Unit 12
Sources of Conflict
Instructor's Guide

Turning lemons into lemonade

Public Conflict Resolution

This unit will focus on the five causes of conflict and how to address these causes. The overheads will serve as a prop to stimulate discussion. This session attempts to combine the knowledge of the participants with the knowledge of the instructor.

Purpose

Workshop participants will learn:
- How to understand the sources of conflict techniques that are used by interest-based problem solvers to address these problems.

Objectives

As a result, participants will:
- Learn about the five causes of conflict.
- Learn how to address five types of conflict.

Time

20-30 minutes

Materials Needed

Flip Chart and Easel
Markers
Overhead Projector

Overheads

37 Five Types of Conflict
38 Causes of Data Conflicts
39 Ways to Address Data Conflicts
40 Causes of Relationship Conflicts
41 Ways to Address Relationship Conflicts
42 Causes of Value Conflicts
43 Ways to Address Value Conflicts
44 Causes of Structural Conflicts
45 Ways to Address Structural Conflicts
46 Causes of Interest Conflicts
47 Ways to Address Interest Conflicts
48 Causes of Conflict

Handouts

1. Five Types of Conflict
   Causes of Data Conflicts
   Ways to Address Data Conflicts
   Causes of Relationship Conflicts
   Ways to Address Relationship Conflicts
   Causes of Value Conflicts
   Ways to Address Value Conflicts
   Causes of Structural Conflicts
   Ways to Address Structural Conflicts
   Causes of Interest Conflicts
   Ways to Address Interest Conflicts
   Causes of Conflict

Directions

1. A Conflict Road Map. The trainer says that before one enters into interest-based problem solving and arena of conflict, it is useful to have a road map of what causes conflict. **Overhead 37** (Five Types of Conflict) is displayed. There are five major types of conflict: 1) data conflicts, 2) relationship conflicts, 3) structural conflicts, 4) value conflicts and 5) interest conflicts.

Overhead 37

Overhead 38

2. What causes data conflicts? **Overhead 38** (Causes of Data Conflicts) is used. The trainer asks participants if they have been involved in data conflicts. What happened? How was the conflict addressed?

Overhead 39

3. Data Conflict Resolution Approaches. How can data conflicts be addressed? **Overhead 39** (Ways to Address Data Conflicts) is used. Participants are asked if they used any of the data conflict resolution strategies. What worked or did not work? Why? Are there other kinds of approaches that can be used?

Overhead 40

4. What causes relationship conflicts? **Overhead 40** (Causes of Relationship Conflicts) is posted and read aloud.

Overhead 41

5. Ways to Address Relationship Conflicts. **Overhead 41** (Ways to Address Relationship Conflicts) is displayed. Participants are asked if they have used any of these approaches successfully. If so, why? Are there other ways to address relationship conflicts that should be included on this list?

6. Value Preferences. Before discussing value conflicts, the trainer should mention that Americans tend to have many similar values. However, individuals and groups have value hierarchies that are different and change over time. For example, you may value both work and leisure. But on weekends or during your lunch hour, leisure may top your list. Some individuals may judge others as "workaholics" or "lazy bums" because of their value preferences. Group and individual value preferences are not easily changed.

Overhead 42

7. What causes value conflicts? The trainer displays **Overhead 42** (Causes of Value Conflicts) and asks the participants if they have seen a recent value conflict in their community. What was it about? How was it addressed?

Overhead 43

8. Addressing Value Conflicts. **Overhead 43** (Ways to Address Value Conflicts) is displayed. The trainer asks if the participants have used any of the strategies to address value conflicts. Was the strategy effective? Why or why not? Are there other ways to address value conflicts that should be listed?

Overhead 44

9. What causes structural conflict? **Overhead 44** (Causes of Structural Conflict) is displayed. Participants are asked if they see major structural conflicts occurring in their communities. What is happening? Why? How is the conflict being addressed?

Overhead 45

10. Ways to Address Structural Conflicts. The trainer displays **Overhead 45** (Ways to Address Structural Conflicts) and asks if people have seen or heard any of these strategies being used. What was effective or not effective? Are there ways to address structural conflict that should be added to this list?

Overhead 46

11. What causes interest conflicts? The trainer mentions that interest-based problem solvers tend to focus on interests. So, they are particularly intrigued with this sphere of the conflict circle. **Overhead 46** (Causes of Interest Conflicts) is displayed.

12. Ways to Address Interest Conflicts. **Overhead 47** (Ways to Address Interest Conflicts) is displayed. The trainer mentions that interest-based problem solving will be embellished later.

13. The circle of conflict is displayed again **Overhead 48.** Interest-based problem solvers do not ignore or avoid any of these five areas of conflict. At first, the disputants may need to talk about relationships, structure and values. But eventually, the interest-based problem-solver moves toward interests or data conflicts because they are easier to solve. Note the shaded area in **Overhead 48.** Indicate that the next unit will begin to focus on interest-based problem solving and how it works.

14. Mention that the real nature of a conflict may be misinterpreted. For example, the two leaders of an environmental group in Kentucky sought outside help in resolving what they thought was a relationship conflict. Both leaders were expecting the other to carry out certain functions and responsibilities that were in fact being left undone. While they both accused the other of neglecting their jobs, upon discussion with a neutral party it became apparent that the source of the problem lay in the lack of a written description of job responsibilities for either person. Neither leader knew what they should or shouldn't be doing on behalf of the organization, making this, in origin, a structural conflict rather than a relationship conflict.

15. Optional. Choose a local issue that everyone understands. Divide the group into teams of five, one for values, interests, data, structure, and relationships. Have each group identify the conflict from their perspective and suggest solutions from their vantage point. Ask each group to come up with ways to move beyond their type of conflict to address the larger issue. Reconvene the entire group and have them report what they came up with.

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A Road Map To Identifying Five Types of Conflict:
- Data Conflicts
- Relationship Conflicts
- Value Conflicts
- Structural Conflicts
- Interest Conflicts

Data Conflicts Caused By:
- Lack of information
- Misinformation
- Differing views on what's relevant
- Different interpretations of data
- Different assessment procedures

Ways To Address Data Conflicts:
- Reach agreement on what data are important
- Agree on process to collect data
- Develop common criteria to assess data
- Use third-party experts to get outside opinion or break deadlock

Relationship Conflicts Caused By:
- Strong emotions
- Misperceptions/stereotypes
- Poor communications
- Miscommunications
- Repetitive negative behavior

Ways To Address Relationship Conflicts:
- Control negative expressions through procedures and ground rules
- Promote process that legitimizes feelings
- Clarify perceptions - build positive perceptions
- Improve quality and quantity of communication
- Block negative repetitive behavior by changing structure
- Encourage positive problem-solving attitudes

Value Conflicts Caused By:
- Different criteria for evaluating ideas or behavior
- Exclusive intrinsically valuable goals
- Different ways of life, ideology and religion

Ways To Address Value Conflicts:
- Avoid defining problem in terms of values
- Allow parties to agree and disagree
- Create sphere of influence in which one set of values dominates
- Search for superordinate goal that all parties agree to

Structural Conflicts Caused By:
- Destructive patterns of behavior or interaction
- Unequal control, ownership, distribution of resources
- Unequal power and authority
- Geographical, physical or environmental factors that hinder cooperation
- Time constraints

Ways To Address Structural Conflicts:
- Clearly define and change roles
- Replace destructive behavior patterns
- Reallocate ownership or control of resources
- Establish fair and mutually acceptable decision-making process
- Change negotiations from positional to interest-based bargaining
- Modify means of parties (less coercion, more persuasion)
- Change physical and environmental relations

Interest Conflicts Caused By:
- Perceived or actual competitive positions/interests
- Content
- Procedures
- Psychological interest

Ways To Address Interest Conflicts:
- Focus on interests, not positions
- Look for objective criteria
- Look for solutions that meet needs of all parties
- Search for ways to expand options/resources
- Develop trade-offs to satisfy interests of different strengths

Causes of Conflict
- Data Conflicts
- Relationship Conflicts
- Value Conflicts
- Structural Conflicts
- Interest Conflicts