

## Rules of Conflict Competence 1

1. Open lines of communication and keep them open
2. Be objective
3. Show empathy
4. Take their side
5. Bridge the differences
6. Make it hard for them to say no
7. Enlist their support
8. Convince rather than threaten
9. Keep choices open
10. Don't get emotional i.e. have better control over your emotions
11. Over-excitement is the enemy.
12. Proceed calmly,
13. Avoid inflating the significance of any adversary
14. With coalitions, etc, better with small and few rather than big and many.

### **Remain objective**

- Stay Centred ;do not polarise
- Stay creative: do not negatives
- Stay calm; tolerate ambivalence
- Do not homogenise
- Do not regress under stress
- Challenge the intrusion of *either-or* thinking
- Resist stereotypical and reductionist explanations of the other's motives
- Stay focused on your goals
- Recognise the other person's tactics
- Be aware of your emotional reactions
- Be aware of the other person's emotional reactions
- Stop before you speak

### **Taking their side**

- Actively listen
- Paraphrase/reflect
- Express your thoughts/viewpoint in a non-provocative manner
- Use open questions
- Use "I" to express your feelings, and "We" to indicate common purpose
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Acknowledge their viewpoint
- Agree where possible
- Apologise if necessary/where warranted (a sign of strength and confidence)
- Project confidence

### **Show Empathy**

- Show concern
- Acknowledge their POV
- Press your own non-provocatively
- Agree where possible

### **Open lines of communication**

- Keep them open
- Do not withdraw
- Do not cut the relationship
- Attempt dialogue rather than isolating from or fighting the other party

Rules of Conflict Competence 2		
<p><b>At all times...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay Centred: do not polarise</li> <li>• Stay creative: do not be negative</li> <li>• Stay calm: tolerate ambivalence</li> </ul>	<p><b>First Rule.... Stay Cool</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calm, calm...If others are a bit hot under the collar, it will not help if we lose our cool too.</li> <li>• And try to see things from the others' point of view.</li> <li>• Hasten slowly...</li> </ul>	<p><b>Second Rule... Be Upbeat and Positive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank your colleagues for their comments, and endeavour to answer their questions as swiftly and concisely as possible.</li> <li>• Nothing confuses more than vagueness and uncertainty.</li> <li>• Show concern and acknowledge their feelings. We have been working with Tandem for a long, long time. Old habits will not change overnight.</li> <li>• Encourage a positive approach. Convince them that it will be worthwhile.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Third Rule... Be Collaborative and Inclusive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of "we's", few "I's".</li> <li>• Thank them for their comments, and for their support in getting the new system implemented successfully.</li> <li>• "We are all in this together, so let us help each other..."</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fourth Rule... Invite Contributions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain constant feedback, particular as people become more familiar with things.</li> <li>• "What do you think?"</li> <li>• "I value your opinion"</li> <li>• "What would you find helpful in this situation?"</li> <li>• "What do you think is the best way forward from here?"</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fifth Rule... Be Decisive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act swiftly to solve problems: try not to let things drift.</li> <li>• Delay in resolving issues that arise will only breed cynicism and negativity.</li> </ul>

## **Communication...Saying and Meaning... Hearing and Understanding ...and Active Listening.**

- Communication works. Keep people informed and up to date. Bring them into the picture.
- It is not what you say, but how you say it.
- Language can provoke conflict. It can also encourage its resolution.
- Effective communication: what is meant is said, and what is said is meant; what is said is heard, and what is meant is understood.
  - The message that is sent may not be the one that was intended.
  - The sender may distort the message, either consciously or subconsciously.
  - The message may not be clear. It may be vague, and it will be distorted.
  - The receiver may receive the message, but not the message intended.
  - Resulting conflict may appear to the receiver to have been provoked by the sender.
  - The receiver's assumptions, perceptions, expectations, and projections may distort the message.
- Saying and meaning, hearing and understanding are effected and distorted by a number of factors, both external and internal to the participants. Noise, interruptions, the presence of others...fear of conflict., eagerness to engage in conflict, anxiety to avoid conflict...all can ensure that messages sent and received are distorted or incomplete.
- Active listening: ensuring that the message received is the message intended to be sent, that what is said is what is meant, and that what is meant is understood.
- To be effective, communication should involve motivation to communicate, effective disclosure, clear, precise messages, assertiveness, clarity of thought and language, empathy, effective listening, and an appropriate environment. (p29)
- Clearly communicate and clearly understand communication.
- Identify the goal of the communication.
- Identify the key message(s)
- Set practical and attainable goals.
- Avoid complex messages.
- Break it down into smaller pieces if necessary.
- Reflect how the receiver of the message may feel – that is, be empathic. Put yourself in their shoes.
- Watch out for barriers to communication and barriers to meaning
  - noise
  - distractions
  - listeners/observers
  - interruptions
  - physical discomfort
- Verbal and non-verbal communications that prevent their listener's understanding of what is meant: criticising, name-calling, ordering, threatening, moralising, avoiding, and diverting.
- Consider what a person does not wish to communicate, and how this person might be motivated to do so.