Corporation for National & Community Service Montana State Office

IN-SERVICE TRAINING



RESOLVING CONFLICTS EFFECTIVELY

LC: RESOLVING CONFLICTS EFFECTIVELY LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of this session, participants will be able to:

Explain how "early cultural starting points" relate to how people perceive, address, and respond to conflicts currently.
Relate at least 3 effective strategies for addressing conflicts.
Discuss the distinctions between interests and positions and intention and impact, and describe their significance to effective conflict resolution.
Discuss 6 important principles that could yield a climate for effective conflict resolution.



1. Learning Circle Set-Up

- ✓ Welcome, introductions, Table Resumes Activity
- ✓ Session overview, packet, working agreements

2. Resolving Conflicts Basics

- Personal responses
- Styles, cultural roots
- Causes
- Important guidelines and frameworks

3. Different Skills

- ✓ Analysis
- ✓ Separating interests from positions
- ✓ Facilitating a win-win

4. Conflict Resolution Lab

5. Learning Circle Close-Out

✓ Summary of session, reflection, closing remarks

Conflict can be perceived and dealt with as an opportunity for:

- Positive change
- Re-evaluation of our relationships
- Creativity
- Satisfying unfulfilled needs
- Increasing knowledge
- Acquiring new skills
- Recognizing and appreciating differences
- Empowering ourselves and others

This requires:

- A willingness and ability to explore and experience different and additional techniques than we traditionally use to deal with our differences and conflicts.
- A respectful approach to cultures and values different from our own.

Welcome! Your assignment is to get to know each other a bit better while focusing on this learning circle's topic – RESOLVING CONFLICTS.



TABLE RC RÉSUMÉ Instructions

Activity time = approximately 7 minutes

- ⇒ Recruit a Discussion Facilitator , Recorder/Reporter, & a Timekeeper
- ⇒ WORK TOGETHER TO ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR YOUR "TEAM RÉSUMÉ." Make sure to involve every member of the table group. Record your answers on provided newsprint.
 - 1. Names of everyone in the group.
 - 2. List 10 things table members associate with "conflict."
 - 3. Tell how members typically respond physically and emotionally to conflict.
 - 4. List 5 skills participants need to be more effective at conflict resolution.
 - 5. List the training members have received on "Conflict Resolution."
 - 6. Record wisdom different members can offer about resolving conflicts.

***Once the table has completed the assignment, each table group will be given approximately 2 minutes to share their résumé.

CONFLICT STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

For each item, select the statement that BEST represents how you would respond in that situation. What statement is MOST characteristic of your own behavior. In many cases, neither A nor B may be very typical of your behavior, however, please select the response that you would be more LIKELY to use.

- 1. A. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
 - B. Rather than negotiate the things on which we disagree, I try to stress those things on which we both agree.
- **2**. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
 - B. I attempt to deal with all of his/her and my own concerns.
- 3. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my own goals.
 - B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
- **4**. A. I try to find a compromise solution.
 - B. I sometimes sacrifice my own wishes for the wishes of the other person.
- **5**. A. I consistently seek the other's help in working out a solution.
 - B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
- **6**. A. I try to avoid creating unpleasantness for myself.
 - B. I try to win my position.
- 7. A. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
 - B. I give up some points in exchange for others.
- **8**. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
 - B. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
- **9**. A. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
 - B. I make some effort to get my way.
- **10**. A. I am firm in pursuing my own goals.
 - B. I try to find a compromise solution.
- **11**. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
 - B. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
- **12**. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions which would create controversy.
 - B. I let the other person have some positions if s/he lets me have some of mine.
- **13**. A. I propose a middle ground.
 - B. I press to get my points made.
- **14**. A. I tell the other person my ideas and ask for his/hers.
 - B. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.

- **15**. A. I might try to soothe the other's feelings and preserve our relationship.
 - B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid tensions.
- **16**. A. I try not to hurt the other person's feelings.
 - B. I try to convince the other person of the merits of my position.
- **17**. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
 - B. I try to do what is necessary to avoid useless tensions.
- **18**. A. If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
 - B. I will let other people have some of their positions if they let me have some of mine.
- **19**. A. I attempt to get all concerns and issues immediately out in the open.
 - B. I try to postpone the issue until I have had some time to think it over.
- **20**. A. I attempt to immediately work through our differences.
 - B. I try to find a fair combination of gains and losses for both of us.
- 21. A. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
 - B. I always lead toward a direct discussion of the problem.
- **22**. A. I try to find a position that is intermediate between our two.
 - B. I assert my wishes.
- **23**. A. I am very often concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
 - B. There are times when I let others take responsibility for solving the problem.
- **24**. A. If the other's position seems very important to him/her, I would try to meet his or her wishes.
 - B. I try to get the other person to settle for a compromise.
- **25**. A. I try to show the other person the logic and benefits of my position.
 - B. In approaching negotiations, I try to be considerate of the other person's wishes.
- **26**. A. I propose a middle ground.
 - B. I am nearly always concerned with satisfying all our wishes.
- **27**. A. I sometimes avoid taking positions that would create controversy.
 - B. If it makes other people happy, I might let them maintain their views.
- **28**. A. I am usually firm in pursuing my goals.
 - B. I usually seek the other's help in working out a solution.
- **29**. A. I propose a middle ground.
 - B. I feel that differences are not always worth worrying about.
- **30**. A. I try not to hurt the other's feelings.
 - B. I always share the problem with the other person so that we can work it out.

CONFLICT STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Scoring KeyCircle the letters below which you circled on each item of the questionnaire.

Question					
1				Α	Е
2		В	Α		
3	Α				В
4			Α		В
5		Α		В	
6	В			Α	
7			В	Α	
8	А	В			
9	В			Α	
10	Α		В		
11		Α			В
12			В	Α	
13	В		А		
14	В	А			
15				В	А
16	В				А
17	А			В	
18			В		А
19		Α		В	
20		А	В		
21		В			А
22	В		А		
23		А		В	
24			В		А
25	Α				В
26		В	Α		
27				Α	В
28	Α	В			
29			Α	В	
30		В			А
TOTAL					
	COMPETING	COLLABORATING	COMPROMISING	AVOIDING	ACCOMMODATING

The *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict MODE Instrument* (TKI) has been the leader in conflict resolution assessment for more than 30 years. This instrument requires no special qualifications for administration, and it is used by Human Resources (HR) and Organizational Development (OD) consultants as a catalyst to open discussions and facilitate learning about how conflict handling styles affect personal and group dynamics.

This instrument is designed to measure a person's behavior in conflict situations. "Conflict situations" are those in which the concerns of two people appear to be incompatible. In such situations, we can describe an individual's behavior along two basic dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which the person attempts to satisfy his own concerns, and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the person attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns.

These two basic dimensions of behavior define five different modes for responding to conflict situations:

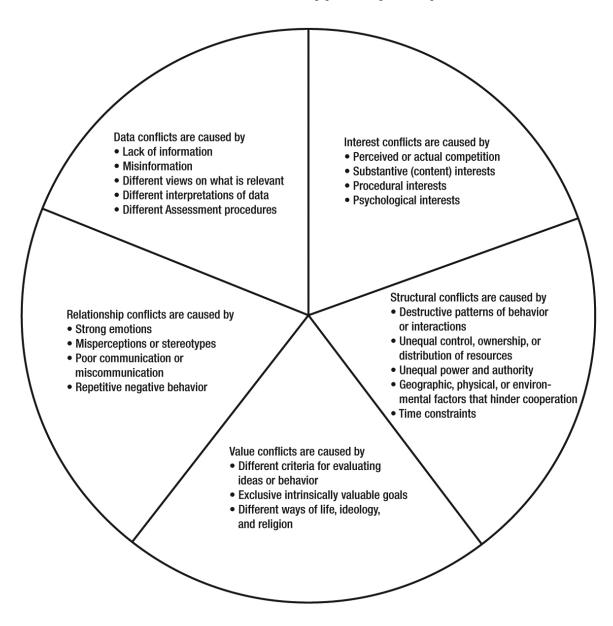
- 1. Competing is assertive and uncooperative -- an individual pursues his own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode in which you use whatever power seems appropriate to win your own position -- your ability to argue, your rank, or economic sanctions. Competing means "standing up for your rights," defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.
- 2. Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative -- the complete opposite of competing. When accommodating, the individual neglects his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.
- 3. **Avoiding** is unassertive and uncooperative -- the person neither pursues his own concerns nor those of the other individual. Thus he does not deal with the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.
- 4. *Collaborating* is both assertive and cooperative -- the complete opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with others to find some solution that fully satisfies their concerns. It means digging into an issue to pinpoint the underlying needs and wants of the two individuals. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.
- 5. *Compromising* is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls intermediate between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating. In some situations, compromising might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, exchanging concessions, or seeking a guick middle-ground solution.

Each of us is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes. None of us can be characterized as having a single style of dealing with conflict. But certain people use some modes better than others and, therefore, tend to rely on those modes more heavily than others -- whether because of temperament or practice.

Your conflict behavior in the workplace is therefore a result of both your personal predispositions and the requirements of the situation in which you find yourself. The *Conflict Mode Instrument* is designed to measure this mix of conflict-handling modes.

(from the work of Thomas & Killman)

Sources and Types Of Conflict



Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Conflict Resolution I & 2. Macro International, Inc. & Circle Solutions, Inc.: Washington, D.C



PERSONAL RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

G. Woo, 2004

a.	How do you typically respond <u>physically</u> to conflict?
b.	How do you typically respond <u>emotionally</u> to conflict?
C.	How do you typically respond mentally to conflict?
d.	When do you feel most <u>vulnerable</u> in a conflict situation?
e.	What do you typically do when someone is avoiding addressing a conflict with you?
f.	What is a <u>strength</u> you bring to resolving conflicts?
g.	What is a <u>weakness</u> you have that challenges your ability to help resolve conflicts?
h.	Under what conditions do you <u>avoid</u> confronting someone?
i.	What issues, statements, or behaviors are real "hot buttons" for you?
j.	When someone disagrees with you on something important in front of others, what do you usually do?
k.	What do you usually do when you have to confront someone you care a lot about?



SHARING EARLY, CULTURAL "STARTING POINTS" RELATED TO CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

G. Woo, 2003

- What were the different messages you received about conflict and conflict resolution when you were growing up?
- How were your early messages about conflict conveyed to you?
- Who sent you your early messages about conflict and conflict resolution?
- Why do you think your early messages about conflict were relayed to you?
- Early on, who were your "enforcers" of appropriate conflict conduct?
- How did the messages you received differ from the message you noticed others receiving (peers, siblings, elders, cultural insiders, cultural outsiders, people of other generations, etc.) regarding what was appropriate?
- How do you think your early "starting points" connect to how you experience and work with conflict now?



I. INVENTORY of CONFLICT

⇒ The Needs and Interests of each Party?

Different Parties	#1:	#2:	#3:	#4:
Position(s)				
Interests				
Needs				

 \Rightarrow Triggering Event(s)?



ANALYSIS of CONFLICT

- \Rightarrow Issue(s)?
- ⇒ Sources of the conflict
- ⇒ Type(s) of conflict
- ⇒ Complexity?
 - Seriousness of the stakes involved
 - Quality of relationships between parties commitment to each other
 - Quality of communication
 - The degree to which the languages of the parties are shared and/or understood
 - Number of issues that the conflict involves
 - Level of multicultural/cross-cultural understanding that exists between parties
 - Extent of common ground between parties shared values, mission, etc.
 - History of resolving conflicts successfully between parties
 - Duration of time the conflict has been active
 - The way power is distributed between the parties
 - Number and quality of resources available to help resolve conflict
 - The current resolution climate
 - The wants and desires of the stakeholders
 - Number of people, organizations, or communities involved
- ⇒ Important History?
- ⇒ Gray or foggy areas?







III. FACTORS THAT IMPACT SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION

- **X** Commitment to future relationship
- ✗ Degree of shared values, common ground, vision
- Negotiated and agreed upon process
- **x** Enough resources
- Good timing
- * Stakeholder buy-in and support
- **≭** Trusted 3rd party or outside help if needed
- Information management rumor and misinformation control
- **Sufficient and appropriate clearing and airing time**
- Cross-cultural understanding and cultural appropriateness of processes used and what is being proposed
- **X** Level of respect and integrity that is promoted and maintained by parties
- Level of commitment to seeking a win-win
- **Supportive community and political climate**
- Creativity and opportunity thinking
- Number of other competing needs and issues

G. Woo, 2001



Separating Interest from Position

Instruction: For each position listed, identify the interest of the speaker Position: I was very angry about the last meeting and I'm not going again. Interest: If you continue to be negative about everything, I don't want to Position: be around you. Interest: This project isn't accomplishing anything; you don't need me. Position: Interest: Position: These people did not fulfill their promises; therefore we can't trust them again. Interest: Position: You're always putting people down and it just has to stop. Interest: Position: I can tell you're going to burn out! Interest: Position: No, you will not attend the party tonight! Interest: Position: This is stupid. I don't want to be on your team. Interest:



	Unconditionally Constructive	Good for the Relationship	Good For Me
1.	Balance emotion with reason.	It is less likely we will have an irrational battle.	I make fewer mistakes.
2.	Try to understand.	The better I understand you, the fewer collisions we will have.	The less I shoot in the dark, the better solution I can invent and the better able I am to influence you.
3.	Inquire, consult, and listen.	We both participate in making decisions; better communication improves them.	I reduce the risk of making a mistake without giving up the ability to decide.
4.	Be reliable.	It tends to build trust and confidence.	My words will have more impact.
5.	Be open to persuasion, try to persuade.	If people are persuaded rather than coerced, both the outcome and compliance are better.	By being open, I keep learning; it is easier to resist coercion if one is open to persuasion.
6.	Accept the other as worth dealing with and learning from.	To deal well with our differences, I have to deal with you and keep an open mind.	By dealing with you and reality, I remove obstacles to learning the facts and to persuading you on the merits.

Principles Of A Win-Win Strategy



- Participants are problem solvers.
- The goal is a wise outcome reached efficiently and amicably.
- Separate the problem from people.
- Be soft on the people, hard on the problem.
- Proceed independent of trust.
- Focus on interests, not on positions.
- Explore interests; avoid having a bottom line.
- Invent options for mutual gain.
- Develop multiple options to choose from; decide later.
- Use objective criteria.
- Try to reach results based on standards independent of will.
- Reason and be open to reason; yield to principles, not to pressure.

Effective Practices for Resolving Differences of Opinion: From Lose-Lose to Win-Win with RESPECT

By **Laura Wilson**, from The National Skills Development Center: Home-Based Care and Independent Living

National service members work in a variety of situations and interact with a multitude of personality "types," sometimes creating less than a perfect fit. Wherever your members work, there are times when conflicts will arise. This is very true in the home-based care area, where recipients may feel uncomfortable physically and become irritated and impatient.

The usual way conflicts play themselves out is for people to argue their points of view over and over again in an attempt to have others finally agree with them and provide them with what they seek. When this occurs, most often the best "arguer" will get what he or she wants, but not necessarily what he or she needs. The following dialogue illustrates this sort of confrontation, where it becomes a lose-lose outcome.

Miguel is an AmeriCorps member who provides home-based care for Annie. On one particular visit, the conversation sounds like this:

Annie: You're late. I need someone I can depend on. I can't depend on you. Go, and I never want to see you again!

Miguel: You have some nerve! I help you so much and treat you nicely, and just because I get caught in traffic and am a few minutes late, you kick me out of your house?

Annie: That's right. I can't depend on you. You're unreliable.

Miguel: Well, if you're going to be so unreasonable and unappreciative, I don't want to be around here to help you anyway. I'm out of here, and I won't be back!

In this case, Annie may get what she wants--Miguel is not longer providing care for her anymore--but not what she needs--someone who she can give assistance to her and with whom she can also develop a friendly relationship. Both Annie and Miguel lose when their conflict is resolved in this manner--Annie loses a friend and Miguel loses someone to assist.

How to Get to Win-Win

The RESPECT conflict resolution technique allows both sides to win and also get what they need. It includes the following steps:

 <u>R</u>ecognize 	that there is a difference of opinion.
• <u>E</u> liminate	from your mind any thought of what you want for the time being. You'll get back to it later.
• <u>S</u> can	and listen to what is being communicated by the other person in words and feelings.
 <u>P</u>araphrase 	what was communicated in words and state the feelings you believe the other person is experiencing.
• <u>E</u> xpress	what you want and describe your reasons for wanting it.
• <u>C</u> ollect	several alternative solutions.
• <u>T</u> ry	the best of the alternative solutions.

Returning to the conflict between Annie and Miguel using the RESPECT technique, their conversation might have gone something like this:

Annie: You're late. I need someone I can depend on. I can't depend on you. Go, and I never want to see you again!

Miguel: (Recognizes there is a conflict, eliminates thoughts of what he wants, scans and listens to Annie and paraphrases her words and feelings.) You seem particularly upset with me. It's important for you to be able to rely on me, isn't it?

Annie: Of course it is. I need your help and need to know you will be there when I need it.

Miguel: (Expresses his position.) I also want you to feel you can rely on me. Today I got stuck in a traffic jam. Sometimes there are unforeseen situations that develop. I need you to be more understanding. (Collects alternative solutions.) However, knowing how important is it to you that I be on time, I will try to leave earlier than I usually do so that if traffic delays me, I'll still be here on time. Are there any other things we might try to prevent a reoccurrence of this situation?

Annie: Well, I guess I can start to get things ready for your visit while waiting if you are a little late. Or, I can call you to see if you are already on your way.

Miguel: (Tries alternative solutions.) Those sound like good ideas. Let's try a couple of them. I will try to leave a little early and you start to get things ready if I

am a little late. I enjoy assisting you and want that to continue, and I want you to feel you can rely on me. I think of you as a friend.

Annie: Thank you. You are a friend, and I know I can rely on you. Now, let's get on with it.

Share the RESPECT technique with your AmeriCorps members. They may be able to reach new understandings with those they provide service to, and learn how to interact positively in difficult encounters.

Retaining Members through Conflict Resolution

By **Joanne Hartman**, Associate Director, National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM)

Conflict is a normal, inevitable part of life.

People who work together are likely to encounter conflicts sooner or later, sparked by differences in personality, values, or perceptions. Conflicts may also seem more challenging when those involved come from different backgrounds or experiences.

Just as in any other work setting, national service members may encounter disagreements with their peers, supervisor, or people in community organizations with whom they are working. For most people, conflict takes the enjoyment out of their work. For some, it may reach a point where they consider leaving the organization. Organizations and teams that often must deal with conflict situations tend to have lower morale, lower productivity, higher turnover, and more burn-out. Conflict that may have been easy to resolve at the outset can make us dread coming to work when it is an ongoing problem.

As preventive measures, it is important to note warning signs and behaviors that may create conflict so they may be addressed early.

Warning signs that something may be wrong:

- Avoidance of issue, situation, or person
- Mistrust
- Violations of rules and working guidelines
- Not accepting responsibility
- Not doing one's job
- Not listening
- Lack of understanding
- Power or status-based communication

Behaviors that may stir up conflict:

- Nonconstructive criticism
- Guilt trips
- Blaming, defensiveness
- Commands

- Unhealthy competitiveness
- Mistrust
- Pushing someone's "buttons"
- Using absolutes "You never..." "He always..."
- Threats, dares

What can be done?

- Establish working guidelines that the whole group agrees to and has helped create.
- Learn and practice effective communication skills active listening, reframing, etc.
- Go through a self assessment identify people's conflict styles: are they
 competitive, do they avoid conflicts, how well does the group employ
 collaborative conflict resolution, how do people cool off when they are angry?
- Model collaborative skills and encourage team members to practice.

Successful organizations create a climate in which people are invested and productive because they feel listened to and appreciated. This is the type of climate in which conflict is not a threat, but instead is an integral part of improving and growing in the organization. Supervisors can play a huge role in establishing this climate, with some key management principles in mind:

- Ethical leadership
- Empowerment invest in others
- Listen share differences of opinion while accepting the validity of other's views
- Environment:
 - 1. What are the vision and goals of the organization?
 - 2. Who are the people affected by the organization's work?
 - 3. How does the organization work?
 - 4. How do people interact?

Even when the goal is preventing conflict, collaborative conflict resolution is an essential tool. It is a model of resolving conflicts that respects and satisfies the concerns of each person involved in a conflict. In this model, those in the conflict take responsibility and ownership of the problem, then work together to solve it. They communicate with each other, try to understand each other's point of view, and come up with solutions that will produce a positive outcome for each person involved.

There are conflict resolution resources available - a local community mediation center or a state mediation association has a lot of experience dealing with many kinds of conflict situations, and can be a good partner or mentor to you and your project. Services may include materials, training, consulting, mediation, or facilitation.

Resources such as Getting Unstuck: Transforming Conflict from Crisis to Opportunity and A Manager's Guide to Conflict Resolution (soon to be published) are available from ETR Associates (800-860-2684, ext. 142) and NAFCM.

For further infomation on conflict resolution training, contact Joanne Hartman at 202-467-6226, or e-mail: jhartman@nafcm.org.

Utilizing an Eight-step Conflict Resolution Process to Reach an Agreement

ISSUE(S) BEING ADDRESSED: Reaching a mutually satisfactory agreement between parties in a conflict situation.

ACTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Step One: Deal Effectively With Anger

You can't negotiate a good agreement if you and/or the other person are too angry to think straight or if you don't acknowledge your feelings.

Step Two: Do Your Homework (Think Before You Approach)

- How does this conflict affect us?
- What interests or values are at stake for each of us?
- What prejudices or assumptions do we each have about the other?
- What approaches or style would be best here (avoid, compete, collaborate)?
- If I want to collaborate, what would be the right time and place to initiate that?

Step Three: Set a Positive Tone

- Invite the other person to negotiate. ("Could we talk?")
- State positive intentions. ("I'd like to make things better between us.")
- Acknowledge and validate the other person. ("I can see this is difficult for you too." "Thank you for working with me on this.")

Step Four: Use Ground Rules (They May Be Stated or Unstated)

- One person talks at a time.
- Work to improve the situation.
- Stay calm.

Step Five: Discuss and Define the Problem

- One at a time, each person shares issues and feelings.
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.
- Summarize new understandings.

Step Six: Brainstorm Possible Solutions

- Each person contributes ideas to satisfy interests and needs.
- Don't criticize or evaluate ideas yet.
- Be creative.
- Use "I can..." or "We could..." rather than "You should..." or "You'd better..."

Step Seven: Evaluate and Choose Solutions

Solutions should be:

- Mutually agreeable
- Realistic
- Specific
- Balanced

Solutions should address the main interests of both parties.

Step Eight: Follow-up

- Solutions should address the main interests of both parties.
- Check back with each other at an agreed-on time and date.

If the agreement isn't working, use the same process to revise it.

CITATION: National Association for Community Mediation. Face to Face: Resolving Conflict Without Giving In or Giving Up. Washington, D.C., 1996.

RESOURCES: Programs funded by the Corporation for National & Community Service can borrow the following resource(s) from the lending library of the National Service Resource Center:

Face to Face: Resolving Conflict Without Giving In or Giving Up

Item number: C1907 Phone:1-800-860-2684 E-mail: nsrc-library@etr.org

Website: http://nationalserviceresources.org/

Resolving Conflicts Bibliography

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Videos

A World of Differences: Understanding Cross-Cultural Communication, University of California video series on Nonverbal Communication.

Skin Deep, Iris Films, 1996.



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

Margeret Mead

RESOLVING CONFLICTS Learning Circle Follow-up Plan

	SIOP	START	CONTINUE
Me			
Our Program, Organization, Group, or Coalition			