Agenda

1. Setting the stage: what is conflict and where does it come from?
2. Alternative conflict strategies
3. Know your personal style of conflict management
4. Manage emotions / active listening
5. Assertion
6. Interest-based negotiation
Workshop Outcomes

- Discover key concepts of interpersonal conflict and conflict styles to more effectively manage a range of interpersonal / workplace conflicts
- Understand how to handle high energy and emotion using reflective listening and avoiding high risk responses
- Develop understanding of the interest-based approach to conflict
Which of the following statements best describes the conflict environment in your workplace?

- Conflicts occur very rarely, 45.7%
- Conflicts occur infrequently, 25.2%
- Conflicts occur frequently but are not openly discussed, 11.5%
- Conflicts occur frequently and are obvious to other staff in the health unit, 8.4%
- Other (please specify), 9.2%
Working Definition of Conflicts

A conflict arises when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives

(Kriesberg and Dayton, Constructive Conflicts 2012)
Exercise One

Pair up with another individual

Objective:
 Get as many points for yourself as you can

Rules
 No talking
 Each participant receives a point for every touch of their partner’s hand to the table
 Assume position demonstrated by trainers
Exercise Two (10 minutes)

Get into groups of four and spend several minutes discussing several real examples of interpersonal or intergroup conflicts in your workplace. Make sure everyone gets a turn.

Address:
• Who are the people or groups?
• What is the incompatible objective?
• How has the conflict become visible (manifest)?
Conflict Management Options- Simple Model

Flight

Fight
- Power
- Rights

Unite
Conflicts are managed well in my workplace

- Strongly agree, 24.1%
- Agree, 35.6%
- Neutral, 21.0%
- Disagree, 10.1%
- Strongly disagree, 4.2%
- Other (please specify), 5.0%
Well managed conflicts result in…

- Satisfaction (with outcome)
- Lower Cost
- Improved relationships
- Low recidivism

Ury, Brett and Goldberg, 1988
Stressed System

Power

Rights

Interests

© Ury, Brett, and Goldberg, 1988
Effective System

Power

Rights

Interests

Ury, Brett, and Goldberg, 1988
The ‘Constructive Conflicts’ Approach

Kriesberg and Daytn, 2012
1. Conflicts are *universal*, *natural*, *inevitable* and *essential* aspects all social relationships.
2. Conflicts can be waged constructively or destructively
3. Different individuals looking at the same conflict often hold very different views about what
4. Conflicts move through stages and rarely end. Most often they are simply *transformed* from one state to another.

---

Louis Kriesberg and Bruce Dayton, *Constructive Conflicts* 2012
5) Four Interacting Dynamics Drive, Sustain, and Nurture Conflicts

The structural environment

Incompatible positions

Differing Cognitions

Emotional dynamics

Dayton, 2014
Exercise Three

Hand out
Conflict Transformation in Practice
A Simple Model of Alternative Conflict Strategies

PERSUADE

REWARD COERCE
Implications of Coercion

- Becomes a game of power. If you’re more powerful you get what you want.
- High cost: Relationships
- Can lead to heightened devotion to cause when issues, identity, values are at stake.
- Good short term results but poor long term results.
- Fragile. Triggers emotional drivers and spiral of escalation.
Implications of Persuasion

- Sustainability
- Democratic
- Doesn’t work for when issues related to core values or identity
- Requires opponent has open mind
Implications of Reward

- Preserves relationships
- Fast
- Does not require relationship
- In asymmetrical conflicts a risky strategy
- Only endures as long as benefits provided
What determines the strategy adopted?

1. Capacity of self / capacity of other
2. Are vital interests, values, or worldviews at stake?
3. Group cohesiveness
4. Availability of institutionalized forms of conflict management
5. Norms, culture, precedent
6. Degree of functional interdependence
7. One-off or on-going relationship
8. Personality / individual style of conflict management
Which strategy do you most often use?
When there are conflicts in the workplace, what would best describe your action to the situation?

- Take advantage of an opportunity to address conflict: 50%
- Remain neutral: 34%
- Other (please specify): 12%
- Wait until there is a “danger” situation before responding: 4%
Exercise Four

Discovering and reflecting on your own personal ‘conflict management style’

Self-Assessment Handout
Two-dimensional Model of Conflict Styles*

- **Compromise** – Give and take
  - **Mini-win/Mini-lose**

- **Collaborator** – works together
  - **Win-Win**

- **Accommodator** – gives in
  - **Lose-Win**

- **Avoider** – walks away
  - **Lose-Lose**

- **Controller** – must win
  - **Win-Lose**

The Critical Points

- To be a manager or to manage conflict know when to use which approach
- Each approach has strengths and weaknesses
- Match your strategy to the situation
When to Use. . .

Competing
Decision is vital and time is short
When important and unpopular

When to Use . . .

Collaborating

When concerns are too important for compromise
To learn and merge insights
To gain commitment
To work through feelings and strengthen relationship
When to Use... 

Compromising

Important goals but not worth disruption of competition
Equal power and mutually exclusive goals
Temporary settlement to complex issues (expediency)
When to Use...  

Avoiding
- Trivial issue
- No chance of satisfying your concerns
- Possible disruption outweighs benefits of solutions
- Let people cool down
- Gathering information important
- Issues are tangential or symptomatic of larger structural problems
When to Use. . .

Accommodating
You are wrong
Issues are more important to others
To build social credits (trade-offs / shadow of the future)
When harmony and stability are important
Three essential skills for constructive conflict management

1. Managing Strong Emotions through Active listening

2. Assertion

3. Interest-based problem solving / negotiation
Is your default pattern coercion, competitive stance, argumentative style?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQFKtl6gn9Y
The essential skill for the coercive competitor:

Reflective listening
During a Conflict Always Address Emotions First

Resourceful State
Thoughts and feelings are in balance

Non-resourceful State
Feelings dominate, Miscommunication and unclear thinking
Skills for bringing emotions under control: Reflective listening

Reflective Listening*

Based on work of Carl Rogers (1951)
Thomas Gordon (1970) coined term ‘active listening’- “using communication skills based in client-centered therapy and applying them to everyday situations”*

Minimizing or avoiding high risk responses
Temptation to offer solutions, evaluations and/or withdrawing from situation (Katz and Lawyer)

*Source: Rautalinko and Lisper, 2005
Sometimes the speaker just needs to be heard.

Sometimes listening aids in clearing up confusion.

Sometimes listening results in problem solving.
Reflective or Active Listening

The listener focuses on the speaker to understand:
Emotion
Content

The listener “reflects” what the speaker felt and said.
Why Bother?

- Brings emotion down
- Let’s the listener know their message was heard
- Builds understanding between listener and speaker
- Opens space for the next step: problem solving
Reflective Listening Process:

Step 1. Take in cues (key words, phrases) from the speaker:
- **Content** - thoughts, ideas
- **Physiology** - facial expression, body posture, gestures
- **Auditory** - voice tone, tempo, volume, inflection
- **Feelings**

Step 2. Sort cues as to what seems to be most important to the speaker

Step 3. Formulate the response to capture essence of speaker’s feelings and thoughts

Step 4. Check out your conclusion with the speaker, and check for accuracy (congruency check)

Example: You’re feeling __________ about/when/because __________
Examples:

This is not what I was hired to do. It is not in my job description and you are not increasing my pay. Why should I bother?

Response: It sounds like being treated fairly here at work is really important to you. Is that right?

I don’t have the time to be nice to everyone around here! Stop being so sensitive!

Response:

I can’t possibly complete what you’re asking me to do by tomorrow! Don’t you know I have a life outside of work?

Response:
Exercise Five:

- Person 1: talk for one minute about an issue you care **very** strongly about.
- Person 2 (to right): Reflect back noting the dominant feeling, the essence of message, and then check back to see if you got it right (if you get stuck use the formula: You’re feeling ________ about/when/because ________)
- If , pass your turn to person 2, who speaks to person 3, who speaks to person 4
High Risk Responses ...

Sending Solutions: Ordering
Threatening
Moralizing
Advising
Logical Arguments
Questioning

Evaluating: Judging
Praising
Focusing on what’s wrong
Name-calling

Withdrawing: Reassuring
Change the topic

... takes the focus off the speaker
Or…maybe your default pattern avoidance / over-accommodation?

The antidote: Assertion skills
Three-part Assertion Message Formula:

1) **Concretely** describe observed behavior of other:
   - “When you __________,”

2) **Accurately** describe your feelings:
   - “I feel __________,”

3) **Specifically** describe the impact of other’s behavior on you:
   - “because __________.”

(Source: Katz, Lawyer)
Exercise
Assertion

- Prepare and deliver an assertion statement.
- Use reflective listening if the other party becomes emotional.
- Redeliver the assertion statement with some variation.
Assertion Process:

Start                Duration of Process                Finish

High

Listen

Other Defends

Low

Emotional Level

Assert

can begin
Now you’re ready to do problem solving / negotiation....
Interest-Based Inquiry / Problem Solving
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positional Bargaining</th>
<th>Principled Negotiation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants</strong></td>
<td>Soft: Friends</td>
<td>Hard: Adversaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship</strong></td>
<td>Soft: on the people and problem</td>
<td>Hard: on the people and problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
<td>Changes position easily</td>
<td>Dug into position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resolution</strong></td>
<td>Search for answer that <strong>they</strong> will accept</td>
<td>Search for answer that <strong>you</strong> will accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria</strong></td>
<td>Yield <strong>to pressure</strong></td>
<td>Apply <strong>pressure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(1) Substance / (2) Relationship</strong></td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Diagram" /></td>
<td><img src="https://via.placeholder.com/150" alt="Diagram" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

From Getting to Yes, Fisher and Ury
Steps in Interest-Based Problem Solving (IBPS)

- Pre-Step: “Talk Story”
  1: Clarify Issue
  2: Identify Interests/Reframe issue
  3: Brainstorm Options
  4: Evaluate Options with Criteria
  5: Review and Discuss
  6: Consensus Solution
Pre-Step: “Talk Story”

• Those who have a story about the problem to be solved share those stories briefly

• Rest of the group listens actively to understand the dimensions of the problem and the concerns of those who have experienced the problem

• Aim for no more than a total of 15 minutes for the stories to be told
Step 1: **Issues**

The *WHAT* to be addressed

The problems to be solved

Clearly defined so each member understands the problem

Jointly selected by the group
A problem well stated is a problem half-solved.”

Source Unknown
Step 2: **Focus on Interests not on Positions**

Interests are reasons *WHY* the issue is a problem

Identify all interests (e.g., needs, concerns, desires)

Recognize the legitimacy of *ALL* interests (separate and mutual)
The Challenge of Identifying Interests!

Positions

“Why?”

Interests

“Why?”
Exercise Six
Positions and Interests

Are each of the following statements positions or interests?

1. I want your clinic notes by 5 PM
2. I’m working so hard that I have no balance between family and work life!
3. I really believe that we need more analysis of the situation before we can decide how to fix this mess.
Strategies to Get to Interests

Reflective Listening—Listening with a “third ear” for the motivators behind peoples demands/proposals

* Chunking--

“If you were able to obtain ______(the position) ,
-What would having that do for you?
-How would tomorrow be different from today?
-How would it be beneficial?
Interest Inquiry

to identify interests

- What will having that (the position) do for you?
- How will things change if you win?
- Why do you care?
- What is a good way of doing that?
Step 3: Brainstorm Options

- Options are *HOW* the interests can be addressed
- Brainstorm as many ideas as possible to satisfy interests
- Record on flip chart
- Be open to possibilities and opportunities
In order to understand how an option would work:

- Check with constituents?
- Research the practice?
- Create a period of experimentation?
- Observe its use in another site?
Step 4: Evaluate Options

Criteria state the “qualities or facets of a good solution”

Use A-B-C criteria at first and define

A – Achievable (Workable)
B – Believable (Acceptable)
C – Cost Effective (Affordable)

2007, Christina S. Merchant, PARCC
Step 4: Evaluate Options (cont’d)

Use matrix, symbols (✓ & ?’s) and nonverbal thumb signals (/thumb) to expedite

Group member polls others: reads option & members put thumb up (✓) or sideways (?)

Matrix points out early agreements and problem areas

2007, Christina S. Merchant, PARCC
Step 5: Review and Discuss Results

Questioners present concern or need for information…others either clarify, give information, or suggest amendments.

Work through the matrix together, building agreement and solving concerns.
In order to understand how an option would work:

- Check with constituents?
- Research the practice?
- Create a period of experimentation?
- Perform a live “test”?
- Observe its use in another site?

Do you need more information before proceeding?
Step 6: Reach Consensus Solution

Look back at problem and ensure solution is comprehensive

Draft solution & re-check consensus

Develop implementation plan with timeline and responsibilities

Communicate with constituents

Measure and evaluate effectiveness of solution
Consensus

“The collective opinion formed by a group of people working together where each person feels he/she has had a fair chance to influence the decision, understands the decision, and is prepared to support it.”
Unilateral Decision–Making

Consensus Decision–Making
Well managed conflicts result in...

- Satisfaction (with outcome)
- Lower Cost
- Improved relationships
- Low recidivism

Ury, Brett and Goldberg, 1988
Skill Development Cycle

Unconscious Competence - Unconscious Incompetence

Conscious Competence - Conscious Incompetence

From the work of Peter Adler
What if the other side doesn’t want to play?
Stressed System

Power

Rights

Interests

© Ury, Brett, and Goldberg, 1988
Strategies for surviving a stressed system

- Always try interest-based approaches first
- If that fails, move to rights-based or power based approaches
  - Organization (tale of collective bargaining)
  - Mobilization (what power do you have?)
  - Rule-making / institutionalization
- You may need a third party facilitator
- Or….avoid, accommodate, withdraw, educate, etc.