

Conflict Resolution Skills for Interpersonal Conflicts

January 11, 2024
10:05 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Presented by Joy Jordan

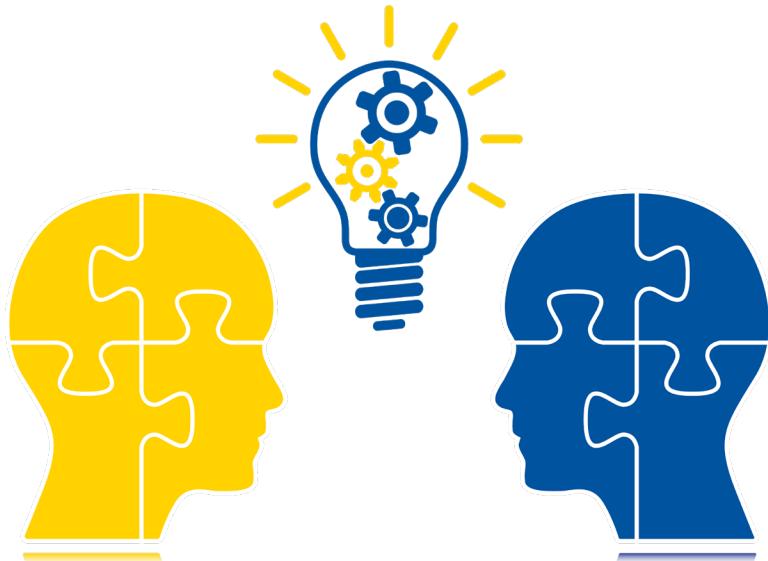
Conflict Resolution Program, Institute for Public Administration



Workshop Outcomes

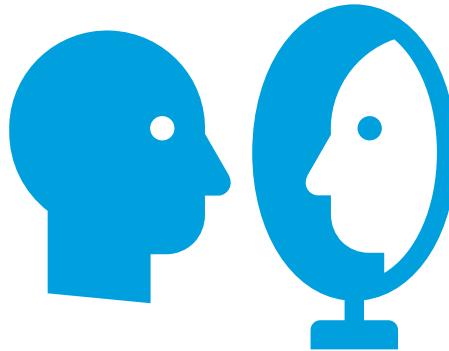
Participants will:

- **Distinguish** between the 5 conflict management styles.
- **Recognize** their preferred style(s).
- **Understand** how to select the appropriate style.
- **Examine** the listening and speaking skills needed to effectively communicate during a conflict.
- .



How We Will Cover These Topics

Through **self awareness** and **reflection** and by **sharing with others**, we will explore essential interpersonal skills that help us foster authentic conflict management skills.

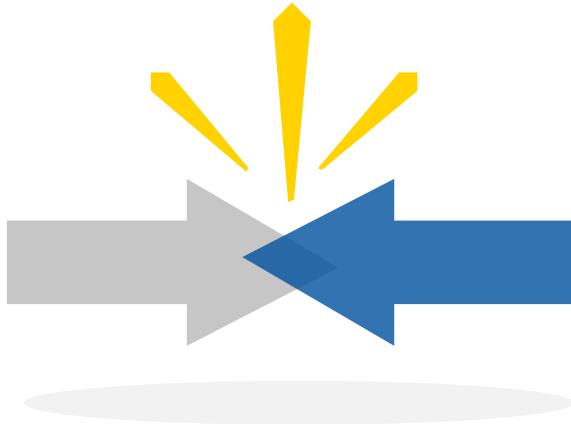


Why These Skills Matter

- Conflict management skills...
 - encourage empathy
 - improve understanding
 - build trust
- We need these skills in our professional lives to work with our colleagues and communities.



What is Conflict?



- Disagreement
- Opposing Views
- Contradictory Ideas
- Struggle

Perception of Conflict

When I think about
conflict, I feel...



Perception of Conflict



Negative Perception



Negative Response



Negative Outcome

Perception of Conflict

Positive Perception



Positive Response



Positive Outcome

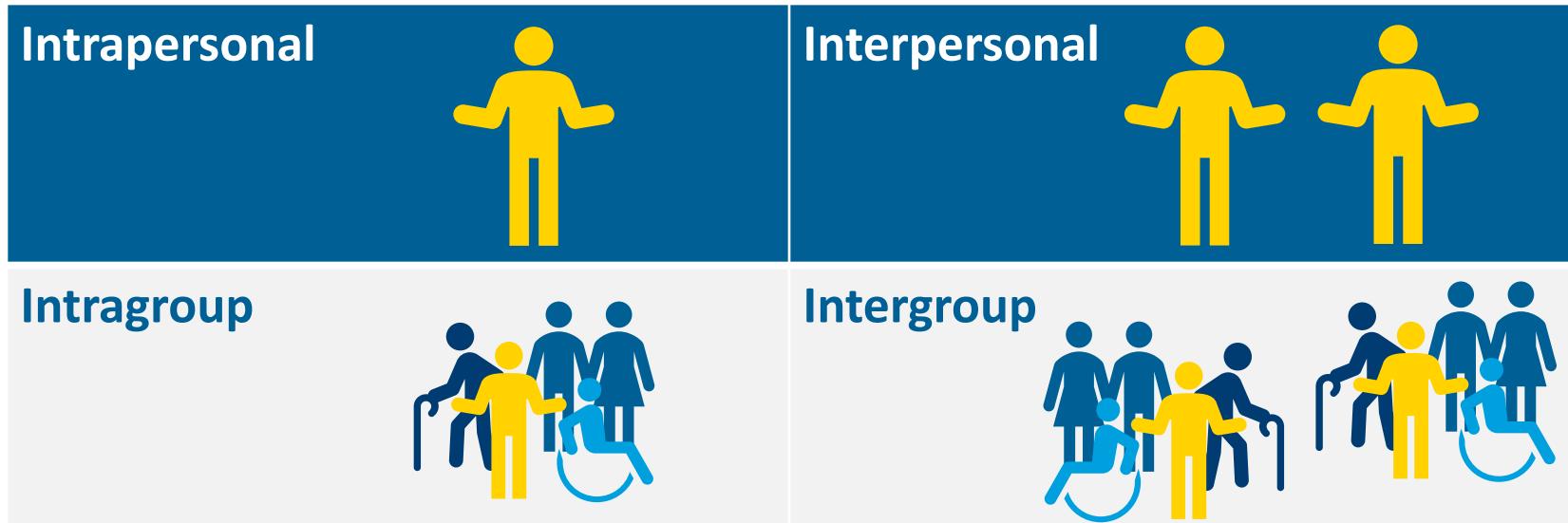
A cluster of green words arranged in a cloud-like shape, representing various positive behaviors and outcomes. The words include: Behaviours, Communicate, Encourage, Develop, Inspire, Teach, Empower, Accountability, presence, Build, Normal, Human, Trust, Vision, Listen, Lead, Learn, performance, Model, Priorities, Role, Oversee, Excellence, Context, control, Engage, and Motivate.

Conflict is Normal



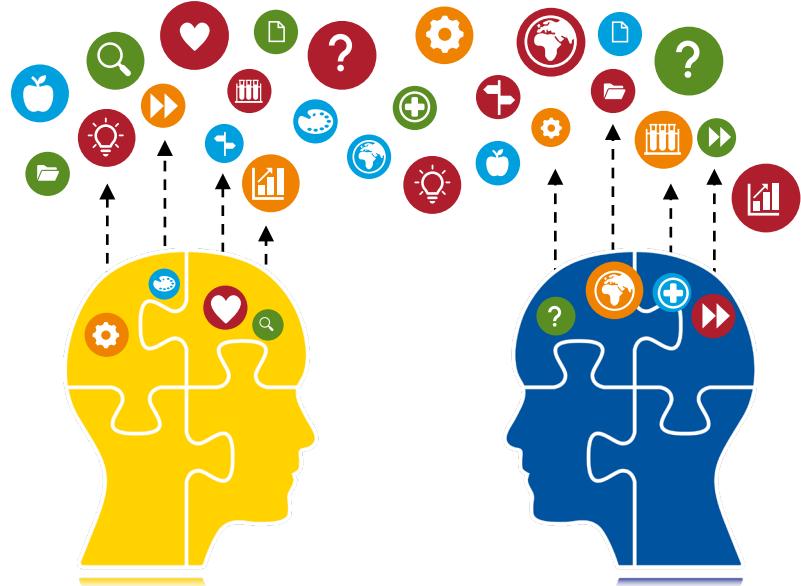
- Everyone has conflict.
- Size matters.
- Conflict is an opportunity for *positive* change.

Types of Conflict



Interpersonal Conflict

- Occurs between two people.
- The parties need one another to accomplish their goals.
- One party usually feels the other is preventing them from getting something they want.



Causes of Conflict

Clashing
Personalities

Differing
Values

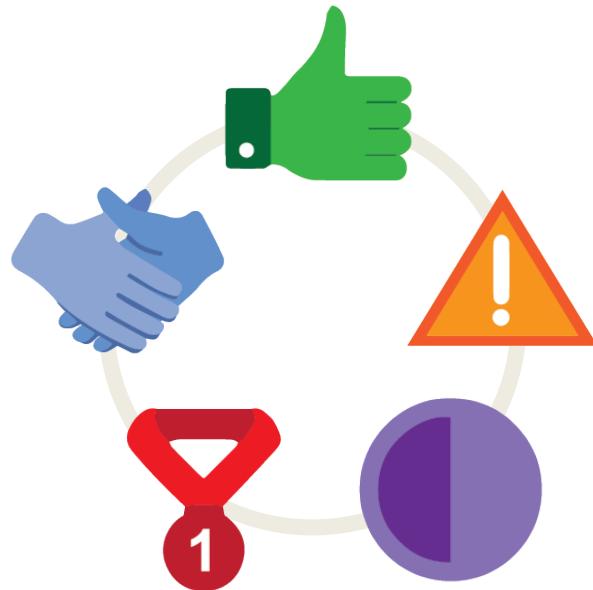
Change

Making
Assumptions

Unmet
Expectations

Unresolved
Issues

Conflict Management Styles



Accommodation

Avoidance

Compromise

Competition

Collaboration

Accommodation



Accommodation

Accommodating is giving in to the other person. You give up what you want in order to let them get what they want.

Accommodating is putting aside one's own needs and concerns in order to satisfy the needs of the other person.

Accommodation



PROS

The person who wins gets what they wanted.

Can end the conflict quickly.

It can demonstrate you care more about the person than the conflict.

CONS

The Accommodator may be reluctantly accommodating due to...

Expectations of quid pro quo may lead to disappointment.

Consistent use may lead to resentment.

Conflict Management Style

Avoidance



Avoidance is knowing there is a conflict but choosing not to deal with it.

Avoiders do not acknowledge or discuss the conflict with the other person and may avoid the person with whom he or she is having the conflict.

Avoidance



PROS

It can be less stressful for an Avoider to avoid than to engage.

Conflict *might* dissipate.

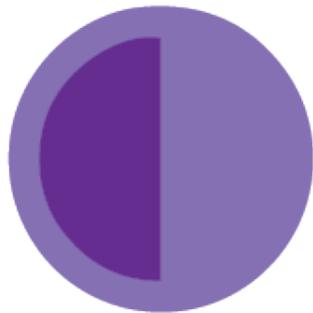
CONS

Causes stress for the person who wants to address the conflict.

May escalate and expand the conflict.

Conflict Management Style

Compromise



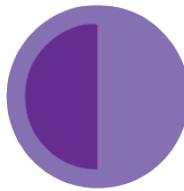
Compromise

Compromise splits the difference 50/50.

Each person gets and gives up a little of what they want.

It is an attempt to seek middle ground.

Compromise



PROS

Can end a conflict quickly.

Each person feels like they got “something” aka a partial win.

CONS

Each person may feel like they had to give up something.

The solution may not actually work for either side.

Competition



Competition

Competition assumes that for one person to win the other person *must* lose.

The goal of competition is to get what you want AND make sure the other person does not get what they want.

Competition



PROS

The Competitor gets what they wanted.

The Competitor feels good about winning.

CONS

The non-competitor loses—gets nothing they wanted.

The non-competitor may feel disrespected and devalued and reluctant to engage again.

Conflict Management Style

Collaboration



Collaboration

Collaboration is talking through differences to uncover what each person needs rather than what they want.

Collaboration generates unique solutions that satisfy the needs of both people.

Conflict Management Style

Collaboration



PROS

Both sides win.

Both sides are satisfied with the outcome.

Each person gains experience with using this style.

CONS

It takes time.

At least one person needs to use/model effective communication skills.

Identify Your Preferred Conflict Style

- Your preferred conflict style is used to manage conflict.
- **Awareness + Understanding =** increased capacity to effectively manage any type of conflict



Conflict Management Styles Group Discussion

- Share why you use this style
 - What works well?
 - What doesn't?



Selecting the Appropriate Style

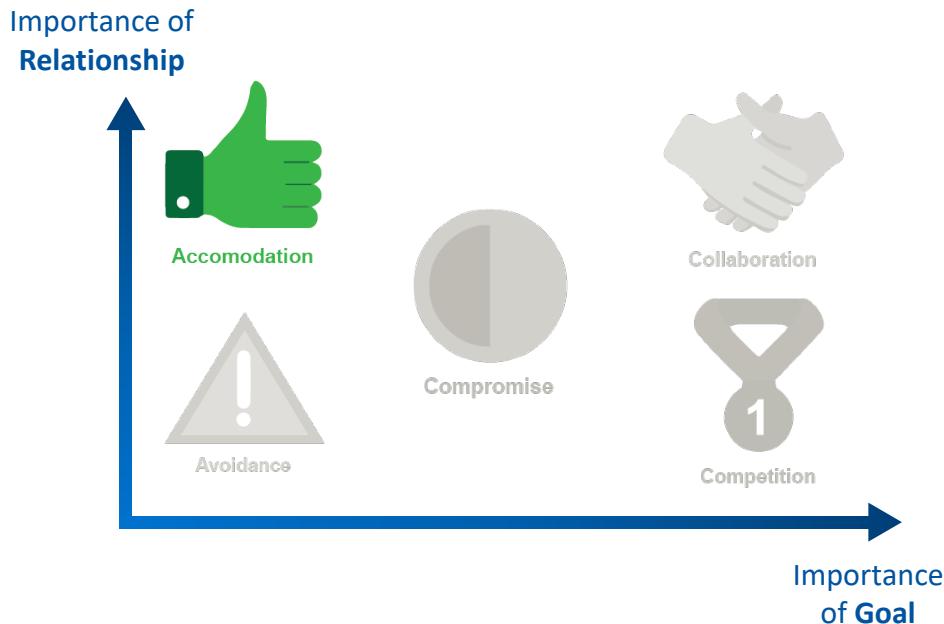


Conflict Management Style

Accommodation

Use when...

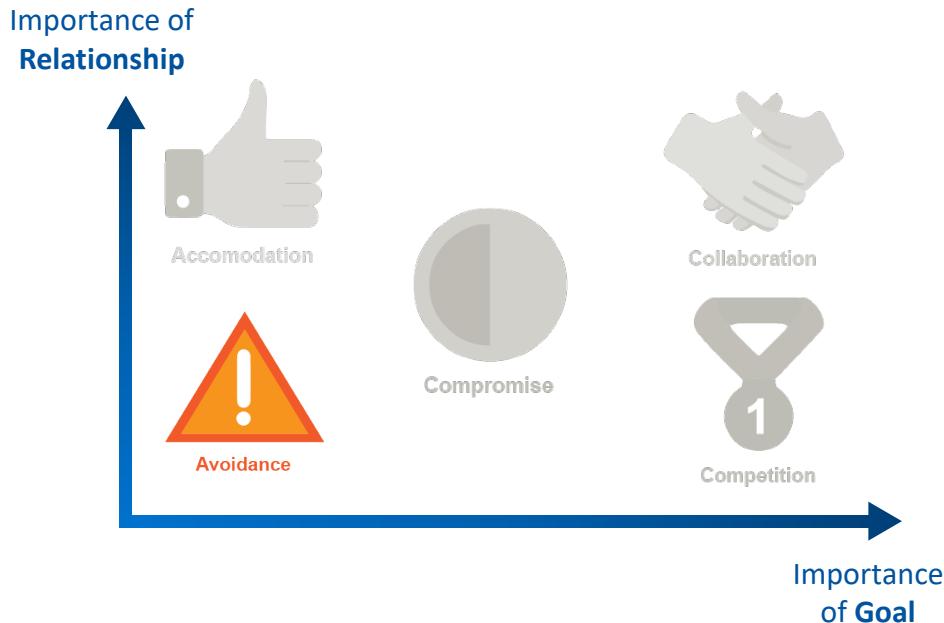
- The relationship is more important than the goal.
- You want to reach a quick solution.
- You are okay with giving into the other person in this situation.



Avoidance

Use when...

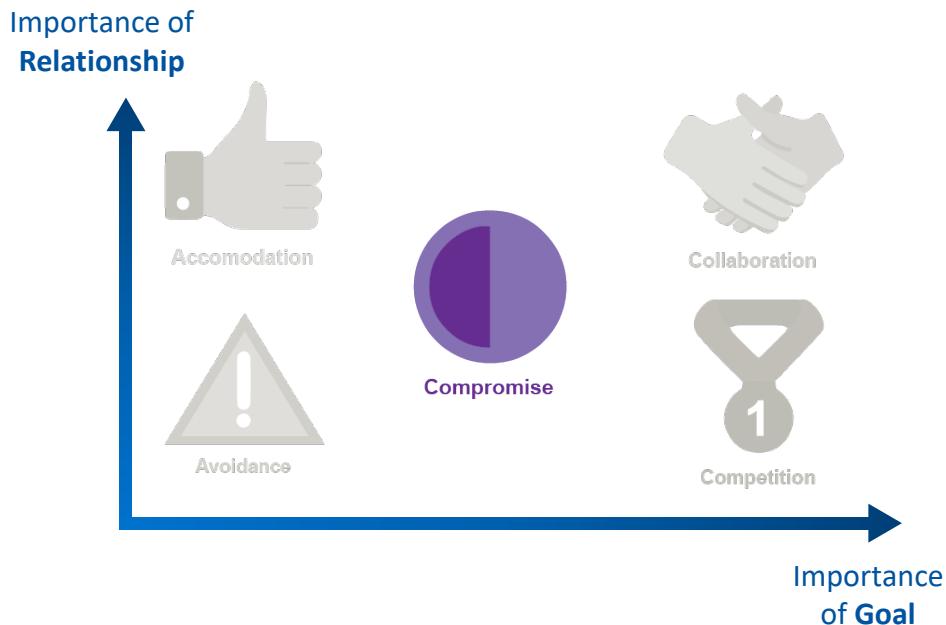
- The goal and relationship are not important.
- Potential harm outweighs potential benefits – you may exacerbate the situation.
- Change is not possible or realistic, such as policy or personality.



Compromise

Use when...

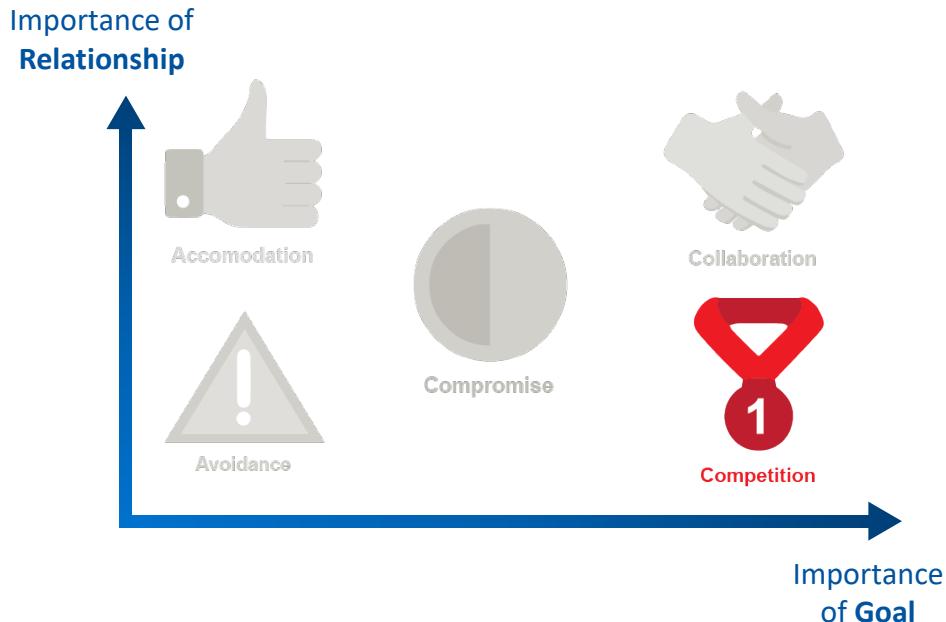
- The relationship and goal are both somewhat important.
- You need a quick solution.
- You are willing to give up some of what you want in order to get some of what you want.



Competition

Use when...

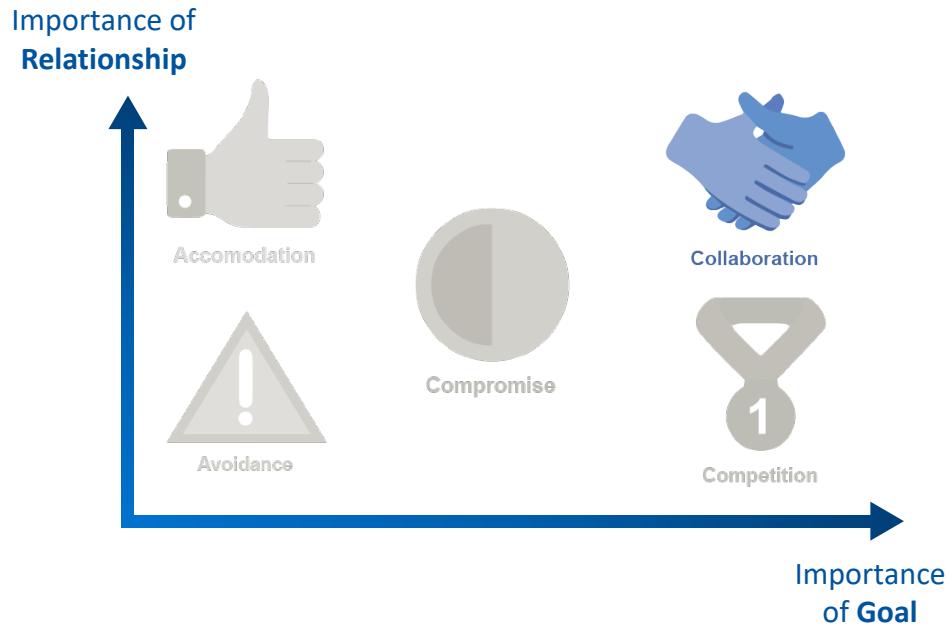
- You are willing to devalue the relationship in order to achieve your goal.
- Achieving your goal is paramount and so is making sure the other person does not achieve their goal.



Collaboration

Use when...

- The relationship and goal are both important.
- You want to find a solution that works for you and the other person.
- You are willing to be flexible and move beyond what you “want” to what you “need”.



Conflict Management Styles Practice



What is Communication?

Exchange of information

- Verbally
- Non-verbally
- Written
- Visually



Effective Communication

Combines...

- nonverbal communication
- attentive listening
- the ability to manage stress

...to ensure a message
is received and understood.



Importance of Effective Communication



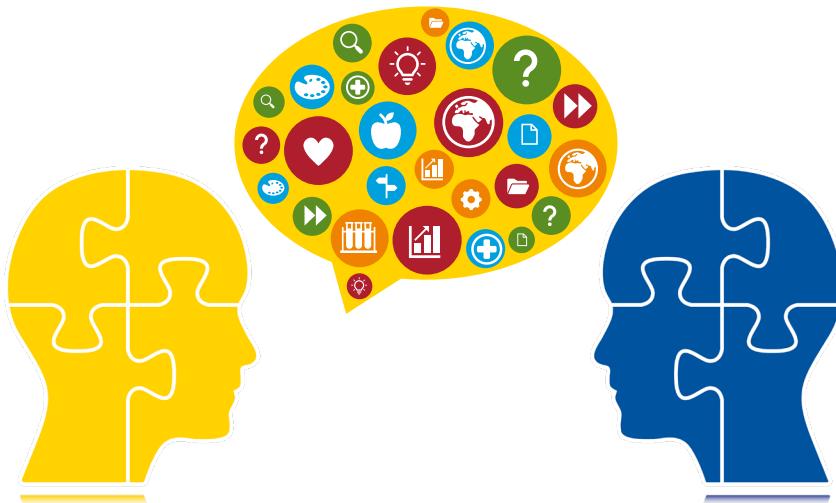
- **Helps** us better understand a person or a situation.
- **Builds** trusting, respectful relationships.
- **Enables** us to resolve differences.
- **Creates** environments where creative ideas, problem-solving and caring can flourish.

Conflict and Communication



- **Accept** that you have a conflict.
- **Talk** only to the person involved.
- **Invite** the other person to discuss the conflict.
- **Hold** the conversation in a private and neutral location.
- **Prepare** your talking points.
- **Say** what you need and want, and why.

Essential Communication Strategies and Skills for Collaborating During a Conflict

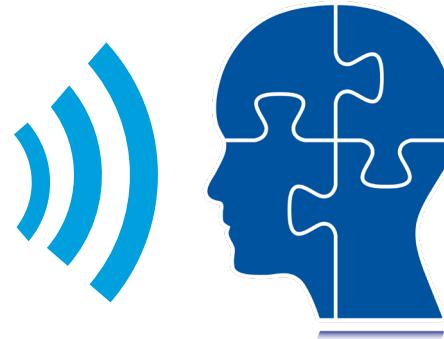


- Active Listening
- Assertive Speaking

What is Active Listening?

Listening to understand the other person's point of view.

- Listen attentively without interrupting.
- Listen to understand, NOT to respond.
- Tell the other person what you heard.



Active Listening

Listen to understand the speaker's point of view.

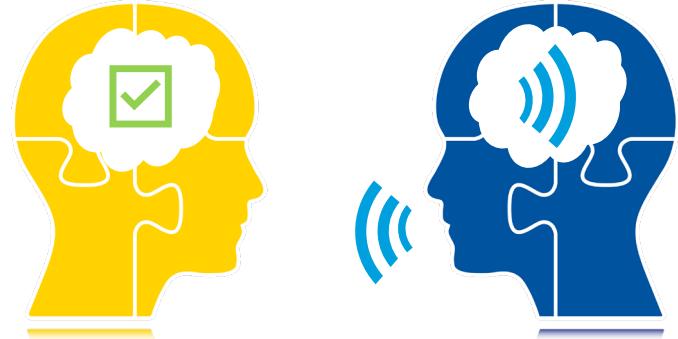
- What happened? (facts)
- How do they feel? (feelings)
- What do they want? (wants)
- Why do they want it? (needs)



How do you do it?

Summarize

- *Why:* To acknowledge the main points and feelings expressed by the speaker
- *How:* In your own words, sum up what you heard and ask the speaker if you “got it”



Caution!

When active listening, be sure not to...

- Interrupt
- Judge or criticize
- Give advice or suggestions
- Bring up your own experiences
- Plan your response
- Make assumptions



What is Assertive Speaking?



Communicating clearly, confidently, and respectfully, so that the receiver of your message believes that you are authentic.

Assertive Speaking

- Encourages dialogue
- Minimizes conflict
- Tempers anger



The speaker maintains self-respect, expresses personal needs, and defends their own rights without abusing or dominating others.

Assertive Speaking

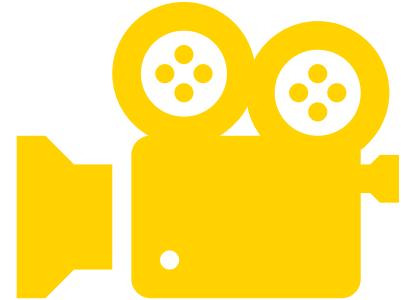
To express how you are feeling about a difficult topic, issue, or conflict.



- **Think before you speak.**
- **Recognize** and take responsibility for your feelings/reactions.
- **Say** what you mean and mean what you say.
- **Separate** facts from feelings.
- **Tell** the other person what you need and want as opposed to what you don't need and want.

Formula for Speaking Assertively

1. Focus on the present situation.
2. Speak about yourself.
3. Use an I-message describing:
 - a. *How you feel (using one feeling word)*
 - b. *When “x” happens... (from a video camera’s view)*
 - c. *Why you feel that way*



Questions?





*Knowing yourself
is the beginning
of all wisdom.*

-Aristotle

Thank You!

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