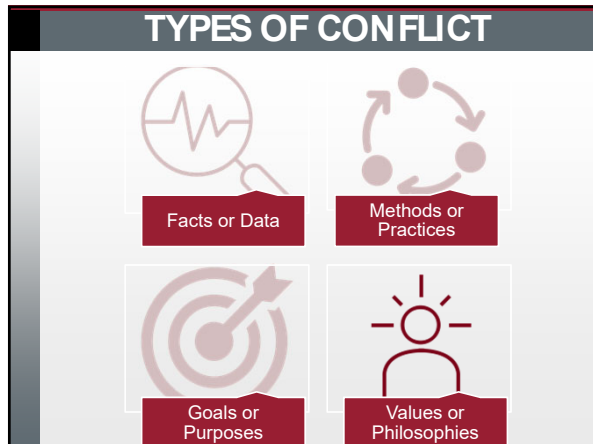
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RESPONDING TO CONFLICT



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

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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

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DEFUSING CONFLICT

The "I" Statement

Deflecting blame from the "problem person" while emphasizing a focus on the behavior at hand.

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## 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."*

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## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

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## CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

-  Avoidance
-  Accommodation
-  Competition
-  Compromise
-  Collaboration

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

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ACCOMMODATION	
Appropriate Uses	Drawbacks
When you are wrong!	Your interests are not met
When "giving in" is a viable solution	May add stress to relationships
To build up "credits"	<b>Never use when:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety is jeopardized</li><li>• Goals, mission, values are jeopardized</li><li>• Ethical standards or legal mandates are compromised</li></ul>
When the issue is trivial	
When harmony is critical	
To let others learn	
<b>Lose / Win resolution</b>	

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

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COM PROM ISE

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

Partial Win / Win  
Also Lose / Lose

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COLLABORATION

Appropriate Uses	Drawbacks
Too important to compromise	Take time and effort
Commitment is critical	Requires sincere and active participation
No clear policy or best decision	Requires a willingness to work toward a true resolution
Complex issue	Win / Win resolution
Others share goals	
To explore alternatives	

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CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
STYLES  
Group Breakout

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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

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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

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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

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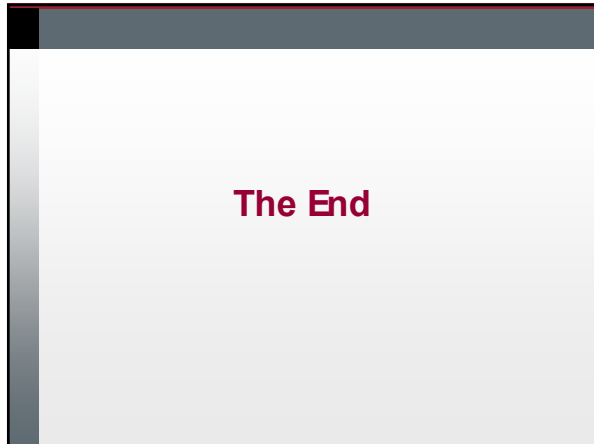
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