

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

How to effectively manage difficult conversations

Instructions:

This worksheet is designed to help you resolve conflict through use of effective communication. Use it to guide your actions in a way that produces a peaceful solution in time of disagreement.

First, let's take a look at the conflict you are facing using the Stop-Think-Act model:

1. **Stop!** Breathe. Calm Down. Now, you are ready to accurately look at the problem at hand.
2. **Think!** Ask yourself:
 - What exactly is the *problem*? _____
 - Is this *really* a problem? Why? _____
 - It is *my* problem? _____
 - Does it need *immediate* attention? _____
 - What do I want? What is my *goal*? _____
 - What might I be *assuming*? _____
 - What might be another person's *point-of-view*? _____
 - What are my *options*? _____
 - What are the potential *consequences* of each option? _____
 - What is my *best choice* here? _____
3. **Act!**
 - Take action and responsibility for that action
 - Evaluate your action and the outcome. What can I learn from this?
 - Does the problem still exist? If no, learn from your experience. If yes, start again

Next, if you have determined that there is indeed a conflict that needs to be resolved, here's some additional **CLUES** on how to resolve it...

C - communicate promptly, assertively, respectfully. Initiate a private conversation and share your perspective & goal. Remember, talk *to* people, not *about* people.

L - listen to the other person's point of view. Allow them to speak without interruption, hidden agenda or judgment. Then, reflect what you hear to clarify what they are saying.

U - understand their perspective. Practice empathy; "Help me understand your point-of-view." Also, discuss one issue at a time, get the facts, and clarify assumptions.

E - explore options & solutions. Brainstorm to generate options. Choose a solution that works for you both and act on it.

S - So, how did it go? Evaluate how it went. Then move one or plan next steps. What did you learn?

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Now, if you are still stuck wondering what to say in the face of conflict, try this...

- **Starting the conversation:** “I want to talk to you about something and I’d appreciate it if you would first listen to what I have to say and then I will do the same for you...OK?”
- **State the problem:** “I’ve noticed...or, I feel _____, Because _____, and What I want is _____”
- **Gaining understanding:** “Help me understand (your view point, what’s going on, what that’s like for you)...”
- **Reflecting/Paraphrasing:** “What I hear you saying is...Is that correct?”
- **Move towards action:** “Given what we just talked about, what are some possible solutions that could work for us both?”

Finally, here are some Conflict Resolution Dos & Don’ts

DO:

- Communicate face-to-face
- Manage your own emotions
- Use language that is understood
- Recognize and embrace differences
- Understand interests and perspectives of self and others
- Act sooner rather than later
- Focus on the present situation/problem
- Actively listen and pay attention
- Be present, clear, and direct
- Be honest, genuine, and respectful
- Assert yourself
- Be aware of body language
- Convey the value of your relationship

DON’T:

- Wait or avoid the issue
- Assume
- Get defensive
- Interrupt
- Ignore feedback
- Argue feelings, judge or criticize
- Use put-downs or sarcasm
- Rely solely on verbals or nonverbal
- Discuss the problem with others not associated with the issue
- Stop communicating