CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

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The Truth

• Absolute truth often does not exist
• People with different experiences and perspectives may have different truths
• Truth is often not the most important factor in a dispute
• Fact-finding will often not resolve the problem between the parties
• Are you trained for fact-finding?
The Nature of Conflict

• Conflict is an inevitable part of life.

• Conflict signals a need for change.

• Conflict can result in a learning experience.

• Conflict can be positive and productive. If people express their feelings and needs in a positive and constructive way it reduces anxiety and prevents the escalation of conflict.

• Conflict can lead to positive growth in working and personal relationships.
I am experiencing a flood of sensation in my thumb. How very interesting.
The Third Side

• Fight
• Flight
• The Third Side
Conflict Resolution Styles

Every person has their own style or way of handling themselves in a conflict. Some use a variety of styles while others depend solely on one.

There are five distinct conflict resolution styles:

Avoidance (turtle) “Not now, maybe later” It is easier to withdraw than to face difficult issues.

Accommodation (teddy bear). “Let’s try it your way”. Values relationships over goals and will give up on goals in order to be liked.
Conflict Resolution Styles

**Compromise (fox)** “Let's make a deal”  Looks for a solution where each gives up something

**Problem Solving (owl)** “Let's work it out together”. Values both goals and relationships

*Problem solving process is the only conflict resolution style that allows for the potential of a win-win outcome.*

**Confrontation (shark)** “Hit head on”  Tries to overpower opponents. Goals are important, relationships aren’t.
“Seek first to understand, then to be understood”

Steven Covey/St Francis of Assisi
Fisher & Ury: Interest-Based Negotiation

• Separate the People from the Problems
• Go to the Balcony
• Know Everyone’s BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement)
• Focus on interests, not positions or values
• Explore options for mutual gain
• Use objective criteria
Positional Bargaining

- disputants are adversaries
- goal is victory
- demand concessions
- dig into position
- mislead, use tricks
- insist on your position
- apply pressure
- look to win for you alone

Integrative Bargaining

- disputants are joint problem solvers
- goal is wise decision
- work together to determine who gets what
- focus on tnterests, not positions
- be open about interests, use fair principles
- insist on objective criteria; consider multiple answers
- use reason; yield to principle, not pressure
- look for win-win opportunities
**WIN-WIN OUTCOMES**

- Housemates each want/need 1 orange
- Only one orange remains
- Shark result?
- Fox result?
- Owl result?
- Zest?
VALUES

• Ethics (good - bad, virtue - vice, moral - immoral - amoral, right – wrong)
• Aesthetics (beautiful, ugly, unbalanced, pleasing)
• Doctrinal (political, ideological, religious or social beliefs and values)
Positions

A proposed outcome that represents one way among many that issues might be resolved and interests met.

Explicit demands made during a negotiation, although the underlying interests may be broader and quite different.

The declared stance which will be strongly defended by a negotiator.
Interests

The reason and motivation behind a negotiating position

Interests are considered to be the motivating factor(s) and underlying reasons behind the ‘position’ adopted by a negotiating party. They often entail some combination of economic, security, recognition, and control issues, or the desires, concerns, aims or goals of a negotiating party in a negotiation process.

www.negotiations.com
Cool Down Your Conflict

Positions

Needs

NYS Dispute Resolution Association
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- Biological & Physiological needs: basic life needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
- Safety needs: protection, security, order, law, limits, stability, etc.
- Belongingness & Love needs: family, affection, relationships, work group, etc.
- Esteem needs: achievement, status, responsibility, reputation.
- Self-actualisation: personal growth & fulfilment.

NYS Dispute Resolution Association
Examples of Needs/Interests

- Autonomy/ Freedom
- Respect/ Fairness
- Trust/ Reassurance
- Equality/ Justice
- Being heard/ Appreciation
- Predictability/ Consistency
- Acknowledgement/ Recognition
- Understanding/ Clarity
- Growth/ Healing
- Safety/ Shelter
- Self worth/ Respect
- Honesty/ Authenticity
- Independence/ Choice
- Support/ Cooperation
- Friendship/ Sharing
- Community/ Family
Conflict Ladder

• Needs/interests

• Positions

• Values
LISTENING SKILLS

1. Pay Attention
• Give the speaker your undivided attention,
• Observe non-verbal communication
• Look at the speaker directly.
• Put aside distracting thoughts.
• Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal!
• Avoid being distracted by side conversations.

2. Show That You're Listening
• Use your own body language and gestures to convey your attention.
• Nod occasionally.
• Smile and use other facial expressions.
• Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh huh.

3. Provide Feedback
• Reflect and summarize what is being said and ask questions to be sure you have understood: “What I’m hearing is”, and “Sounds like you are saying, “What do you mean when you say.” "Is this what you mean?"
• Keep judgments and opinions to yourself.
LEAVE ME ALONE SIR KNIGHT, OR I’LL BURN YOU TO A CRISP AND EAT THE PRINCESS FOR DINNER!!

SO WHAT I’M HEARING YOU SAYING IS THAT YOU BOTH VALUE YOUR PEACE AND QUIET. HOW CAN WE MEET THOSE NEEDS?
Absolute truth often does not exist. Truth is often not the most important factor in a dispute. Fact-finding will often not resolve the problem between the parties. Fact-finding raises the risk of compromising the mediator’s neutrality. Mediators are not trained for fact-finding.
3 Levels of Listening

• Facts (what)
• Needs (why)
• Emotions (wtf)
Eight Ways We Don’t Listen

• **Mind Reader**
  Thinking “what is the person really thinking or feeling?”

• **Rehearser** - “Here’s what I’ll say next.”

• **Filterer** - Selective listening

• **Dreamer** - Drifting off

• **Identifier**
  Referring everything to your own experience

• **Derailer**
  Changes the subject quickly

• **Sparrer**
  Belittle or discount

• **Placater**
  Agree with everything to be nice or to avoid conflict

Source: *The Writing Lab*, Purdue University Press
Breaker Switches/Hot Buttons

• Things that drive you crazy
• Types of people for whom you have limited tolerance
• Character traits that cause you to lose patience and not be a good listener
In groups of 3 – 5, talk about some of your hot buttons.

When your buttons are pushed, how does it affect the outcome of a conflict situation?

Have your hot buttons ever gotten you into trouble?

What strategies do you employ to manage your hot buttons?
Managing Hot Buttons/Breaker Switches

• Self-awareness
• Go to the balcony
• Count
• Breathe
• Silence
• I’m outta here!
• Others?
Five Elements of an Apology

• Expressing regret
  “I am sorry”

• Accepting responsibility
  “I was wrong”

• Making restitution
  “What can I do to make it right?”

• Expressing future intent
  “I’ll try not to do that again”

• Requesting forgiveness
  “Will you please forgive me?”

from “The Five Languages of Apology”, by Jennifer Thomas and Gary Chapman
APOLOGY STUDY

Percent of victims accepting a settlement offer in an accident case:

Full apology w/ 3 R’s (Regret; Responsibility; Reform) -- 73%

No statement or apology -- 53%

Partial apology (“I’m sorry that you were hurt”) -- 35%
Use of Silence
When in Doubt, Ask Questions!

- Scared
- On shaky ground
- Angry
- Don’t know how to answer
- A question shows caring
- Buys you time
- Gathers information and knowledge
**Questioning Techniques**

**Open Question:**
A question with a lengthy answer that usually involves someone’s opinion.

**Closed Question:**
A question with one answer, usually yes or no.
USE MEDIATION

- Bring in a pro
- Conflict is stuck
- Conflict is damaging the organization/municipality
- Good management decision
- Free or low cost services at Community Dispute Resolution Centers
http://www.pon.harvard.edu/free-reports/
In groups of 4-5, discuss the following question:

How good a job does the public hearing process do in promoting constructive public input and conflict management?
New York State Dispute Resolution Association, Inc.

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www.nysdra.org

NYSDRA is a membership organization committed to the use and promotion of peaceful dispute resolution.

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