

Increasing Board Effectiveness through Conflict Management

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Objectives

- Identify when conflict is present and when it needs to be addressed
- Identify common sources of conflict
- Understand your own conflict style
- Learn to assess the conflict style of others
- Gain skills on how to navigate conflict in your group.

Guidelines for Classroom Interaction

- Listen and respond to others with respect and integrity – one person speaks at a time.
- Information shared in class shall be considered confidential unless otherwise agreed upon. If you discuss a situation, which involves another, please change the name and circumstances to prevent recognition.
- Work cooperatively with others to provide appropriate feedback during discussion and group work.
- Cell phones and side conversations can be distracting to others. Please leave the room if you need to text or take a call, and give your full attention to discussions.
- When addressing conflict, focus on the problem and not the person.

Introduction & Initial Thoughts on Conflict

- Take a moment to write down your initial thoughts on conflict
 - My main interest in taking this workshop is:
 - What I do well in conflict situations is:
 - What gets me stuck in conflict situations is:
- Introduce yourself to the group by sharing your:
 - Name
 - Organization your work for
 - Position
 - One initial thought about conflict

Understanding Conflict



Defining Conflict

What is conflict?

Defining Conflict

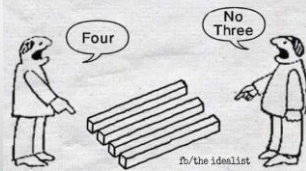
- “Conflict” comes from the Latin root “strike together” and can be defined as any situation where incompatible activities, feelings or intentions occur.
- Conflict can occur within a person, between two or more people, or between large groups of people.
- There are two types of conflict
 - Personal – occurs within the individual, where internal forces are at work
 - Social – occurs when people disagree over
 - Values
 - Needs
 - Beliefs
 - Perceptions
 - Expectations

Activity 1 – When is conflict present?

As a group, we will discuss:

- When is conflict present?
- When does conflict need to be addressed?

"Everything we hear
is an opinion, not a fact.
Everything we see
is a perspective, not the truth."
- Marcus Aurelius



Activity 2 – Part 1 – Survey

Complete the survey and tally your scores.

Activity 2 – Part 2 - Conflict Styles

Move to groups of 6 or so and share your style.

- How will this knowledge help you?
- How will this knowledge create better board effectiveness?

"Everything that
irritates us about
others can lead us
to a better
understanding of
ourselves."



Carl Jung

Communication Skills are Conflict Tools



Listening is a "key" skill in diffusing conflict



Think about it: Why would listening be such an important skill in conflict management?

Active Listening

- is based upon creating a positive, supportive communication climate.

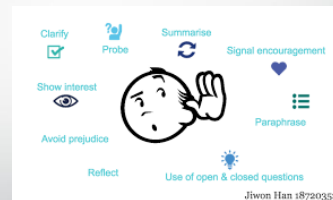
Characteristics:

Body Language

- Facing speaker
- Eye contact
- Leaning in
- Nodding
- Showing appropriate emotion

Vocal

- Reflecting
- Asking non-threatening questions
- Watching for word choice, tone and inflection



Responding Techniques

- **Paraphrasing**
 - A concise response that states the speaker's content in the listener's own words.
 - I.e. "What I heard you say was..."
- **Reflect Feeling**
 - Reflects back to the speaker the emotions, in the listener's own words.
 - I.e. "You're excited about your holiday!"
- **Empathizing**
 - Captures the content and emotions in a way that demonstrates the listener cares and understands.
 - I.e. "sounds like you're confused by this memo and angry about the change in plans?"

Responding Techniques

- **I-Message Impact Statement**
 - Explains the "impact" of situations or behavior on you
 - Gives information about you, your feelings and needs
 - Gives information in a manner that shows respect for others
 - Encourages people to be more open
 - Allows others a choice in how they react to what you have said, because information is about how it feels for you, it does not attack them.

• Formula:

When I _____,
(describe situation)

I feel _____,
(insert emotion)

What I need/want/would like is _____,
(describe your ideal situation)

“We did the best we could with what we knew... and when we knew more, we did better!”

Maya Angelou





Think about it: What you learned in this course about conflict and how it applies to creating effectiveness on your board.

Activity 3– ACTION IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

WHAT ARE THE TOP TEN THINGS AN ORGANIZATION OR PERSON CAN DO TO MANAGE CONFLICT?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO OR CHANGE?

Avoiding Conflict Is Conflict:
 Healthy adults talk about problems. We look for solutions. When people hurt us we communicate with compassion. No connection will last if people hold in all of their anger, pain, and misunderstands.
—A. Menotti

Wrap up – Now What?

Consider:

- What did I learn about myself?
- What do I need to keep doing?
- What do I need to change?
- What do I need to practice?

