



ISSUE 07

## HOW DO YOU MANAGE CONFLICT WISELY? LEADERNOTES

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Everyone has been in a situation where conflict has arisen. The extremity of the situations may vary, but overall every conflict must be managed in order to restore a level of peace. Even if the conflict isn't resolved, there are ways to manage the problem and make the situation more comfortable.

### Steps to Managing Conflict

#### 1. Analyze the Conflict

- ❖ In order to analyze the conflict, many people find it is helpful to ask questions. Go to people that don't have a bias in the situation, for example don't go to a mutual friend and ask for their input on the situation. This will allow you to step back, evaluate the situation, and determine what type of conflict it is.

#### 2. Determine your Management Strategy

- ❖ Collaboration- this results in a "win/win" situation where the group's interests and other's interests are equally weighed. It can be time consuming since the idea of this strategy is to reach a consensus, which at times can be difficult.
- ❖ Compromise- this results in a situation where the group's interests are top priority, followed closely by the interests of others. This strategy tends to result in short-term resolutions and is used to avoid power struggles or when time is crunched.
- ❖ Competition- this results when there is a high concern for your own group with much less concern for others. Retaliation of a loss is a risk with this strategy of bargaining for the win.

- ❖ Accommodation- this results when a group's interests are set aside to meet the interests of others. It is used most commonly when you don't feel an issue is as important as others do. It is seen as a "goodwill" gesture and typically gives you little credibility.
- ❖ Avoidance- this results from a low concern for both your group and that of others. This strategy is used in high pressure situations and decisions are usually rash and not thought through.

### 3. Pre-negotiation

- ❖ Certain things must be done before a conflict can begin to be worked out. One party must first approach the other with the proposal to work on the issue. After this is done, the two parties must meet at an appropriate time for both of them, and decide which factors are up for negotiation. The parties involved should set an agenda of the items they will discuss and the ground rules of their discussion. Relevancy to the problems must also be determined by the parties, so they stay on track with their negotiations.

### 4. Negotiation

- ❖ When in negotiation neither party should focus on personal positions but rather on the interests. The focus must be on the reasons, needs, and motivations for the position. Discuss different options to manage the conflict; don't immediately settle for one option. After all options are placed on the table then they must be discussed and agreed upon. Today, a written agreement comes highly recommended, as it is more likely to be followed.

### 5. Post-negotiation

- ❖ Communication is a key role in the continuation of the agreement. After the consensus is reached the parties must work together to gain support for their decision from organizations involved in the area. Communication must be continued throughout the entire job just to make sure the agreement is being followed.