

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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## Agenda

1. Definitions
2. Beliefs and Truths
3. Conflict Styles
4. Defensive versus Supportive Positions
5. Basic Elements of Approach
6. Steps in Process
7. Dealing with Difficult Negotiators

# CONFLICT

## Definitions

- The result of interaction of different people with differing perspectives, values, interests
- Interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposing goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals or who believe goals cannot be achieved simultaneously

# CONFLICT

## Definitions

- Interaction between people who are interdependent and who perceive that their interests are incompatible, inconsistent or in tension
- Situation where incompatible activities are occurring in which one party is interfering, disrupting, obstructing or in some way making the other party's actions less effective
- Process in which two or more independent parties attempt to frustrate the others' goal attainment

# **CONFLICT**

## **Beliefs About It**

- It is driven by anger and aggression
- It is uncomfortable
- It is destructive
- It is a abnormal and unhealthy
- It is a battle

# CONFLICT

## Truths About It

- It is part of every interpersonal relationship
- It is an ongoing process against the backdrop of continuing relationships and events
- It involves the thoughts, perceptions, memories and emotions of people involved
- It can be constructive or destructive

# CONFLICT

## Styles

- Five recognized styles of conflict
- Advantages and disadvantages to each
- No right or wrong one, depends on motives, agenda and reasons
- Each can be used effectively and appropriately, depending on situation

# CONFLICT Styles

- Avoidance
  - Uncooperative and unassertive
  - Low concern for self and other
  - Withdrawing and evading
  - No attempt to address and resolve issue or denying it exists
  - Appropriate when:
    - Time out is needed
    - Relationship or issue is relatively unimportant
    - If time does not allow for a solution
    - If issue is really a symptom of a larger problem to be addressed later
    - If someone else not currently available can address the issue better



# CONFLICT Styles

- Accommodation
  - Cooperative but unassertive
  - Low concern for self, high concern for other
  - Places other's needs before own
  - Appropriate when:
    - Relationship is more important than issue
    - Harmony is primary concern
    - Disruption needs to be avoided
    - Power factor needs to be reduced

# CONFLICT Styles

- Competition
  - Own needs and concerns met at the expense of other
  - High concern for self, low concern for other
  - Wielding power to get desired outcome
  - Appropriate when:
    - Issue is more important than relationship
    - Emotion factor is not a concern
    - Authority issues outrank personal relationship concerns

# CONFLICT Styles

- **Compromise**
  - Moderately cooperative and assertive
  - Moderate concern for self and other
  - Seeking mutually acceptable solution and middle ground
  - Partially satisfies each person's needs and wants
  - Appropriate when:
    - Time is short
    - Short-range solutions are needed for complex issues
    - Goals of both parties are moderately important but not worth time and effort to maximize results
    - Both parties have leeway to give
    - Resources are limited
    - Win-lose stance is undesirable

# CONFLICT Styles

- Collaboration
  - Maximally cooperative and assertive
  - High concern for self and other
  - Structured and deliberate approach to resolving issue
  - Maximizes satisfaction of each person's needs and wants
  - Appropriate when:
    - Time is not an issue
    - Both parties are committed to be fully invested in process
    - Both parties are prepared to be fair and honest
    - Both parties can commit resources to process

# CONFLICT

## Basic Elements Approaching Resolution

- Be assertive, not aggressive
- Be aware of anger triggers and watch self-talk
- Do not over-react or become provocative
- Speak calmly, coolly, rationally
- Be an active listener
- Verbalize feelings appropriately
- Avoid blaming
- Choose an appropriate time

# CONFLICT

## Basic Elements Approaching Resolution

- Maintain a healing, respectful environment
- Be honest
- Be willing to forgive and to forget
- Be willing to apologize
- Be willing to admit mistake
- Accept responsibility for your part

# **CONFLICT**

## **Steps in the Process**

- Plan ahead of time
- Know your Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement
- Set the ground rules
- Define the problem
- Find underlying interests

# **CONFLICT**

## **Steps in the Process**

- Use an objective standard, if possible
- Think of several options, plans and alternatives for resolution and satisfaction of needs, goals, wants
- Be willing to compromise
- Secure observable commitments
- Resolution



# Questions or Comments?

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