

# Conflict Resolution Skills



Occasionally as a leader in an organization you will be in a position where you will need to deal with conflict between two or more people. When that occurs, you will need some skills/knowledge to deal with it effectively. Below are a few simple ideas.

- Do not take sides.
- Do not allow yourself to become emotionally involved.
- Assume from the beginning that all participants have legitimate positions.
- Listen quietly no matter how unreasonable or violent the remarks are.
- Judging is not your task -- the listener's role is not that of reformer, so avoid "I'm right, you're wrong".
- All expression and emotions should be allowed to be voiced without any interference or negative reaction on the listener's part.
- Listen with all your senses to understand whether a person is really conveying one message but meaning to convey something else.
- Avoid interrupting or arguing.
- Remember the importance of individual differences.
- Be wary of telling your own personal experiences or using yourself as an example -- listen instead.
- Being told "everyone feels that way" makes it seem that you think this "immediate and crucial catastrophic predicament" is rather common and insignificant.
- Be aware of your biases and/or prejudices in relating to groups or individuals whose personalities may clash with your own.
- If the participants can't possibly talk with each other, have them talk separately with you.
- Don't be afraid to clarify a point:
  - what was he/she trying to say?
  - what was he/she feeling at this point?
  - was the other person hearing what was said: "I heard you say... is that it?"