Conflict Management

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Our team has built a toolkit to enhance preventative values that will lead to positive conflict management in the workplace. Our goal was to create an effective tool that could be used to increase knowledge and skills related to acute conflict prevention and management, while supporting constructive conflict. This is a “user-friendly” kit that can be easily accessed and implemented by managers (our target audience) in health sector workplaces. The model below shows how conflict can escalate unless managed effectively.
WORKPLACE CONFLICT AWARENESS MODEL

During the retreat our team developed a visual model describing how conflict typically unfolds; but also how it can be embraced to create a healthy workplace environment. The literature continually suggests that conflicts do occur in the workplace due to the tremendous diversity of humans. Therefore, conflict is a normal human process.

When looking at the model you will notice a small lightening bolt and a small tornado of anxiety and potential storm (conflict). These are signs of a conflict beginning. Employers and employees ignore the tornado or conflict at this stage. Another way of stating this unconcerned response is that the ostrich has its head in the sand, the sun is shining and the employers and employees are enjoying a picnic as illustrated in the model with a picnic basket.

However, as the conflict continues underground, the lightening bolt strikes again, but this time with much more energy. The conflict now is more intense and the tornado is now exceptionally large. Yep, the workplace now has a serious conflict. Some individuals scratch their heads and say, “What happened?” as shown by the man scratching his head. Some individuals walk away, as demonstrated by the footprints walking away, due to intense fear and feeling unsafe. Perhaps they walk away because they have been previously wounded during the conflict. The workplace system is now unbalanced as shown in the model. It is a long hike to the insight (light bulb) or to conflict resolution and to wisdom.

Another approach to conflict is when the individuals involved embrace conflict constructively thus reaching insight (light bulb) and wisdom (owl) quicker with less trepidation and damage. However, even if the conflict is resolved, the conflict process starts again, leading to the small lightening bolt and the small tornado. Conflicts are part of the human process. Conflicts are inevitable. If conflicts are addressed initially, the process continues directly to conflict resolution. The individuals reach the light bulb and the owl; thus preventing the larger lightening bolt and
A healthier way to approach conflict is to be a courageous lion. To recognize when lightening strikes is small and more crucial, yet safe, Engaging in conflict this strong team, develop healthy workplace and then nip the tornado when it manageable by engaging in conversations and confrontations. way makes it possible to build a leadership skills and invest in a environment.
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**Introduction**

We’ve all experienced the emotional and physical drain that conflict causes. Whether we like it or not, managers in the health system play an important role in setting the stage for healthy conflict resolution initiatives in their workplaces. Many of us feel woefully inadequate to perform this task and without very specific training or access to resources, we continue to flounder in conflict situations.

We recognize this and yet feel helpless either because of a lack of training and knowledge and/or a lack of time to address these issues as they come up. Managers and employees who are in high-pressure environments often experience significant stress. This can lead to short tempers, abrupt or ineffective communication and tense interactions. Study after study indicates that conflict is a significant contributor to emotional exhaustion and burnout. In one study, it was noted that generally 65% of staffing turnover is due to unresolved conflict. ([www.mediationworks.com/mti/certconf/healthcare.htm](http://www.mediationworks.com/mti/certconf/healthcare.htm)) Another study noted that to replace a specialty nurse costs the system 156% of her annual income. ([American Journal of Maternal/Child Nursing March/April 2005.](http://www.thinkenergygroup.com/think.nsf/InfoNFR/TurningWorkplaceConflictintoOpportunity?OpenDocument)

The cost of unresolved or poorly resolved conflict is high, both from an emotional and a financial perspective. It is also very hard on people and causes undue stress and loss of productivity in many work environments throughout the health system.

Conflict in the workplace, particularly in the health sector is inevitable. The good news is this: conflict, properly managed, can be positive, build new ideas, illuminate issues that need to be addressed, and help to create a better and more productive work environment. One conflict management expert indicates that there are many opportunities to be gained from dealing with conflict in a positive way:

1. An opportunity for growth. Conflict involves learning how to cooperate and how conflict is dealt with by different employees.
2. Conflict can improve communication. Conflict is often the result of a problem with communication within the organization. Conflict provides the opportunity to understand issues, get employee feedback, and build more open and honest communication lines.
3. Conflict can improve meeting results if it is dealt with appropriately when it happens and all feel that they have had their say.
4. Conflict can alert you to problems such as low morale and allow you an opportunity to address it.
5. Conflict can build relationships by having a better understanding of colleagues and co-workers.
6. Conflict can help to improve productivity if it is dealt with.
7. Negotiations often need to begin when there is conflict; this allows everyone to “win”.

Unfortunately, many of us struggle with pursuing these opportunities in a positive way. Nowhere is this more evident than in the health sector. The very nature of health care in today’s world generates conflict: between providers, with patients and their families, between management and unions, and the list goes on. Shortages and budget pressures, critical incidents, cultural misunderstandings and other events create an environment rife with conflict. Yet, over 35,000 health care services are provided daily in our system – something is working despite the potential for conflict. However, more can be done to prevent toxic workplaces resulting from conflict, and the staffing turnover and loss of productivity that this can cause.

That is where this toolkit comes in. The purpose of this toolkit is to enhance preventative values that will lead to positive conflict management in the workplace. The tool can be used to increase knowledge and skills related to acute conflict prevention and management, while supporting constructive or productive conflict. This is a “user-friendly” kit that can be easily accessed and implemented by managers (our target audience) in health sector workplaces. The toolkit will provide managers with resources to create healthy environments with constructive conflict practices, provide information on what to do when sparks fly and what our roles as managers are in conflict situations. It is also flexible - you can read and utilize every tool and resource listed in this kit, or you can simply utilize the pieces that are immediately helpful in any given situation. The idea was to pull together many useful resources so that busy managers in the system have a list of tools to start from and a further list of resources they can access if they so choose.

We hope this toolkit will help you in your work to build a more productive, effective and quality workplace for you and your staff.
Creating Healthy Environments

Creating healthy environments requires a commitment and involvement by all members in the workplace to participate. Creating such an environment also involves many strategies. A few strategies would include:

a) exploring one’s own personality traits and characteristics and honouring co-worker’s/colleague’s personality;

b) embracing the notion that conflict is an opportunity to enhance one’s communication skills, problem solving skills, team building and leadership skills;

c) identifying common or shared values in the workplace;

d) contributing to a safe, respectful, inclusive, and satisfying workplace environment;

e) acknowledging the notion that diversity creates strong teams;

f) gaining skills to spot signs and symptoms of potential conflicts before the conflicts becomes too big to deal with; and

g) maintaining enthusiasm about your work.

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMM_57.htm

In This Section:

Education Tools
   ➢ Personal Traits/Characteristics Assessments
   ➢ Workplace Culture Assessment
   ➢ Cultural Diversity Contributors to Conflict
   ➢ Workshops and Videos

Accountability and Responsibility
   ➢ Shaping the Environment
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Structure
   ➢ Development of Policy
   ➢ Development of Code of Conduct

Appendix 1 - Checklist for an Anti-harassment Policy: Medium & Large Organizations
Appendix 2 - Checklist for an Anti-harassment Policy: Small Organizations
Education Tools - **Personal Traits/Characteristics Assessments**

Colour Spectrums

Have you ever wanted to better understand your colleague or co-worker through an enjoyable and interactive team building setting? Have you ever wanted to learn how to accept others for their strengths and their challenges? Have you ever wanted to have fun exploring your colleague’s personality *(as well as your own)*? Have you ever wanted to understand the reasons for your colleague’s and your own behaviour patterns and wanted to know how to enhance self-esteem, communication and team-esteem for all team members within the workplace? Have you ever wanted to celebrate everyone’s diverse personality while working with him or her, rather than being stressed in your work environment?

ColourSpectrums provides an interactive and entertaining workshop for achieving any of the above goals that you may want. Based on the Myers-Briggs theory and Jungian Psychology, ColourSpectrums offers a workshop to enhance emotional, intellectual, physical and organizational development through the use of primary psychological colourful cards and magical language in a respectful, fun and entertaining environment. ColourSpectrums addresses key workplace needs such as values clarification, conflict prevention and resolution, respect for team diversity, stress management strategies, business management strategies and much more.

[ColourSpectrums](http://www.colourspectrums.com/Home.htm)

True Colours

If you are seeking an enjoyable way to start to create a harmonious, successful and productive workplace environment, True Colors is an easy, fun and enjoyable method of encouraging the team to gain a greater understanding of self and colleagues. True Colors assists in changing the workplace environment by improving morale, reducing absenteeism and decreasing staff turnover and ultimately strengthening teamwork. Drawing on Jungian Psychology and Myers Briggs and through the use of four colourful and picturesque cards, the individual is able to sort out oneself and other’s personality characteristics, temperament and type of intelligence. True Colours enhances leadership, teambuilding, communication, conflict management, wellness and much more.

[True Colors](http://g5.edcentre.ca/portal/login/index.php)
[True Colors - Online Assessment](http://g5.edcentre.ca/portal/login/index.php)
[http://www.truecolors.org/](http://www.truecolors.org/)
[www.colourspectrums.com](http://www.colourspectrums.com)
Education Tools - **Workplace Culture Assessment**

Workplace Cultural Assessment

The Culture Assessment Survey focuses on a few key areas of the culture:

1. Are relationships healthy throughout the organization?
2. Does feedback flow smoothly throughout the organization?
3. Is destructive, collusive behavior a problem in the organization?
4. Are trust levels high among the team members?
5. Do people have a sense of loyalty to the organization?
6. Is there a potential problem with harassment?

The survey also allows people the opportunity to voice their concerns about issues within the organization. The comments can be both insightful and enlightening to senior management.

Source:  
[http://www.employeedevelopmentsolutions.com/cultureassess.htm](http://www.employeedevelopmentsolutions.com/cultureassess.htm)

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Aboriginal Awareness

**Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative Employer Toolkit**

Chapters 1 and 5 in this thorough toolkit provide valuable information in assisting workplaces to develop strong collegial relationships with the First Nations people. Chapter 1 supports teams to develop respect, dignity, fairness and trust between the First Nation's people and other employees in the work place. Chapter 5 explains how to develop a foundation for constructive relationships building on respect, dignity, fairness and trust. This chapter expounds on Aboriginal issues and how to develop relationships with First Nation people.

The toolkit offers many resources to assist First Nations people and non First Nations people to work together harmoniously.

Source:  [www.inac.gc.ca](http://www.inac.gc.ca)

**Resources:**

[www.mediationworks.com](http://www.mediationworks.com)
Education Tools - **Cultural Diversity Contributors to Conflict**

Diversity and Respect in the Workplace

Sometimes differences and conflict arise from big “D” differences such as gender, race or disability. Sometimes these differences cause judgement and conflict coming from small “d” differences:
- one’s own world view
- feeling our values are compromised or ignored
- how we think the work should be done
- how we think our colleagues should behave

- Ever wonder why we just can’t get along?
- What is diversity anyways?
- Why do we have negative emotions with diversity?
- What is “white privilege” and how does this affect our unconscious thinking?
- What are the consequences to ourselves, the organization, our colleagues based on our own perspective regarding diversity?
- How do we create generalizations and stereotypes?
- How do we develop our beliefs and how do these beliefs affect our perceptions of our colleagues?
- How do we interpret our common values and then behave according to these values in the workplace?

For more information and answers to these questions contact Klowe@spc.gov.sk.ca

Gender Issues and Conflict in the Workplace

Gender issues in the health care setting are very common and occur for both men and women in today’s work force. For decades women have been confronted with gender issues in the health care settings. Gender issues for women are different than for men. As more men enter female dominated workplaces such as nursing, they are experiencing gender conflict. Male gender conflict is a new frontier for the researchers.

- Want to learn about Mars and Venus in conflict and how each gender tends to handle conflict differently?
- Want to learn how to handle confrontation with your boss (and still have a job)?
- Want to learn to manage disagreements with coworkers?
- Want to learn how to resolve conflict between you and your employees?
- Want to know what to do if the other person becomes verbally abusive?
- Want to learn tactics for diffusing an angry person during confrontation?
- Would learning how to recognize “red flags” before your co-worker becomes violent be useful?
Workplace Cultural Assessment

True Directions is an Aboriginal approach to understanding personality types and qualities. This program was developed by the First Nations People of Canada using the True Colors approach and fosters the maintenance of the Aboriginal traditional faith. The basic underpinning of True Directions is to assist people to return to their authentic direction and purpose in life by making a commitment to themselves, their lives and their environment. The program facilitates understanding of Aboriginal wisdom and teachings, which can enhance one’s relationship with family, co-workers and with health. True to Aboriginal teachings, True Directions uses story telling from one person to other people within an interactive workshop setting.

Resources:

Cool, Confident, and Collected ... Managing Conflict for Women

The Professional Woman’s Guide to Working Through Disagreements Effectively

Feel empowered with effective conflict resolution skills

www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com

Quiz: Are You Homophobic? Website: www.avenuecommunitycentre.ca

Research website: http://www.socialjusticeresearch.com/
Education Tools - Workshops and Videos

Workshops & Videos for Aboriginal People

The Sharing Circle: Aboriginal Humour

First Nations humour can bring out the best in any situation. The video mentioned below is ideal for creating more understanding between the First Nation’s people and other cultures through humour, jokes and laughter. As well, the video clearly demonstrates the strengths of the First Nation People and connects them to the viewer through humour.

To access this resource:

Aboriginal Awareness Workshops

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Health has made a concerted effort to assist health care employees to become aware of our Aboriginal heritage. The principles shared in the awareness training are:

- Support a representative work force
- Support integration of Aboriginal people into the work force
- Learn and deal with myths and misconceptions about Aboriginal people
- Gain a better understanding of Aboriginal issues and cultural differences
- Respect partnership agreements and collective agreements
- Involve partnership and collaboration with government, union and employers
- Include elders whenever possible
- Promote positive employee relationships between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people

For more information:

'In Partnership' Aboriginal Awareness Training 2008 Schedule - this Aboriginal awareness training program is presented at locations around the province.

Four Generations-One Workplace

Want to learn how to work together given the vast differences in the ages of workers in today’s work environments, and understand that all age groups gain benefits from the other generations? It is not our differences that separate us. It is the lack of listening, appreciation and understanding each generation’s qualities, behaviours, needs and offerings that cause conflict. Want to explore how and why our workplace ethic is changing and the reasons behind potential
conflict that the four generations in the workplace are causing? The research suggests that there are about six major value shifts in today’s workforce.

Workplace environments are changing. The notion that workers must adapt to their employers is no longer accepted. The current notion is that organizations need to adapt to a new work world. Values such as community, balance, partnership and personal growth are shaping and transforming workplace environments.

Want to gain a deeper understanding of this transformation?

Source:

"Four Generations-One Workplace" - http://www.theizzogroup.com/training.htm

Video: “Resolving Conflict Creatively in the Multicultural Community” (1996)
Inter-Cultural Mediation
By: Triune: www.triune.ca

This video demonstrates how inter-culturally conflict can arise and escalate quickly and how these situations can be mediated successfully.

Study Guide to assist with viewing the Video (answers are also provided)

1. This video demonstrates real experiences of multicultural conflict. The collective agreement wisdom for resolving conflict include:

2. Describe the exchange process.

3. What does cultural insensitivity mean? What are some behaviours that demonstrate culturally insensitive situations?

4. Describe "Action Freeze" technique.

5. What are the other phases to this style of resolving conflict?

Answers to the Video’s Study Guide, “Resolving Conflict Creatively in the Multicultural Community”

1. This video demonstrates real experiences of multicultural conflict. The collective agreement wisdom for resolving conflict include:

   Share all relevant information
   Keep information and mediation process confidential
   May need private interviews between disputants and or mediators
   No interruptions to keep the process moving along
   Respect one another
   Freedom to stop the process with explanation
   No name calling
2. Describe the exchange process.
   - The mediator pushes the interaction between the people in conflict
   - The mediator is encouraging the people in conflict to take responsibility for their part in the conflict

3. What does cultural insensitivity mean? What are some behaviours that demonstrate culturally insensitive situations?
   - Pointing fingers
   - Name calling
   - Gender stereotyping and sexism
   - Direct eye contact

4. Describe “Action Freeze” technique.
   - The mediator stops the process and redirects the participants who are experiencing conflict by explaining how the individual’s behaviour could be culturally insensitive.

5. What are the other phases to this style of resolving conflict?
   - Pre mediation Phase – to assess what may escalate multicultural conflict and understand the individual’s cultural norms when communicating (eg: direct eye contact may cause aggression)
   - Resolution Phase
   - Closing Phase

The Nonviolent Communication Training Course

Communicating non-violently nurtures relationships, connects humans authentically, with compassion and assists individuals to stay focused on the problem rather than the personalities, even under stressful situations. Nonviolent communication is based on centuries old wisdom – all behaviour has purpose. All behaviour is based on the individual’s need for autonomy, celebration, integrity, interdependence, play, harmony, peace, and physical nurturance. Needs are generally the root of one’s feelings. If humans could come to an understanding of this basic principle that needs stimulate feelings and feelings cause behaviour, perhaps there would be less blame and more understanding of where self and the other is coming from.


Harmonization in Healthcare:  A Guide to a Respectful Workplace

A workshop offered by SAHO Workplace Health, Safety & Education, 600-2002 Victoria Avenue, Regina, SK, S4P 0R7; (306) 347 5580; www.saho.org

Aboriginal Awareness

A workshop offered by SAHO Workplace Health, Safety & Education, 600-2002 Victoria Avenue, Regina, SK, S4P 0R7; (306) 347 5580; www.saho.org
Harassment and Diversity: Respecting Differences

Conflict can easily surface when others appear to be very different. The video “Harassment and Diversity: Respecting Differences” provides a role-play of harassment in the workplace and the challenges that the manager experiences when handling the situation. The video demonstrates how to recognize harassment and suggests taking complaints about harassment seriously. As well, the role-play shows how to investigate the complaint.

www.kantola.com

Crucial Conversations Workshop

This two day interactive workshop to discover invaluable skills that will truly help you get unstuck and achieve breakthrough results.

- Identify the conversations that are keeping you from your desired results.
- Identify how you deal with people when you are under stress.
- Speak persuasively not abrasively no matter the topic.
- Make it safe for others to share their honest opinions.
- Deal with people who either clam up or blow up.
- Gain control of your own emotional responses.

Register for Crucial Conversations training by contacting Jean- Francois Hivon:
Direct: (519) 837-3432
Email: jf@sharedvisions.ca

Fair Fighting

Have you ever had a conflict and wished you could have handled it better?

Fair Fighting skills are proven ways to resolve conflict and create successful human relationships where everyone wins. This Conflict Resolution technique is endorsed by many psychologists, counsellors, doctors, business managers, and teachers.

Who: Use it with: *your partner *your children *your parents *your work colleagues *your friends *your business negotiations

When: When it's time to take action on your own problem or helping someone else.

How: Work on the questions alone or together. Writing down the answers often helps. One or more of these skills will make the difference.
Why: You will not only take a significant step towards resolving your own immediate problem, but you will also be helping to build the conflict-resolving community.

Resources:


**Workshops offered by the Dispute Resolution Office**

E-mail: disputeresolutionjustice@gov.sk.ca

**Leading By Example – Resolving Conflict When You Are Not Neutral**

Designed for those who have completed the "Resolving Conflict Constructively" workshop. This three day workshop is intended for those who wish to enhance their conflict resolution skills for situations where they are expected to lead a process and also to present their own interests. The course will be of particular interest to managers, supervisors and others with human resource and personnel responsibilities in the workplace. It will also be of assistance to representatives of regulatory, licensing and planning agencies who deal with competing private and public interests.

**Resolving Conflict Constructively – A Collaborative Approach to Problem Solving**

This three day workshop is an opportunity to improve one's skills in dealing with conflict as a participant or a third party in a problem solving process. *Resolving Conflict Constructively* is a pre-requisite for both the *Leading By Example* and *Introduction to Mediation* modules. The course will include large and small group discussions. One of the highlights of this session is the opportunity to practice skills in role play settings.

**Quality Workplace Program – Building Effective Workgroups**

Designed for organizations or groups - can be customized for specific workplace issues. This two day training event is designed for organizations wishing to improve the quality of their workplaces. Participants will identify patterns of conflict and their role in sustaining these patterns. Opportunity is provided to develop skills to create a positive work environment and establish a foundation for future change. Customized sessions can include the beginning of a facilitated process to build on this foundation and address specific issues.

**Building Quality Organizations**

This two-day workshop will be of interest to leaders, managers, supervisors and human resource professionals who wish to gain understanding and insight in the areas of conflict, change and enhancing capacity for change in organizations.
More theoretical than other sessions offered by the Dispute Resolution Office, this workshop will be particularly valuable for those who work in organizations currently experiencing conflict or change, or who are anticipating organizational change.

The Dispute Resolution Office can be contacted at (306) 787-5376 for more information.
Accountability & Responsibility - Shaping the Environment

Moving to a culture of accountability (good conflict) from a culture of blame (ugly conflict) requires the intentional efforts of all key personnel—managers, supervisors and staff. Truly, development of a responsible and accountable culture is a team effort. Training, zero tolerance for unacceptable behavior, and transparency in communication are all necessary in this process. Good conflict allows the organization or people in it to grow, solve problems more effectively, and counterbalance the inertia that most organizations develop. Good conflict also stimulates creativity and problem solving. Ugly conflict is trivial, destructive and personal. It occurs when the conflict is unnecessary or is handled inappropriately causing it to become a personal confrontation between the people or sides. One of the biggest contributors to ugly conflict is nonaction, such as fear of bringing conflict to the surface and avoidance of problems and conflict. Shaping a ‘good conflict’ environment requires the following:

- **Managers need to communicate their commitment to the value of preventing destructive conflict.** To demonstrate this commitment, management shall provide opportunities and resources, such as setting up workshops (i.e. Harmonization in Healthcare or Quality Workplace Workshop) and providing work time to participate in training and follow up activities.
- **Effective training** is the key to reduce and eliminate harassment, increase awareness, and make each worker more sensitive of how their actions and behaviors may affect others. All staff should be educated on the policies and procedures regarding harassment and bullying in the workplace. Training in cooperative communication helps everyone learn to focus on fixing problems (versus finding the person to blame), leave the past behind and emphasize present and future, exclude non-responsiveness, and other effective communication strategies to avoid conflict provoking behaviors.
- **Development of a Code of Conduct** may be helpful, as this provides a set of agreed upon principles and holds all stakeholders accountable. The culture of accountability is possible when everyone shares the responsibility for communicating effectively and ensures that others do so as well, takes responsibility for own actions and behaviors, and is part of the solution. Respect for the dignity and well-being of every individual is a value that all workers are expected to uphold.
- **Once management and staff have taken training in problem solving, communication and collaboration skills, key personnel need to be empowered to practice their new learning.** This needs to be done in a workplace conducive to further development of accountability. A team effort is required to build an environment where open and transparent communication occurs so emotions (such as guilt, anger, fear, grief) can be aired honestly.
- **Managers need to provide a forum or format for resolution of issues.** The goal of such a forum is to attempt to meet concerns of the other party as well as your own.
Each individual in the workplace is encouraged to examine our own behaviors and contributions to conflict. Our own perceptions, beliefs and assumptions will influence our behavior, especially toward those with whom we have had a history of conflict.

All individuals in the workplace are responsible for addressing conduct breaches in informal and formal ways. Managers are responsible for following the process in their Anti-harassment and/or Respect and Dignity policies. Following up on conduct breeches contributes to building an environment of predictability and trust, as this demonstrates that the manager is responsive and able to enforce the boundary.

What is my responsibility?

| Source | The source or person who is acting in an offending way or whose actions or behaviors are impacting on others in some way first has responsibility to adjust their behavior. By paying attention to the reactions from others, a person can alter their behavior |
| Target | The person who is the target of the offending behavior has responsibility to raise the issue |
| Observer | Responsibility also lies with the observer to the situation. Silent observers condone negative behavior |
| Person in Authority | Lastly, the person in authority has a responsibility to address the issues in an appropriate way. This may include:  
(1) Coaching a target to raise the issue with the source.  
(2) Speaking directly to the source about what your expectations are  
(3) Examining your own role in intentionally or unintentionally allowing the offending behavior to occur |

Resources:


In every conflict situation, there is a Victim, Villain and Hero. Everyone in the conflict situation has their own story and, typically, our adversaries see themselves as victims and paint us as villains. In our story, our adversaries might be the villains. As long as we see ourselves as victims or heroes, we automatically create villains in our conflict story. Of course, neither party wants to be the villain, so there is a lot of energy expended to defend themselves and their reputations from this unfair label. The roles in the Drama Triangle inevitably create a win-lose approach to conflict. Since no one likes to lose, there are continuous battles to avoid defeat, which results in shifting from one position to the next.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Hero</th>
<th>Villain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• A sense of powerlessness; relinquish sense of control or influence over the situation</td>
<td>• Victim shifts to hero mode to protect self, defend interests, and ‘even the score’</td>
<td>• Viewed by the victim and hero as hateful, controlling, evil and vindictive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tends to blame the villain; victim role reflects goodness and innocence</td>
<td>• Focus is on justice and retribution</td>
<td>• “It’s all your fault”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rewarded by attention in the form of sympathy</td>
<td>• “I’ll make things right”</td>
<td>• May display aggressive, sneaky and controlling behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Absolve self of responsibility (victim is innocent; conflict not their fault and the other person needs to change)</td>
<td>• Fine line between righteousness and self-righteousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Get off the Drama Triangle

- Be accountable for your own feelings and reactions in conflict
- Examine your own triggers and unmet needs
- Let go of the need to be ‘right’ and focus instead on ways to get your needs met
- Ask directly for what you need instead of quietly complaining to others about your plight
- Raise an issue directly rather than to attack
- Be respectful and calm in your interactions
- Identify the problem and focus on the problem-- not the person
- Tell your story
- Start by presenting facts, not judgments
- Clarify your motives and intents and tell the other person what you think and how you feel
- Try to find a mutual interest
- Encourage the other person to tell their story and listen to it with curiosity
- Be aware of verbal and non-verbal cues from the other person and take the time to stop and ensure safety if the other person becomes aggressive, defensive or silent
- Validate the other person’s experience (“I understand why you would be angry at me”)
- Have the courage to stay present in conflict and see the conflict through to real resolution
- Think of the other person as a ‘reasonable person’ and ask yourself why a reasonable, rational and decent person might act the way they did. Is there any unmet need that fuels their conflict?
- Resist the urge to attack your perceived enemy--Allow your anger to inform you about your unmet needs
- Check out your assumptions
  - Ask the other person what they intended by what they did or said; tell them the thinking behind our action
  - Tell the other person how events impacted us; ask them how they were impacted by events
- Take responsibility and apologize if you have done wrong
- Focus on the future rather than on the past

Source:
Leading Change and Transition

Part of a healthy environment includes effectively managing change and transition.

Information
- A vision must be clearly articulated
- Demonstrate confidence in the change by reinforcing the fact that the organization continues to have value and purpose
- Demonstrate confidence in the staff and how they are contributing to the organization
- Offer reminders to those who want to turn back why the organization left the past behind

Empathy
- Be present, consistent and available to staff during the change process
- Assess what you are committed to preserving and communicate this
- Listen and observe with empathy—each staff’s journey in the change process is unique.
- Exercise patience and remember that change is difficult

Ideas
- Provide appropriate decision-making models throughout the change process. At times, as the manager, you will need to provide clear direction and make independent decisions. As much as possible, provide opportunities for staff input and consultation
- Managers are responsible for providing opportunities for staff training and learning new skills
- Provide opportunities to build new teams and new relationships

Accountability & Responsibility - Sustaining a Healthy Environment

Sustaining the health of any organization requires a commitment and shared responsibility by all individuals in the workplace. In a healthy workplace, rather than waiting for a policy to be enacted or a supervisor to take charge, every team member is part of the system of accountability. If team members see others violate a team agreement, they step up and speak up immediately and directly. Some ideas for sustaining a healthy workplace environment include:

- Establish a healthy workplace committee with membership from staff and management to introduce ideas to support respectful behavior, better communication, positive environment and relations between staff and management.
- Ongoing audits are necessary for monitoring the workplace health climate. Annual reviews should ensure that policies are understood, trusted and used by employees, complaints were dealt with quickly, thoroughly and effectively, and there was no retaliation against individuals who filed a complaint or cooperated in the investigation of a complaint.
- Benefit programs such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) provide confidential professional assistance to employees (and sometimes their families) to help them resolve problems that affect their personal lives, and in some cases their job performance.
- Maintain the momentum by keeping the Healthy Workplace message front and centre—post the Code of Conduct on bulletin boards and intranet sites and make “Healthy Workplace” a standing item on staff meeting agendas.
- Look for opportunities to recognize and acknowledge staff. For example, highlight recent successes at staff meetings.
- Continue to communicate
  - Convey information to others and accept information from others.
  - Check out assumptions and use a solution-focused approach (rather than blame-focused)
  - Clarify expectations clearly, particularly during times of change/transition
  - Raise issues as they come up, and raise the issues with involved stakeholders
  - Use and strengthen skills such as active listening, non-verbal communication, questioning and reframing
  - Follow processes outlined in anti-harassment policies
  - When raising difficult issues, be curious, not critical
- Whether we are the source, target, observer or a person in authority, take the Code of Conduct seriously and challenge any breeches

Resources:


Accountability & Responsibility - Electronic Communication

The electronic age has shifted the ways in which individuals communicate with each other. While advanced technology can help our work, there are cautions involved in the use of e-mail, particularly during conflict situations. **Why? In many situations utilizing email is not the appropriate way to communicate effectively.**

- In face-to-face situations, non-verbal communication such as nodding or frowning provide social cues that help us interpret factors such as intent.
- In face-to-face situations, there are opportunities for ‘simultaneous mutual influence’ (where each person’s behavior influences the other’s reactions in real time)
- In telephone conversations there is less opportunity for simultaneous mutual influence, but the inflections and volume of voice can also provide some cues.
- Emails tend to be informal and spontaneous—often are done quickly and not read before sending.
- In our ‘fast food’ world we are expected to respond instantly—often this means that we have not had the opportunity for a thoughtful discussion in order to provide a thoughtful response
- The sender of email ‘assumes’ the receiver is going to understand the intention of the message
- There are many opportunities for misinterpretation, miscommunication and creating unnecessary conflict
- It is easier to be rude in emails because there is increased anonymity and therefore less personal accountability involved

**Tips for the use of Email in the Workplace:**

- Always re-read emails before pressing the ‘send’ button. Be mindful of the content (does it say what you want it to say) and tone (does it reflect your emotional state)
- Reflect before responding to an email that seems offensive
- Refrain from using slang terms. Keep a professional, businesslike tone.
- Say what you mean in a clear succinct way—watch that you are not coming across as either terse, demanding or long winded.
- Be cautious about the use of email emotional graphics—these can cause misunderstandings for people do not understand their meaning or those who read their emails quickly.
- The use of all upper case, bold text and italics might be misconstrued as aggression
- Refrain from forwarding or blind copying (bcc) emails to others when they were meant for your exclusive viewing purposes.
- **Emails are a poor way to problem solve. A face-to-face (or telephone) contact is indicated for any emotionally charged issue.**

**Resources:**


Structure - Development of Policy

In order to foster an organizational culture conducive to effective conflict resolution, corporate structures and written policies are necessary. Workplace wellness is supported by policies such as harassment and bullying issues. Effective policies help to improve morale, reduce stress related injuries, increase productivity, and give management and supervisors credibility and set a standard with which all staff shall comply. Although development of policies is the responsibility of management, enlisting staff input can be valuable. Staff needs to be educated on the policies and procedures and clearly understand the behavior that is expected and acceptable and the consequences for unacceptable behavior. Once the policies and principles of behavior are introduced, the challenge is the follow up. Staff are encouraged to follow the process outlined in the Respect and Dignity and/or Anti-harassment policies in the workplace. Every individual in the organization is encouraged to adhere to the process, and managers and supervisors need to act promptly on harassment/bullying complaints, follow the policy and procedures, support their workers through the process, and prevent reoccurrence of harassment and bullying incidents.

A Policy for workplace harassment/bullying should be:
- Written in plain English
- Clear
- Fair
- Displayed where all employees can have access to the policy
- Communicated to everyone, at all levels of the organization and reinforced at relevant times
- Applied to everyone, at all levels of the organization
- Reviewed and updated regularly
- Unequivocally supported by management

Some things to keep in mind when developing policy:
- Legislation has some influence:
  - Occupational Health and Safety Act 1993 – the responsibility to provide a harassment free workplace is a legislated requirement
  - Saskatchewan Human Rights Code – it is against the law to discriminate in the workplace based on a number of human rights factors
  - Criminal Code of Canada – applies if the activities include uttering threats, criminal harassment, assault or sexual assault
- Collective Agreements- provide some mechanisms for dealing with conflict, dispute resolution and grievance procedures
Structure - Development of Code of Conduct

In addition to formal policies, workplace wellness is sustained by a Code of Conduct that establishes the organization's values and outlines a set of clear expectations regarding behaviour of all individuals in the organization. A Code of Conduct provides guidance on how to handle conflict situations and what courses of action to take. Since a Code of Conduct requires each person in the workplace to make a commitment to self and to others, development of this Code should be a shared responsibility and united effort between management and staff. Ideally, everyone stands by the Code of Conduct and takes the responsibility of ensuring that it is respected and followed. This means that in the event of code breeches, any staff, whether they are part of a conflict or not, will 'call it as they see it'. Any guidelines are meaningless unless there is 'buy in' and adherence to the process by all parties. The strongest buy-in occurs when a consensus approach is used.

Steps to take in development of a Code of Conduct:

- Although the lengthiest resolution, consensus produces the most favorable results.
- Set up a dedicated time for staff and management to work on development of the Code. You might choose to go through this exercise as part of a staff retreat day, held in a facility outside the workplace.
- Select a facilitator- it may be beneficial to call on an outside source to facilitate more serious conflicts.
- Provide a safe environment to encourage active participation of all staff.
- Encourage creative thinking and open-mindedness.
- Have the group set up agreements (ground rules) for the session—(i.e., all ideas are good ideas, listen, be respectful).
- In order to come up with strategies to build and/or develop respectful relationships, some time should be devoted to getting the group to come to common definition to words such as ‘respect’ and ‘trust’.
- Randomly assign staff to small working groups. Each group could brainstorm principles of behavior items that they would like to see in the Code of Conduct. Assign one person to record this information on a flipchart.
- A spokesperson from each small working group will present the ideas that were generated in their group.
- Provide adhesive stars or dots to each staff member (3 for each station) and ask them to circulate around the small groups. On an individual basis, staff will place an adhesive star or dot on the items they feel are critical for inclusion in the Code.
- Compile the flipchart information, highlighting the items that received the most stars/dots.
- The group’s goal should be to reach decisions that best reflect the thoughts of all group members.
• Finally, enter into a dialogue about how the Code will be followed up. Encourage commitment from all individuals in the organization to take responsibility for addressing breeches to the Code.

Resources:


Appendix 1 – Development of Policy

Checklist for an Anti-Harassment Policy:
Medium And Large Organizations

Developing a policy

Consultation with unions, employee representatives or employees about content of policy, penalties and remedies, identity of anti-harassment counsellors

Content of the policy

☐ Policy statement–management supports a harassment-free workplace

☐ The law

☐ Employees' responsibilities and rights
  • the right to a harassment-free workplace
  • the responsibility to treat other employees with respect
  • the responsibility to speak up when harassment occurs
  • the responsibility to report harassment to the appropriate person
  • confidentiality

☐ Supervisors’, managers’, and employers' responsibilities
  • treat all employees, clients, suppliers, contractors with respect
  • report or investigate all complaints
  • set a good example
  • refuse to tolerate harassment

☐ An undertaking that allegations of harassment will be dealt with seriously, speedily and confidentially

☐ Descriptions of harassing behaviour

☐ Procedures
  • practical guidelines for employees and management
  • informal and formal ways of proceeding
  • encourage employees to choose the informal approach first
  • mediation
  • detailed steps to be taken in complaints
  • time frames
  • who is responsible for decisions
  • appeals
  • information about other agencies that deal with harassment

☐ Remedies, corrective action, and safeguards
  • possible remedies
  • the range of penalties for a harasser
  • whether information about the complaint will be included in a harasser’s file
  • information about the complaint will not be put in the complainant's personnel file, when complaint is in good faith
Protection against victimization or retaliation for employees who complain of harassment, or who testify in an investigation

- Selection of counsellors and investigators

The following issues should be considered during the selection of anti-harassment counsellors, mediators and investigators

- are trusted by employees
- are outside chain-of-command or line management
- whether they are employees or outside contractors
- have appropriate experience and training
- will ensure confidentiality
- can be reached easily by employees
- whether they will deal with informal or formal complaints
- whether they will mediate
- whether they will investigate
- to whom they report
- whether they will advise management
- whether they will educate employees
- what their role is in advising management about specific cases of harassment
- do not fulfill double roles, e.g. do not do both mediation and investigation; do not represent the organization at a human rights hearing

Education

Communication and circulation of the policy to all employees and managers, current and new, through

- orientation or information session
- staff meetings
- memos or e-mail
- pay slip notices
- films
- posters
- videos
- brochures

Education of all staff

- training managers to react appropriately, handle cases of harassment appropriately, maintain the anti-harassment atmosphere
- training employees to respect each other, maintain the anti-harassment atmosphere
- training harassment counsellors and investigators to perform their respective roles
- make ongoing anti-harassment training part of other training sessions, such as: management training, induction programmes for new employees, courses for union-management committees, social skills training for employees, assertiveness training for women employees or others
Monitoring

☐ A commitment to periodic review of the policy
• openness to employee comments
• solicitation of feedback from counsellors, managers, and employees
• exit interviews with personnel leaving the organization
• make necessary adjustments to policy and procedures

Source:

APPENDIX 2 - CHECKLIST FOR AN ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY: SMALL ORGANIZATIONS

Content of the policy

- Policy statement--management supports a harassment-free workplace
- The law
- Employees' responsibilities and rights
  - the right to a harassment-free workplace
  - the responsibility to treat other employees with respect
  - the responsibility to speak up when harassment occurs
  - the responsibility to report harassment to the appropriate person
  - confidentiality
- Supervisors', managers', and employers' responsibilities
  - treat all employees, clients, suppliers, contractors with respect
  - report or investigate all complaints
  - set a good example
  - refuse to tolerate harassment
- An undertaking that allegations of harassment will be dealt with seriously, speedily and confidentially

Descriptions of harassing behaviour

- Procedures
  - practical guidelines for employees and management
  - informal and formal ways of proceeding
  - encourage employees to choose the informal approach first
  - mediation
  - detailed steps to be taken in complaints
  - time frames
  - who is responsible for decisions
  - appeals
  - information about other agencies that deal with harassment

- Corrective action, safeguards and remedies
  - the range of penalties for a harasser
  - whether information about the complaint will be included in a harasser's file
  - remedies
  - information about the complaint will not be put in the complainant's personnel file, when complaint is in good faith

- Protection against victimization or retaliation for employees who complain of harassment, or who testify in an investigation

Education

- Communication and circulation of the policy to all employees and managers, current and new, through
• orientation or information session
• staff meetings
• memos or e-mail
• pay slip notices
• films
• posters
• brochures

Education of all staff
• training managers to react appropriately
• handle cases of harassment appropriately
• maintain the anti-harassment atmosphere
• training employees to respect each other
• maintain the anti-harassment atmosphere
• training harassment counsellors and investigators to perform their respective roles
• make ongoing anti-harassment training part of other training sessions

Monitoring

A commitment to periodic review of the policy
• openness to employee comments
• solicitation of feedback from counsellors, managers, and employees
• exit interviews with personnel leaving the organization
• make necessary adjustments to policy and procedures

Source:


Resources:


www.conductcode.com

www.rctm.com (The Richardson Company Training products for the Workplace offers Harassment and Respect training programs)
When Sparks Fly

When conflict occurs and sparks fly, managers need to pay attention to what is happening, immediately and proactively address the situation, and help staff move forward in a productive manner. This section provides an overview of resources available to help assess and work through a conflict situation to help ensure a positive result for all involved.

In this section:

Seeing the Sparks
- Assessment of the Situation
- Reading and Responding to Body Language
  - Appendix 1 - Body Language Quiz

Dealing with Conflict
- Diffusing Hostility
- Listening, Questioning, Reframing

Post Conflict
- Moving Forward Productively
Seeing the Sparks - Assessment of the Situation

When the sparks fly and conflict occurs, managers must do a quick assessment of the situation. Does each party have sufficient emotional energy to discuss the conflict immediately or should there be a cooling off period? Who should be involved in the discussion? When is the best time? Where is the best place? These and other questions will help to assess how and when to address the situation to help ensure a positive outcome.

Like so many other experiences in life, conflict is what you make it. Depending on how the conflict is managed, the experience can be growth enhancing for the individuals involved, or it can be destructive to relationships involved. Conflict that is well managed can tap creativity and problem solving skills or when poorly managed reduces productivity and trust and can create additional conflict.

Defining the conflict situation requires identifying the current pertinent issues and the historical events around the situation. If you feel drawn into an existing conflict, be sure you understand the history of the situation and the roles and power of the parties involved. Consider also other parties and stakeholders who may also have a significant stake in the outcome.

Another category of critical information is organization factors. These include current policies, environmental influences, working conditions. Personal factors such as values, stress level, self confidence and cultural differences may also play a role.

Different types of people assess the situation differently. The Thinking (T) and Feeling (F) conflict pair demonstrates where an individual prefers to focus their attention when experiencing conflict. When facing challenges the Thinking types want to fix the problem and the Feeling types are concerned about the impact of the problem on people’s thoughts and feelings. Conflict accentuates the difference in decision-making style leading to differing expectations and misunderstandings. This is especially true when the Thinking or Feeling preference is very clear or strong.

A person with a Thinking preference will take an objective and information driven approach by focusing on:

- What the conflict is about – the facts
- Opinions and principles
- Analyzing and tolerating differences
- Succinct delivery when addressing conflict – concern for persuasive data
- Maintaining a firm position in attempting to resolve the conflict

A Feeling oriented person will take a different perspective and focus on:

- Who is involved – the people
- Needs and values
• Accepting and appreciating differences
• Tactful delivery when addressing conflict – concern about the impact on others
• Ensuring that there is give and take in resolving the conflict

It should be apparent that two parties who take these opposing perspectives will approach the same situation with different priorities. Most people have the ability to appreciate both the thinking and feeling points of view but when under the stress of being in a confrontation are likely to “dig in their heels” and hold firm to preferences consistent with their type. This creates the classic battle between the “insensitive jerks” and the “bleeding hearts”. Thinking types just want to fix the problem as quickly and efficiently as possible while the Feeling types want to ensure that everyone’s thoughts and feelings are being considered.

So, what do we do when faced with a conflict in mediation involving Thinking and Feeling oriented people? Ideally each party can actively listen to the other and be willing to include their “non-preferred” judgment in their assessment of the situation. When asking each party to present their perspective it is best to start with the Thinking side of the equation and identify the facts and realities. Once these are agreed upon it is easier to move to the Feeling side of the equation to empathize and consider the impact that a decision will have on those involved. This process will likely enable the Feeler to become more objective and enable the Thinker to take time to consider the subjective aspects of the problem at hand. The result will be a more balanced assessment which will increase the likelihood that the parties will reach some agreement.

**Resources:**

Conflict management checklist: A diagnostic tool for assessing conflict in organizations – Part 1
Conflict Management Physician Executive, July-August 1999 by Cathie T. Siders, Carol A. Aschenbrener

Ellerman, D; Use of the Myers-Briggs Conflict Pairs in Assessing Conflict
Let me see your Body Talk

Let me see your body talk, read the rhythm of your walk, learn the language of your sighs, for you speak poetry to my eyes. Although your posture gives commands, you speak gentleness with your hands. Your emotion is softly heard, without the need to say a word.

Jan Hargrave

Your tone of voice and facial expressions will tell people more about your message than the words you use. It is important to recognize the importance of non verbal communication which is often referred to as body language. Non verbal signals can give important clues on how an individual is feeling. It is important to remember that non verbal signals are clues only. We should not assume that everyone uses the same body language.

How you say something is often more powerful than what you say. How does your non verbal communication work for you? Tone, inflection and facial expressions account for 93% of your message. The actual words count for only 7%. It’s not what you say; it’s how you say it.

The components of non verbal communication include:

- Eye contact
- Body posture
- Distance/physical contact
- Facial expressions
- Gestures
- Vocal tone, inflection and volume
- Timing
- Dress

Remember………

- do not assume you know what they mean;
- be aware that some may not realize their non verbal mannerism or habits;
- be aware of the messages you may be sending with your own non verbal communication;
- use effective questions to check out assumptions and clarify non verbal’s that you are observing.

Resources

McKenna, C. Powerful Communication Skills (1997)


Hargrave, Jan. Let me see your Body Talk.


Appendix 1 – Seeing the Sparks

Body Language Quiz

1. Placing your right hand against your upper chest as if you were reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, shows Dishonesty.
   □ True    □ False

2. Touching the fingertips of both hands together at the chest level shows nervousness
   □ True    □ False

3. People who tend to use the left hand a lot, tend to lie a lot.
   □ True    □ False

4. Slowly stroking of the chin with your thumb and pointer finger is synonymous with serious contemplation.
   □ True    □ False

5. Leaning back in a chair and placing both hands behind the head reveals great self-doubt.
   □ True    □ False

6. Displaying the hand with the thumb and the forefinger tips joined to make a vertical ring means O.K. in Canada but means that you are a Zero in Belgium
   □ True    □ False

7. A speaker punches the air with his clinched fists to forcefully emphasize a point.
   □ True    □ False

8. A high degree of confidence is shown when a man will adjust his shirt cuff in the presence of a woman.
   □ True    □ False

9. In Gypsy communities, women shake imaginary dust from their clothing as a symbolic message of cleansing themselves of a relationship.
   □ True    □ False

10. Triple cheek kisses may be popular as a greeting in France, but three quick nose-tip touches in succession are as popular a greeting in Saudi Arabia.
    □ True    □ False
Body Language Quiz – Answers

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. True
7. True
8. False
9. True
10. True
Dealing with Conflict - **Diffusing Hostility**

While working through conflict it can be very common for one or both parties to become angry. It is extremely important to recognize the difference between someone being upset or becoming angry. Anger appears as a result of fear of loss of the following:

- The need to be valued by others.
- The need to be in control.
- The need for self esteem or to feel good about yourself.

The way people perceive a problem creates this reaction. It is best to try to diffuse the anger, rather than have the individual leave angry. Give some thought to what might have triggered the anger.

Acknowledge that the person is angry instead of telling them not to be angry. People can control their behaviour but not their emotions. An angry person usually wants someone to argue with. It is vital to avoid the temptation.

Keep focused on the anger. Your goal at this stage is to understand the person’s point of view. Show interest in their concerns and keep them talking using open ended questions. Use active listening skills to encourage, reflect and summarize.

If necessary take a break before getting further into significant discussion. It is important to emphasize a willingness to resolve the issue and acknowledge the importance of doing so. Also discuss what your own needs are. Re-ask questions and summarize the problem to see if your perception is correct.

Lastly, it is important to solicit the person’s opinion on how to resolve the issue and to reinforce solutions that seem reasonable.

Remember that anger is unpredictable and that it will run its course. When “anger” becomes a “blocker” to raising issues and problem solving, the impact of these negative behaviors’ must also be raised as an issue.

**Resources:**


Dealing with Conflict - Listening, Questioning, Reframing

Listening, questioning and reframing are all important skills in conflict resolution. However, the most important of the three is effective listening. In order to listen well, we need to prepare. Most of us understand the importance of preparing ourselves to speak, but few of us think about preparing to listen. We take for granted that we all know how to listen. We may also assume listening is a passive activity, yet it is actually hard to do and we are rarely prepared to listen well.

In order to listen, we have to quiet our minds. Most of us have a habit of taking our constant mind chatter seriously. We never stop to think about whether that makes any sense for us. Emerson once joked that 95% of what goes on inside our minds is none of our business! This doesn’t mean that we have to retreat to a cave or spend our lives meditating; it means that we have to consciously create a space where listening can occur, especially during conflict.

The effective use of common skills can ease critical and difficult conversations.

The key points to remember are:

Listening is….
- Active, not passive
- Dialogue, not debate
- Congruent (in words, tone, body language)
- Appropriate (choose words, environment appropriate to the situation)
- Seek to understand before seeking to be understood
- Understanding is not agreement
- Encouraging

About Questioning….
- Open and closed
- Honesty inquiry
- Curious not judgmental
- Accept answers
- Show patience

When Reframing….
- Identify the underlying need
- Shift from negative to positive or neutral
- Remove toxic language
- Ask for confirmation
- Lead with;
  - “It’s important to you that…”
  - “Your goal is…”
  - “You need to see/feel/believe/know that…”
Resources:


Here is a resource on Emotional Intelligence (E.Q.)
Once conflict is resolved, often there are left over issues regarding broken promises, violated expectations and just plain bad behaviour. In a healthy workplace environment, it is important to repair relationships, facilitate a follow-up process post conflict and assist the team to move forward with their newly learned skills. The three strategies for managing post conflict would be repairing relationships (also called restitution), crucial and safe confrontations and following up on agreements made with each other a conflict resolution experience.

Restitution is about repairing relationships to a more healthy engagement. Restitution is more than apologizing. It is demonstrating how one values another who he or she was in conflict with and wanting to start a repair process that will strengthen their relationship

Restitution is an approach to discipline and counselling which encourages a person to grow towards self-evaluation, self-discipline and self-respect. It teaches a person to behave for self-respect rather than to avoid punishment or gain a reward from another.

**RESTITUTION** is a way to invite people to:

- Understand the needs behind their behaviour, fix their mistakes, and learn to make better choices for the future.
- Consider the social contract (shared values of the family, the school, the community, and workplace) and restore themselves to these values.
- Behave to gain self-respect and be the kind of person they want to be.

2. **Crucial and Safe Confrontations** are a set of skills that assist people to seek opportunity to repair and build broken relationships which are harmed from disappointments, broken promises, and bad behaviour that may occur in many different situations. We all face these types of experiences. Such skills also assist with strengthening relationships, solving problems and team building. All of this is achieved by encouraging individuals to engage with each other regarding important issues without having people leave the conversation blamed, humiliated, or victimized. The notion behind crucial confrontations is that the individual moves beyond good communication to the point of actually gaining results such as collegial behaviour from others, meeting agreed upon expectations, preventing disappointments and preventing damaged relationships

3. **Follow Up Post Conflict** is meeting with the group to ensure that conflict resolution agreements are successful and are maintained. We all know how hard it is to change habits. Over time, people develop dysfunctional ways of relating to one another and agreeing to change behavior is one thing. Actually
changing behaviour and interactions is another. By following up you are creating an opportunity for the participants to trouble shoot and consolidate lessons. The entire focus of the follow up meeting is learning. Following up is not about blame, but continuous improvement. The value of Follow Up Post Conflict is:

- that it signals care.
- participants know that you share in their desire to succeed.
- it signals your realism.
- help people to change bad habits
- signals an opportunity for fine tuning an agreement or making adjustments

How to Follow Up

In a follow up meeting, once you sense that participant/s are comfortable and ready to open up, you begin by orientating them to what you want to facilitate. You remind them that the process is still confidential. You then use open-ended questions to begin the post conflict follow up process. Some examples are:

- What aspects of the agreement that were reached have been working well?
- What have you done differently since reaching the agreement?
- What has the other person done differently since reaching the agreement?
- What aspects of the agreement are causing frustration/disappointment/anxiety?

You may also use closed ended questions, as needed, such as:

- Have you been following the terms of your new agreement?
- Have you been meeting regularly as proposed?
- When last did you look at the agreement?

When you follow up in a shared meeting, get participants to share specific situation that have been challenging. Based on what they share, you may do some additional skill building and then have them do something called a 'Take Two.' In Take Two the participants replay the situation, and with some supportive coaching and encouragement, experience how the situation could be worked out differently. This could add humour to the situation.

Resources:

restitution@sasktel.net

Restitution I – Introduction to Restitution: Philosophy and Personalizing (2 days)

Restitution II – Implementing Restitution (Prerequisite Restitution I)

Crucial Conversations by: Patterson, Kerry, Grenny, Joseph, McMillan, Ron &
Switzler, Al (2005)

www.vitalsmarts.com
The Importance of Follow Up – Post Conflict

Your Role as Manager

Part of the role of a manager is to effectively address conflict situations. Each individual has a unique perspective, or method they use, and it is important to recognize that different styles are not necessarily better or worse, just different. Being aware of your own style, and drawing on different styles can enhance your workplace and productivity.

In this section:

- Management Awareness
  - Knowing Your Own Management Style
    - Appendix 1 - Conflict Management Style Survey
  - Personal Courage and Emotions

- Responsive Management
  - When and How to Intervene in Conflicts
  - Dealing with Difficult Employees
Management Awareness - Knowing your own Management Style

Conflict is inevitable in any interpersonal relationship or among members of any group. Why do we shy away from dealing with our conflict? It is often because many of us were raised to believe that conflict is something to be avoided or an experience of failure. Conflict does not have to lead to failure or even to the termination of a relationship. We all experience the world differently, and we all have different ideas about what is best for “my group” or “our group.” Recognizing this fact can help free us from the negative conclusion that conflict is a signal of failure. It is actually a signal that change is needed!

When faced with conflict, people are inclined to respond in different ways. Below are five different management styles and how each deals with conflict.

**Competing**
An individual pursues his or her own concerns at the other person’s expense. This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one’s own position. Competing might even mean standing up for your rights, defending a position that you believe to be correct, or simply trying to win.

**Accommodating**
When accommodating, an individual neglects his or her own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person. The accommodator ignores the issues in order to put relationships first and keep peace at any price.

**Avoiding**
The individual does not immediately pursue his or her personal concerns or those of the other person. He or she does not address 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.

**Compromising**
The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

**Collaborating**
Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. This is clearly the most effective approach of conflict management. It will produce the following results:
- Both sides win
- Satisfaction
- Mutual respect
- Both parties feel enriched rather than belittled
- Continuing effort of both parties
Resources:


Appendix 1 – Your Role as Manager

Conflict Management Style Survey

This Conflict-Management Style Survey was designed to help you become more aware of your style in managing conflict. Respond by making choices that correspond with your typical behavior or attitudes in conflict situations. Study each situation and the five possible behavioral responses carefully and then allocate 10 points between them to indicate your typical behavior, with the highest number of points indicating your strongest choice. Any response can be assigned 0 – 10 points, as long as all five responses for the given situation add up to 10 total points.

Choose a single frame of reference (e.g., work-related conflicts, family conflicts, social conflicts, organizational conflicts) and keep that frame of reference in mind when responding to all the situations.

SITUATION 1: Upon experiencing strong feelings in a conflict situation, you:

_____ A. Enjoy the emotional release and sense of exhilaration and accomplishment.
_____ B. Enjoy the strategizing involved and the challenge of the conflict.
_____ C. Become serious about how others are feeling and thinking.
_____ D. Find it frightening because you do not accept that differences can be discussed without someone’s feelings getting hurt.
_____ E. Become convinced that there is nothing you can do to resolve the issue.

SITUATION 2: Consider the following statements and rate them in terms of how characteristic they are of your personal beliefs:

_____ A. Life is conquered by those who believe in winning.
_____ B. Winning is rarely possible in conflict.
_____ C. No one has the final answer to anything, but each has a piece to contribute.
_____ D. In the last analysis, it is wise to turn the other cheek.
_____ E. It is useless to attempt to change a person who seems locked into an opposing view.

SITUATION 3: What is the best result that you expect from conflict?

_____ A. Conflict helps people face the fact that one answer is better than others.
_____ B. Conflict results in canceling out extremes of thinking so that a strong middle ground can be reached.
_____ C. Conflict clears the air and enhances commitment and results.
_____ D. Conflict demonstrates the absurdity of self-centeredness and draws people closer together in the commitment to each other.
_____ E. Conflict lessens complacency and assigns blame where it belongs.

SITUATION 4: When you are the person with the greater authority in a conflict situation, you:

_____ A. Put it straight, letting the other know your view.
_____ B. Try to negotiate the best settlement you can get.
_____ C. Ask to hear the other’s feelings and suggest that a position be found that both might be willing to try.
_____ D. Go along with the other, providing support where you can.
_____ E. Keep the encounter impersonal, citing results if they apply.
SITUATION 5: When someone you care for takes an unreasonable position, you:

_____A. Lay it on the line, telling him or her that you don’t like it.
_____B. Let him or her know in casual, subtle ways that you are not pleased; possibly distract with humor; and avoid a direct confrontation.
_____C. Call attention to the conflict and explore a mutually acceptable solution.
_____D. Try to keep your misgivings to yourself.
_____E. Let your actions speak for you by indicating depression or lack of interest.

SITUATION 6: When you become angry at a friend or colleague, you:

_____A. Just explode without giving it much thought.
_____B. Try to smooth things over with a good story.
_____C. Express your anger and invite him or her to respond.
_____D. Try to compensate for your anger by acting the opposite of what you are feeling.
_____E. Remove yourself from the situation.

SITUATION 7: When you find yourself disagreeing with other members of a group on an important issue, you:

_____A. Stand by your convictions and defend your position.
_____B. Appeal to the logic of the group, in the hope of convincing at least a majority that you are right.
_____C. Explore points of agreement and disagreement and the feelings of the group’s members, and then search for alternatives that take everyone’s views into account.
_____D. Go along with the rest of the group.
_____E. Not participate in the discussion and not feel bound by any decision reached.

SITUATION 8: When a single group member takes a position in opposition to the rest of the group, you:

_____A. Point out publicly that the dissenting member is blocking the group and suggest that the group move on without him or her if necessary.
_____B. Make sure the dissenting member has a chance to communicate his or her objections so that a compromise can be reached.
_____C. Try to uncover why the dissenting member views the issue differently, so that the group’s members can reevaluate their own positions.
_____D. Encourage the group’s members to set the conflict aside and go on to more agreeable items on the agenda.
_____E. Remain silent, because it is best to avoid becoming involved.

SITUATION 9: When you see conflict emerging in a group, you:

_____A. Push for a quick decision to ensure that the task is completed.
_____B. Avoid outright confrontation by moving the discussion toward a middle ground.
_____C. Share with the group your impression of what is going on so the nature of the impending conflict can be discussed.
_____D. Forestall or divert the conflict before it emerges by relieving the tension with humor.
_____E. Stay out of the conflict as long as it is of no concern to you.

SITUATION 10: In handling conflict between your group and another, you:

_____A. Anticipate areas of resistance and prepare responses to objections prior to open conflict
B. Encourage your group’s members to be prepared by identifying in advance areas of possible compromise.

C. Recognize that conflict is healthy and press for the identification of shared concerns and/or goals.

D. Promote harmony on the grounds that the only real result of conflict is the destruction of friendly relations.

E. Have your group submit the issue to an impartial arbitrator.

SITUATION 11: In selecting a member of your group to represent you in negotiating with another group, you would choose a person who:

A. Knows the rationale of your group’s position and would press vigorously for your group’s point of view.

B. Would see that most of your group’s judgments were incorporated into the final negotiated decision without alienating too many members of either group.

C. Would best represent the ideas of your group, evaluate these in view of judgments of the other group, and then emphasize problem solving approaches to the conflict.

D. Is most skillful in interpersonal relations and would be openly cooperative and tentative in his or her approach.

E. Would present your group’s case accurately, while not making commitments that might result in obligating your group to a significantly changed position.

SITUATION 12: In your view, what might be the reason for the failure of one group to collaborate with another?

A. Lack of a clearly stated position, or failure to back up the group’s position.

B. Tendency of groups to force their leadership or representatives to abide by the group’s decision, as opposed to promoting flexibility, which would facilitate compromise.

C. Tendency of groups to enter negotiations with a win/lose perspective.

D. Lack of motivation on the part of the group’s membership to live peacefully with the other group.

E. Irresponsible behavior on the part of the group’s leadership, resulting in the leaders placing emphasis on maintaining their own power positions rather than addressing the issues involved.

When you have completed all items in Section 1, write the number of points you assigned for each of the five responses for the twelve situations in the appropriate columns on the scoring form below. Add the total number of points for each column and make sure that they total 120 points. Then, transfer your column scores onto the style/approach form to discover the extent to which you model the different styles/approaches to managing conflict.

Scoring Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>A Response</th>
<th>B Response</th>
<th>C Response</th>
<th>D Response</th>
<th>E Response</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>8.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Competing
An individual pursues his or her own concerns at the other person’s expense. This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one’s own position: one’s ability to argue, one’s rank, or economic sanctions. Competing might even mean standing up for your rights, defending a position that you believe to be correct, or simply trying to win.

Accommodating
The opposite of competing. When accommodating, an individual neglects his or her 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 one would prefer not to, or yielding to another person’s point of view.

Avoiding
The individual does not immediately pursue his or her personal concerns or those of the other person. He or she does not address 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.

Compromising
The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls on a middle ground 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 in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

Collaborating
The opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution that fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative that meets both sets of concerns. This is clearly the most effective approach of conflict management. Specifically it will produce the following results:
• Both sides win
• Satisfaction
• Mutual respect
• Both parties feel enriched rather than belittled
• Continuing effort of both parties
Management Awareness - **Personal Courage and Emotions**

Does this sound familiar? The following fears or responses to conflict are common:

- What if talking about it makes it worse, rather than better?
- What if he doesn’t listen to me?
- What if he/she yells at me?
- Why stir up trouble? It will probably resolve itself on its own

Many people are uncomfortable when it comes to confrontation. Often they will have the conversation in their head; so they can plan out what they want to say and how they want to say it. Sometimes these mental conversations are enough to settle the issue, as they realize they are making too much out of a simple situation.

Practicing personal courage is necessary if you want to really resolve conflicts at work. It is much easier and much safer to ignore the necessary conflict and play ostrich. Unfortunately, unresolved conflict tends to escalate. It never really disappears.

Most people avoid conflict at all costs at work. Because pushing for resolution means exercising personal courage by standing up for your ideas and beliefs. Many are uncomfortable because they lack conflict resolution skills and are afraid of getting hurt or losing out. Having to endure conflicts in your workplace without sufficient information, training, tools, or support, puts you in an uncomfortable position.

Yet conflict can be productive, beneficial and empowering. Meaningful work conflict is essential to an organization's health and success.

It is important to remember that all conflicts tend to have a high emotional content, and so emotional intelligence plays an important role when resolving workplace issues.

1. Self-Awareness (our own feelings)
2. Self-Management (managing our emotions)
3. Social Awareness (recognizing other people’s feelings) and
4. Social Skills (managing emotions in others).

An understanding of these factors can assist managers to create trusting relationships, perform more effectively under pressure, make better decisions, and defuse potential workplace conflicts.
The following chart outlines the five components of emotional intelligence that are particularly applicable to the workplace:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>Ability to recognize own moods, emotions and aspirations, and how they affect others</td>
<td>Self confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Realistic self assessment</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self-depreciating sense of humour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Regulation</td>
<td>Ability to control impulses/moods and suspend judgments.</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integrity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comfort with ambiguity</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Open to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Passion for work beyond remuneration and status.</td>
<td>Drive to achieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistence in the pursuit of goals.</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Organizational commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Able to understand the emotional make-up of others, and skill in relating to others</td>
<td>Expertise in building and retaining talent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cross-cultural sensitivity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Service-oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills</td>
<td>Proficiency in managing relationships and in building networks</td>
<td>Effectiveness in leading change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Persuasiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Expertise in leading and building teams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Often the emotions involved in a dispute can be discharged if you show you understand the other person’s feelings. At the very least, the other person will appreciate that you have listened.

Resources:

Heathfield, S (no date) Personal Courage and Conflict Resolution at Work; Why People avoid Conflict Resolution.  [http://humanresources.about.com/cs/conflictresolves/a/conflictcourage.htm](http://humanresources.about.com/cs/conflictresolves/a/conflictcourage.htm)


Author Unknown (no date) Overcome your Fear of Confrontation and Conflict [http://humanresources.about.com/od/conflictresolution/a/confrontation.htm](http://humanresources.about.com/od/conflictresolution/a/confrontation.htm)


DK Publishing Inc.

Author Unknown (no date) Managing Workplace Conflict; Why we avoid dealing with conflict. Vancouver Island University -  [http://www.mala.ca/conflict/avoid.asp](http://www.mala.ca/conflict/avoid.asp)

If you are looking for a quick resource for Emotional Quotient (EQ):
- Learning to engage in the four unique areas of emotional intelligence:
  - self-awareness
  - self-management
  - social awareness
  - relationship management
• Increase your EQ through skill building techniques
• Apply your EQ in your workplace environment and develop leadership skills
• Practice your EQ skills outside the workplace to benefit your personal relationships
• Discover the link between you EQ and your physical well-being to improve your general health
• Measure you EQ through access to the online Emotional Intelligence Appraisal
  www.simonsays.com
Responsive Management - When and How to Intervene in Conflicts

Unresolved workplace conflict is stressful for participants, their bosses and everyone in close proximity. Yet conflict is a common workplace reality -- as human beings we naturally have different values, points of view or ways of communicating.

Healthy debate on workplace teams often leads to better strategy and decisions and should be encouraged. Being accountable on a team may mean that others will challenge you to do a better job or follow through on a commitment -- these are not reasons to head for the human resources department.

Unhealthy conflict is very different -- it interferes with people’s ability to do their work successfully and, in the extremes, involves harmful or abusive behaviors.

The challenge for most managers is knowing when and how to intervene. Avoiding it won’t solve anything. Unresolved conflict just festers and resurfaces. In extreme cases, managers need to draw a well-defined boundary and lay out consequences for unacceptable behaviors. Individuals who contribute to a hostile work environment must be dealt with swiftly and decisively. Here are some intervention guidelines in resolving unhealthy conflict.

- Start by establishing ground rules through your workplace Code of Conduct for acceptable behavior such as: One person speak at a time. Speak for yourself and not for others.
- Allow each an opportunity to share their stories so each understands the other’s experience. Encourage both parties to identify how they contribute to the situation.
- Clarify job descriptions, roles and behavior expectations. Often the source of workplace conflict is overlapping or misunderstood roles or "turf." Get participants clear on whose responsibility is what by when.
- Ask participants to identify what specific actions they would like from the other to resolve the disagreement. Help them identify what they want more of, less of, stopped or started.
- Create accountability for a plan to move forward. Participants should walk away with shared (preferably written) agreement about who will be responsible for what in the future. Plan to meet again to check on how things are working.

It is important to remain calm in a confrontation in order to listen properly and think rationally. Try to separate yourself from the issue and concentrate on the facts. Listen carefully to what is being said and try to make plenty of eye contact to build empathy and give yourself maximum opportunity to read someone’s reactions.

In times of conflict, it is helpful to be as physically relaxed as possible. Avoid defensive or aggressive posturing and try to appear as open and accessible as possible to indicate that you are prepared to listen.
Resources:

Moriarty, M (Workplace Coach: Unhealthy conflict hurts workers and the business)
http://seattlepi.nwsource.com/business/338065_workcoach05.html

DK Publishing Inc.

Groenewald, A (no date) A nine step process for resolving workplace conflict
http://www.themanager.org/hr/workplace_conflict.htm

Author Unknown (no date) Managing Conflict in the Workplace


Responsive Management - Dealing with Difficult Employees

It’s not only important to deal with difficult people but also to manage them. Much like all personality types, there are many types of difficult people. Below is a list of difficult personality types and how best to manage them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Person</th>
<th>How to Manage Them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slumper</strong></td>
<td>Encourage this type to reflect on their achievements as they progress toward goals. Give praise when due, and check that positive feedback outweighs the negative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has no enthusiasm, sighs, shrugs, but will never say that anything is wrong.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dumper</strong></td>
<td>Set clear objectives, project milestones, and deadlines. Draw up an action plan and ensure that their initials are shown against most of the actions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offloads tasks, especially the worst ones, and dumps them on others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jumper</strong></td>
<td>Make sure that people who are responsible for projects deliver feedback themselves. Define responsibilities clearly and give credit to everyone involved in projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has no scruples; takes credit for others’ work to move up the career ladder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grumper</strong></td>
<td>Hold a one-on-one meeting and ask questions to pinpoint specific problems. Ask them to prioritize their workload and set deadlines for achieving objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complains constantly about every small thing and is impossible to please.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bumper</strong></td>
<td>State responsibilities clearly. Set stretching targets. Meet regularly to review progress against measurable objectives and give feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes the kudos when all goes well but blames mistakes on others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trumper</strong></td>
<td>Confirm in writing whatever has been agreed. Have an agenda for meetings, anticipate the objections a “trumper” will raise, and prepare questions and goals to challenge him or her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always has to have the first and last word and be one step ahead of everyone else.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thumper</strong></td>
<td>Stand your ground by being assertive. State your case calmly and ask questions to encourage the person to consider the consequences of their actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullies and intimidates others and gets his own way by being aggressive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dealing with a difficult person successfully requires objective analysis and assessment. Consider all your options before choosing the best way to achieve cooperation and change.
Resources:

DK Publishing Inc.

Madison, WI: CWL Publishing

Paramus, NJ: Prentice Hall Press