

8-Step Conflict Resolution Process

Adapted from: Resolving Conflict Without Giving In or Giving Up

STEP ONE: DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH ANGER

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

STEP TWO: DO YOUR HOMEWORK (THINK BEFORE APPROACHING)

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

STEP THREE: SET A POSITIVE TONE

- Invite the person to negotiate. For example: "Could we talk?"
- State your positive intentions. For example: "I'd like to resolve things between us."
- Acknowledge and validate the other person. For example: "I can see this is difficult for you, too."

STEP FOUR: USE GROUND RULES (STATED OR UNSTATED)

- One person speaks at a time.
- Continue until the situation is improved.
- Remain calm.



STEP FIVE: DEFINE THE PROBLEM

- One at a time, each person states his/her issues and feelings.
- Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
- Identify interests and needs.
- Discuss assumptions and values.
- Summarize new understanding and agreements reached.

STEP SIX: BRAINSTORM POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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

STEP SEVEN: EVALUATE AND CHOOSE SOLUTIONS

- Solutions agreed upon should be mutual, realistic, specific, and balanced. Solutions must also address the main interests of both parties.

STEP EIGHT: FOLLOW UP

Check back with one another at a pre-set time and date. If the solution is not working, revisit the process.

