



**Turning lemons
into lemonade**

Unit 9 Problem Solving as a Neutral Instructor's Guide

Public Conflict Resolution

The roles and skills of the neutral in public conflict situations will be introduced by way of a lecture and role-play exercise. Tips for getting past deadlocks, communicating interests, reframing issues, and generating options are discussed.

Purpose

The purpose of this session is to lay out the role of the neutral in problem solving. The skills necessary for being an effective neutral are discussed.

Objectives

As a result, participants will:

- Understand the various roles of third party neutrals in public disputes.
- Address a public dispute with the presence of a third party neutral.

Time

45 minutes

Materials Needed

Flip Chart and Easel
Markers
Overhead Projector

Overheads

33 The Role of Neutrals In Local Public Disputes
34 Ways To Overcome Deadlock and Generate Movement

Handouts

1. The Role of Third Party Neutrals In Local Public Disputes
2. Overcoming Deadlock: Generating Movement In A Public Conflict Situation
3. The Substance Abuse Treatment Center
4. The Case of Too Many Wockets (Optional)

Directions

Prior to the presentation of Chapter 9, the trainer

will distribute and read aloud the handout "The Role of Third Party Neutrals In Local Public Disputes."

1. The trainer asks the participants "What does neutrality mean to you?" Answers are recorded on the flip chart.
2. The trainer will ask workshop participants "Why would you want non-advocates— third party neutrals—to be involved in local public disputes?" Ideas are generated and recorded on the flip chart.
3. The trainer asks the participants for instances when it is not desirable to have a neutral involved in public disputes. Do neutrals ever interfere with the resolution of public disputes?
4. The participants should be asked for examples of neutrals helping or hindering the resolution of disputes within their communities. "Are there particular members within your community that regularly act as neutrals? What did they do?" Responses are recorded on the flip chart. The trainer may mention that in many Southern Appalachian communities ministers take the role of neutrals in disputes over money.

Overhead 34 a-d

5. The trainer distributes the handout "Overcoming Deadlock" and posts **Overheads 34 a-d** (Ways to Overcome Deadlock), reading the overhead aloud to guide the participants through the handout. Emphasize that negotiations can be stalled by any of these points, and that the neutral should adapt their approach to whatever factors they believe are holding up progress in reaching people's interests.

Overhead 33

6. The trainer displays **Overhead 33** (The Role of Neutrals In Local Public Disputes) as a follow-up to the discussion. He/She mentions that neutrals can address relationship barriers (if possible, make reference to the participants' insights in parts 2 and 4 of this unit). The trainer leads participants in a discussion about the strengths and potential problems of each role.
7. The trainer uses **Overhead 33** to discuss procedural barriers in conflict. A procedural barrier arises

when: a) the disputing parties don't know the other potential disputants; b) when no acceptable forum exists for negotiations; or c) the relationship between the parties is so strained that some procedural help is needed to break a deadlock. The trainer should lead a discussion about the strengths and potential problems associated with coaching, training, facilitation and mediation.

8. The trainer uses **Overhead 33** to discuss the role of neutral information and data providers.
9. The trainer mentions that many neutrals work in teams. There are several advantages to neutrals working in teams that should be mentioned:
 - a. Neutral teams have strength in numbers—the skills and insights of two people is often better than one.
 - b. Multiple neutrals allow greater balance. If one neutral appears to be favoring a party at another's expense, the second neutral can 'pull them back' to the needed impartiality.
 - c. Gender differences can be addressed by team neutrals. Sometimes a party will be more open and honest when they feel that a neutral shares their gender-experience. For example, an all-female group of disputants may, at times, feel more comfortable talking directly to a female neutral. The *feeling* that the neutrals are understanding what a party is saying can be crucial in the negotiation process.
 - d. Teams allow knowledge areas to be balanced. If one party is trained in legal matters, but does not fully understand the technological specifics of an environmental dispute, a second neutral who has the called-for training can help the negotiations. Despite their best efforts, no single neutral possesses all of the skills and knowledge needed to fairly evaluate every dispute—another neutral can compliment the first's strengths.

Some communities have created facilitator teams, public issues education moderators and mediation programs or developed other teams to help their communities deal with conflict in constructive ways.

10. The trainer should ask the group to break up into groups of three. Distribute copies of the role play. Instruct the participants to chose a character (without reading the details of their respective roles) and then learn their arts. The Jay Brown character is to serve as the neutral in this negotiation. Allow the actors enough time for the neutral to have at least begun moving the other parties toward resolution. The idea of this exercise is to apply the skills discussed on the handouts.
11. **Optional.** If the trainer believes that further practice at problem solving as a neutral is needed, the handout "The Case of Too Many Wockets" can be used as a supplement. This case study allows the participants to quickly rotate into the role of a neutral in order to gain further experience. The Discussion Guide for Conflict Coaches tells the trainer how to conduct this exercise.
12. The trainer asks each group to 'sculpt' individual(s) as neutrals. The idea is for each group to come up with a representation of what they think a neutral is through the molding of a statue. Groups should be encouraged to be as creative as possible. After each group has 'sculpted' an image of a neutral, the trainer should go around the room and have each group describe to the others what the body language of their statue demonstrates. The trainer should use this exercise to highlight the differences and similarities of each group's model of a neutral.



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Unit 9
Problem Solving as a Neutral
Handouts



The Role of Third Party Neutrals In Local Public Disputes Handout 1

Public Conflict Resolution

There are a variety of roles that third party neutrals can play in helping parties resolve local public disputes. Third party assistance involves the intervention of neutral and impartial persons into the dispute who provide help to individual or group negotiators. Generally, these third-party neutrals may be Extension agents, religious leaders, adult educators, counselors or others who are not directly involved in the dispute. Potential neutrals may be relatively easy to identify. Generally, they are open-minded and willing to listen to many sides. Some individuals or groups such as the Cooperative Extension Service, are restrained from taking sides in public disputes because of the definition of their professional role. Others may have personalities or professional or other interests that make it easy for them to behave as neutrals.

In order to understand how third party neutrals are involved in public disputes, it is useful to divide their role into several distinct categories. It should be recognized that in real life they may play several roles given the context of the situation.

Relationship Barriers. There may be relationship barriers that serve as major obstacles for interest-based problem solving. These barriers may be due to the presence of strong emotions; recent or past interactions between the parties; misperceptions about a party's behaviors, goals, form or content of information.

In order to overcome these barriers, the disputing parties may seek the assistance of a third party to build a relationship between the parties and to overcome psychological barriers to settlement.

Counseling and Therapy. There are a variety of counseling programs and therapies to help individuals respond to particular individual or group problems such as racism or gender issues. Counselors and therapists prepare the disputants for dialogue.

Conciliators/Conveners. For some reason, the disputants may not be willing to come together to discuss the dispute. The conciliator or convener, who is accepted by all the disputants, initiates the discussion by finding a neutral meeting place, carrying initial messages between/among the parties, setting ground rules for behavior and affirming the abilities to work on the issue together.

Team Building. The neutral team builder structures activities with the disputing parties to promote positive perceptions of each other and to encourage productive communications, build trust and encourage a positive working relationship. Activities can range from structured social gatherings or discussions with questions like "What constitutes an ideal or positive working relationship?"

Procedural Assistance With Negotiations. There are neutrals who can assist with the procedures for negotiation. These neutrals are often sought by parties in the dispute because they don't know the other potential disputants or no acceptable forum exists for negotiations or the relationships between the parties may be so strained that some procedural help is needed to break a deadlock.

Coaching Or Process Consultation. In this type of intervention, the third party is invited by one or more parties to make suggestions about how the negotiation process can be improved. The coach makes suggestions that will enhance all parties. The coaching process may involve suggestions on conciliatory gestures, improving communications, starting negotiations, identifying interests, generating options or coming to an agreement.

Training. In this intervention, the third party trains one or both parties in effective interest-based problem solving techniques and tools. These training sessions may be conducted separately with each of the parties or in joint sessions.

Facilitation. Facilitators are neutrals who work with all of the meeting participants and provide procedural directions for doing problem-solving. They can improve the flow of information exchange and provide a structured meeting that will lead to a decision being made. At their most effective, facilitators can stimulate creativity among the participants, foster shared discussion, and ensure equity within the problem-solving processes. For the most part, facilitators are used when the emotional intensity of the dispute is low to moderate. Facilitators are inappropriate for highly emotional disputes.

Public Issues Education. Public issues educators help carry out learning activities that lead to a better understanding of public issues. They attempt to improve the ways issues are addressed. They can serve as conveners, program planners, facilitators and information providers. They also can gather and interpret relevant information about issues and involve participants in actively identifying alternatives and anticipating consequences.

Mediation. Volunteer and professional mediators work best in disputes that have a high level of emotional intensity. They provide a procedure to assist parties to voluntarily reach an agreement on the dispute. Some mediators set the stage for bargaining and make minimal suggestions unless there is a deadlock. Other mediators are much more involved in forging the details of the settlement. In any case, the mediator helps the disputants move toward their own resolution of the dispute.

Data and Information Assistance With Negotiations. Some disputes are blocked by problems with data. There may be a lack of information in order for the disputants to move forward. The third party neutral collects, assesses and presents data in a manner that is useful to all the parties. These neutrals may be **scientists, technicians, technical advisory boards or data mediation panels**. It is important that all parties in the dispute accept the data and information provider as neutral and knowledgeable.

Arbitration. Arbitrators have a long history in resolving labor/management and commercial disputes. Arbitrators are chosen by the disputants because of their expertise in particular issues as well as their reputation for fairness. In an arbitration hearing, the arbitrator hears each side's arguments and counterpoints. He/She may seek additional information. Upon completion of the hearing, the arbitrator issues an opinion which may be binding or non-binding.

Identifying Third Party Neutrals To Aid In Local Public Disputes.

Neutrals may come from inside the community or be outsiders. Increasingly, third party neutrals tend to work in teams in dealing with public disputes. Some communities have created public issues facilitator teams. Some have established mediator programs while others have created public issues education programs. Neutrals can play a useful role in helping disputants deal with relationship barriers, procedural problems or supplying data and information to the disputants.



Overcoming Deadlock: Generating Movement in a Public Conflict Situation

Handout 2

Public Conflict Resolution

Public conflict can be a gridlock situation in which little movement occurs. Interest-based problem solving attempts to move people from their positions to a discussion of their real interests. However, there are times when the parties cling rigidly to their positions and the resolution of public conflict seems to be deadlocked. This paper focuses on ways to stimulate movement toward interest-based problem-solving:

1. **Use Facts**

Facts are persuasive and can stimulate people to think and act differently. "Can we agree that the facts are...?" But recognize that there may be conflicting interpretations of the facts.

2. **Use Doubts**

People can't know everything. Highlight ambiguities to generate options. "Is it possible that Mr. Jones did not really intend to insult your group?"

3. **Appeal to Commonly Held Standards**

Acknowledge some basic matters on which the disputants agree. "Can we agree that drinking water in Pleasant County should not be polluted?" "Can we agree we want to find a way to settle this conflict?"

4. **Identify Priorities**

Compel people to identify their priorities and to make choices. This allows people to relinquish their claims to less important matters.

5. **Identify Constraints On Others**

Recognize the limitations of each party to address this dispute. Each party has political, psychological and resource constraints. "Could we agree that the City has a modest budget to correct this problem?"

6. **Trade-offs**

People will agree to do something for someone else in exchange for that person doing something for him/her. "I will apologize for my statement if you will apologize for yours."

7. **Compromise**

Groups and individuals will accept something less than their ideal as long as they believe they aren't relinquishing their fundamental interest. "I will give in on this minor point but I stand firm on my major concern."

8. **Integrative Solutions**

Sometimes each can achieve his/her interest without having to give up anything. For example, senior citizens may want a quiet city street while teenagers want loud party noises on the street. "The situation can be corrected if the party is moved away from the senior citizen complex. The teenagers will be able to enjoy their party and the seniors will protect their quiet neighborhood."

9. **Stroke the Parties**

Make people feel good about the progress they have made. "You have all worked hard on agreement of three major points! Can we move forward on the other two points?"

10. **Use Humor**

Laughter often creates a flexible atmosphere. People become more comfortable with themselves, each other and the situation when they can laugh.

11. **Role Reversal**

Force people to view the dilemma from the other party's perspective. "Try to consider how you would have reacted if a landfill was opening next to your home?"

12. **Peer Pressure**

People want approval from others about their conduct. Sensitively exploit that pressure to generate flexibility. "Ms. Young, have you considered what your friends and citizens in the community will say by your refusal to address this problem?"

13. **Focus On the Future**

The past cannot be changed. Focus on building a future relationship in light of what occurred. "How would you like your working relationship to be in the future?"

14. **Remind the Parties of the Cost of Not Coming to an Agreement?**

"What happens if this issue is not addressed in the next 30 days?" "Do you want to deal with the time and money it takes to settle this issue in the courts?"

15. **Be the Agent of Reality**

Some parties will demand that others do things that are not achievable. "Mr. Olden, do you think people will really be willing to live without cars in our town?"

16. **Break the Issue Down Into Parts**

The parties may be tackling too many problems at once. "Can we break our dispute into several parts and tackle the easiest first?"

17. **Legitimize Feelings**

Make sure people are really heard and that their emotions, while perhaps initially obstructions to uncovering a solution, still matter.

18. **Keep Talking — Try Again**



The Substance Abuse Treatment Center Handout 3

Public Conflict Resolution

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR CONFLICT COACHES

Note that Millie (Milt) Moderate is to serve as a third party neutral. Interrupt the role play at three-minute intervals and ask her/him to choose her/his replacement. At the end of the role-play period, lead the group through the following questions.

Questions for role-play participants and observers:

1. What is the problem? What are the positions of the two parties?
2. What are the interests of the representative from Better Health, Inc.?
3. What are the interests of the representative from Old Town neighborhood Council?
4. What are the interests of the planner who is serving as mediator?
5. Are all of the interested parties represented at the negotiation? If not, whose interests went un-represented (or under-represented)?
6. Can the problem be re-framed in terms of interests?
7. Did the parties succeed in identifying common interests?
8. Did the parties succeed in listing potential actions that would help to satisfy the interests of both sides?
9. What solutions might have met the needs of both sides? Did the role players approach any of these solutions?
10. What, if anything, hindered the parties' working constructively toward an agreement?
11. Did you reach an impasse at any point? What, if anything, helped to break the impasse? (Alternatively, what helped the parties work constructively together?)
12. How might the mediator(s) have helped the parties to work together more effectively? What additional resources might have helped the mediator(s)?



The Substance Abuse Treatment Center Handout 3

Public Conflict Resolution

Instructions for role player: Do not read this script aloud, or let other role-play participants read it. Try to play the role in a way that is natural to you.

Marion (Marian) Sparks, Chair, Old Town Neighborhood Council

Your name is Marion (or Marian) Sparks. You serve proudly as chairperson of the Old Town Neighborhood Council. Yours is one of the nicest, older neighborhoods in Pleasant City. You worry that things are changing, though. Better Health, Inc. (BHI), a for-profit health care corporation, has purchased a home in Old Town with the intention of making it into a half-way house for so-called "substance abusers." You are organizing people in your neighborhood to stop the project. Only through years of hard work have you maintained the quiet, safe character of Old Town, and you aren't about to lose it to a transient bunch of drunks and drug addicts. You are also concerned for the safety of Old Town's residents, since you know that drugs and alcohol are all too often associated with violent crime. Perhaps worst of all, the drug and alcohol abusers could have a devastating influence on the neighborhood's children.

They have talked about supervision. You can't imagine how BHI could provide adequate supervision and security to protect Old Town's residents without turning the place into a prison, hardly what you and your neighbors want down the street. And let's face it, BHI is doing this for profit. It costs real money to keep constant watch over a group of dangerous men, and you strongly suspect that BHI and the agencies that contract with them don't plan to spend nearly enough to ensure that the men are always where they're supposed to be, doing only what they're supposed to be doing. Whether or not they could manage to make the place safe, this half-way house would harm the character and the property values in Old Town. BHI has bought a sadly neglected house, and you doubt that they plan to put much money into it. Since nobody will have the pride of ownership, or even live there for more than a few months at a time, you can't expect anyone to have the incentive to fix it up and keep it looking nice. For years, you've been encouraging people to make Old Town their long-term home and create the kind of neighborhood pride that results from this stability and the desire to keep making our neighborhood a better place. A half-way house in Old Town would undermine this stability and pride.

This project has to be stopped, but it seems that some powerful interests support it. (Why else would the Mayor be waffling so badly on the issue?) You have been invited by Millie (or Milt) Moderate, from the Pleasant City Planning & Zoning Dept., to meet with a representative of BHI. Millie (Milt) says that (s)he wants you involved in problem-solving before this dispute gets out-of-hand. That sounds fine, but you wonder whether the Planning Board isn't already in BHI's pocket, and whether this meeting is just to provide the Mayor with some good PR. Besides, what kind of fancy "problem-solving" do we need? The Planning Board just needs to stand up and say "no" to the permit, and make BHI find a more appropriate site for this facility.

Instructions for role player: Do not read this script aloud, or let other role-play participants read it. Try to play the role in a way that is natural to you.

Frances (Francis) Warner, BHI, Program Director

Your name is Frances (or Francis) Warner. You work as the Half-Way Homes Program Director for Better Health, Inc. (BHI), a for-profit health care corporation. BHI has applied for a permit to site a half-way house for substance abusers in Old Town, one of the nicest, older neighborhoods in Pleasant City, and has obtained a house for this purpose. The new half-way house will serve male substance abusers who have completed 21 days of inpatient treatment. You anticipate that most residents would stay for about six months of supervised living and back-to-work experiences.

The house has deteriorated in recent years because the former owner had fallen on hard times. BHI plans to renovate it with new paint, shutters, roof, and much needed landscape maintenance and new plantings. You also plan to make interior improvements. You want the home to blend in with the other homes in the neighborhood. You don't want the half-way house or its residents to stand out. It is critical that the half-way house be located in a good neighborhood in order that house residents make a good transition to a healthier life-style. It will have strict supervision. As a health care provider, you see a strong need for a facility of this kind in Pleasant City. The need has been substantiated by several research studies. You have seen how lives can be turned around by the kind of program BHI intends to implement in this half-way house. Several prominent ministers in town have said that BHI should be commended for helping the less fortunate to find their way back to wholesome living. You have heard that residents of Old Town have expressed opposition to BHI's plans. You don't understand why, given the multi-family residential zoning and the obvious problems caused by substance abuse in Pleasant City. These problems must be addressed, and BHI is taking a responsible approach to meeting this community need.

You have been invited by Millie (or Milt) Moderate, from the Pleasant City Dept. of Planning & Zoning, to work with a representative of the Old Town Neighborhood Council to find a mutually acceptable way to deal with this potentially divisive conflict. You hope that the Old Town residents will be open to the facts that you will present, and be willing to accept BHI's plans without making a big stink. You also hope (with some skepticism, unfortunately), that the Planning Dept. official won't be swayed by dramatics from the citizen activists and will keep the proceedings calm and rational.

Instructions for role player: Do not read this script aloud, or let other role-play participants read it. Try to play the role in a way that is natural to you.

Millie (Milt) Moderate, Planning and Zoning Official

Your name is Millie (or Milt) Moderate. You serve as an official in the Pleasant City Dept. of Planning and Zoning. Better Health, Inc. (BHI), a for-profit health care operation, has applied for a permit to site a half-way house for substance abusers in Old Town, one of the nicest, older neighborhoods in Pleasant City. Several research studies have indicated a strong need for a facility of this type in the city. BHI has obtained a house for this purpose, in an area zoned multi-family residential. There are no local codes that would prohibit such a facility in that neighborhood, and it would not require a zoning variance. Nonetheless, the Planning Board would need to issue a permit, as city ordinances specify for the building or redevelopment of any multi-family residential property.

Old Town residents have organized to oppose the half-way house, on the grounds that it will bring crime to the neighborhood, threatens public safety, and reduces property values. BHI, on the other hand, has issued public statements that the proposed facility will improve the quality of life in Pleasant City without harming the character or safety of Old Town. The Mayor, who has tried to stay neutral on the topic, says that some neighborhood people might even resort to arson or other violence if this issue is not resolved to their satisfaction. She wants you to use interest-based problem-solving to try to develop a solution that everyone can live with.

You have invited Francis (Frances) Warner, the BHI Half-Way Homes representative, and Marion (Marian) Sparks, the chairperson of the Old Town Neighborhood Council, to meet with you today to work toward a resolution. In this first 20-minute session, you will encourage the parties to develop a set of alternatives to meet their goals.



The Case of Too Many Wockets

Handout 4

Public Conflict Resolution

DISCUSSION GUIDES FOR CONFLICT COACHES

Divide people into groups of three. Each individual in the small group will play one of the three roles. These questions are designed to stimulate discussion among the participants. You are not expected to lecture or provide all the answers.

1. What are the positions in this case? Possible answer(s):
 - Farmers want the wockets killed to protect their crops.
 - Tourism leaders want the wockets protected.
 - The Extension Agent wants to stay neutral.
2. What are the real interests of the parties in the dispute? Possible answer(s):
 - Farmers want to have the wocket population controlled.
 - Farmers do not want to lose income because of the damage caused by the wockets.
 - Tourism leaders want to keep city image intact.
 - Tourism leaders want to keep tourist business flowing.
 - The Extension agent does not want to choose sides.
3. Are there overlapping interests? Possible answer(s):
 - Everyone (farmers and tourism leaders) wants to protect his or her income flow.
 - Both farmers and tourism leaders want to co-exist with each other.
4. How would you reframe the issue to reflect real interests? Possible answer(s):
 - How do we deal with the wockets without damaging the city's image and tourism trade and still protect farmers' income from wocket damage?
5. What are some potential solutions that might meet everyone's needs? Possible answer(s):
 - Remove some animals to other areas, especially females to cut down on reproduction.
 - Ask tourists to pay to see the wockets on farm property (as a compensation for crop loss).
 - Seek city or tourism business compensation for crop losses.
 - Purchase farmland as wocket havens in ways that allow farmers to buy similar farmland elsewhere.
6. What solution seems most feasible? (open discussion)



The Case of Too Many Wockets

Handout 4

Public Conflict Resolution

Public Information

This information should be distributed to everyone.

The community of Wocket has recently been overrun with a rapid increase in the population of a small, furry mammal, the locals call a wocket. These animals are generally afraid of humans and keep to themselves in their natural habitat. They are harmless little mammals that have given the community its name because the town has built its reputation on being a natural habitat for the wockets. Visitors travel great distances to see the wockets.

The problem was that about five years ago, these animals were feared to be near extinction because their numbers began to decline rapidly. The state, in haste to save the local tourist industry and the animals as well, decided to add this animal to the Endangered Species List. This addition gave the species many advantages, including the fact that it became illegal to hunt or kill these animals.

What the lawmakers and biologists did not understand was that the decline in population was just a temporary natural occurrence that happens every five years to naturally control the population. Since these creatures are elusive, the scientists had not done studies long enough to determine their breeding habits and population cycles. Also, predators were removed after the wockets were listed as an endangered species. The lack of predators allowed the population to grow unchecked.

Now the numbers have grown dramatically. Tourists are flocking in record numbers to see the animals since there are so many of them around. The community has adopted a new slogan, "A wocket in my pocket" to promote this new increase in population.

The farmers near Wocket have suffered severe economic losses from this proliferation of animals. These creatures are relatively harmless in normal numbers. But these huge numbers are vastly extending the limits of the carrying capacity of the land. The farmer's crops are being overrun and destroyed.

The farmers have protested to the city council which has referred the matter to the local Extension agent. He must decide if a problem does exist and how to go about proposing corrective measures.

The agent has called a meeting between the tourism people and the farmers so they can present their opinions on the wocket issue. Based on the information presented, the agent must make a recommendation to the city council about what action, if any, to take. The agent cannot afford to alienate the farmers or the tourism leaders. He must find a way to make everyone satisfied.

Instructions for actor: Do not read this script or let others read it in the role-play situation. Try to act out the role in a way that is natural for you.

Harriet (Harold) Koch, University Extension Agent

You are the university Extension agent. You have worked in the local community for a number of years and know the involved parties. You hope this does not cloud your opinions or prevent you from being neutral.

You know how important tourism is to the local community. Your wife runs a small craft store that depends heavily on tourist dollars and the increase of wockets has stimulated more tourist dollars than anyone imagined possible.

You are a trained biologist and part of your job is to assist farmers in matters relating to production, marketing, and advice on pest control. You were concerned just like everyone else five years ago when the wocket population seemed to be in decline and you supported it being added to the endangered species list. You have done many studies on the animal since and realized that more than likely the wocket was experiencing a natural decline and was not near extinction.

You have visited many of the affected farmers and assessed the damage. There is some cause for concern. But you are not sure if drastic measures are necessary.

You have called a special meeting with a representative from the farmers' group (Bill James) and one from tourism (Suzie Patrick) so you can gain further information on the current situation to help you come to a conclusion that is best for all parties. Each of the affected parties has contacted you and asked you to side with them. Your Extension district director has informed you that you should not take sides but should try to satisfy everyone's interest. Meanwhile the city council of Wocket has informed everyone that they want a recommendation from you about how to proceed with this urgent problem. In essence, you are between "a rock and a hard place." Your way out of this jam is to use interest-based problem-solving

Instructions for Actor: Do not read this script or let others read it in the role-play situation. Try to act out the role in a way that is natural for you.

Bill (Billie) James, Local Produce Farmer

You are a local produce farmer who raises many crops, such as tomatoes and squash. The overpopulation of wockets is pushing them out of their normal habitat in the woods into the fields in search of food. They are herbivores and especially love to eat tomatoes.

You contacted the local Extension agent about how to control the animals to lessen the damage to your crops. The agent informed you that the wocket was added to the endangered species list because at one time their numbers were in decline. As such, they are protected by state law and no one can harm, kill, or move them. If you so much as harm a hair on their heads, the Wildlife

Service has the power to investigate your operation and fine you and possibly shut you down.

You contacted the Wildlife Service and asked them why the animal is still on the endangered species list when they are overrunning your fields and those of your neighbors. They informed you that even if they wanted to, they could not remove the animal from protection, and that it could take up to a year to cut through the red tape to get the change approved. A YEAR! Your crops will be gone and you will be out of business in a year.

You share everyone's love for these furballs. But they are affecting your livelihood directly and you need relief now. You plan to attend the meeting called by the local Extension agent and express your opinion that something has to be done to help kill these critters and control the population and salvage your crops and those of your fellow farmers. If the agent does not help, you and your fellow farmers have to find a way out of this jam, and you will personally see to it that he/she is fired. The farmers have rights too! You and other farmers have developed a slogan, "KILL WOCKETS, NOT FARMERS." Your position is clear.

Instructions to actor: Do not read this script or let others read it in the role-play situation. Try to act out the script in a way that is natural for you.

Suzie (Sam) Patrick, head of the local Tourism Committee and originator of the "wocket in my pocket" tourism campaign

You are excited about the recent dramatic increase of tourists and especially tourist dollars that have poured into the city of Wocket because of the increase in the wocket population. The rapid population increase has caused them to be more visible to tourists. Everyone wants their photograph taken with wockets because they are so cuddly looking.

You are concerned that any measures used to control the population increase will be viewed as inhumane by the news media and will drive tourists away. But you are mainly concerned about the town's image and the tourist dollars that are now pouring in. You also care about the animals' well being. Besides, you were trained in marketing, not biology. You do not understand population dynamics of how population levels naturally fluctuate over time. You have an uncle who is a produce farmer who has told you the problems he is experiencing with his crops being overrun.

You are going to stick to your guns at this meeting and you are going to present your belief that the population increase is being overblown. You feel that tourist dollars are more important and vital to your community than farming and any effort to control the population could have an adverse affect on tourism.

You see nothing wrong with the increase in population of the wockets. They do not harm people and the added tourist's dollars have greatly enhanced the community and businesses that you

represent. You fear that control measures will present a bad image of your community and drive away tourists.

Today a meeting has been arranged by a county Extension agent to meet with you and a prominent farmer. You want the county Extension agent to side with you. You and other tourism leaders have strongly supported Extension and now it's time for them to support you and the cause of the wockets.

You have had a good relationship with farmers until now. But you are shocked by the bumper stickers sported by some local farmers, "KILL WOCKETS, NOT FARMERS." This kind of publicity is not good for tourism or the city's image. You are toying with the possibility of bringing a lawsuit against the farmers unless they stop this nonsense and begin to side with the tourism interests in Wocket.