
Solving Conflict

T r a i n i n g L e a d e r ' s G u i d e

©1999 Coastal Training Technologies Corp.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of Coastal Training Technologies Corp.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter. It is sold with the understanding that Coastal Training Technologies Corp is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Table of Contents

Solving Conflict

Preparation Materials	Introduction8 Training Session Checklist9 Trainer's Instructions for Using the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>10 Tips for Transferred Learning11 Possible Session Agendas12 Invitation Memo to Participants14 Trainer's Instructions for the Pretraining Survey15
Training Materials	Introducing the Session to Participants18 Analyzing the Emotional Side of Conflict— Exercise from the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>19 Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part One</i> , and Review Questions20 Ground Rules—Exercise21 Active Listening Techniques—Discussion22 Using the Three Rs of Conflict Management— Exercise from the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>23 Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part Two</i> —Conflict Vignettes Discussion24 Posttraining Survey31 Follow-Up Memo32 Conflict Self-Evaluation33
Participant Materials	Pretraining Survey Ground Rules Scenarios Observer's Guide for Ground Rules Exercise Team Leader's Guide for Ground Rules Exercise Conflict Vignettes Exercise Action Plan Posttraining Survey Session Evaluation Form
Overheads	Overhead 1: Learning Objectives Overhead 2: Take Responsibility for Resolving Conflicts Overhead 3: Uncover, Discuss, and Define the Real Problem Overhead 4: Suggested Ground Rules Overhead 5: Active Listening Overhead 6: Things to Avoid

Solving Conflict

P r e p a r a t i o n M a t e r i a l s

Introduction

People often feel reluctant to get involved in a conflict situation. Who doesn't feel uncomfortable at the thought of an unpleasant and possibly emotional confrontation? Most managers, supervisors, and team leaders hope conflicts among their employees or team members will somehow work themselves out. Unfortunately, conflicts are rarely self-healing conditions. This course shows specific steps that can turn conflict into a challenge to grow and an opportunity to improve relationships.

This Training Leader's Guide, coupled with the video program *Solving Conflict* and the How-To Book *Managing Workplace Conflict*, will provide the tools you need to present an effective training session. Participants should walk away from your session with tips they can put to use immediately. They should be able to:

- Take responsibility for resolving conflicts.
- Uncover, define, and discuss the real problem.
- Ask questions and listen objectively.
- Develop an action plan to resolve the problem.

Before conducting the training, we encourage you to view the video and read this guide at least twice. The more familiar you are with the subject matter, the more valuable the session will be for participants. And that makes for a win-win situation!

Icon Key



Flipchart



Read or
Paraphrase



Overhead



Worksheet



Video



Ask and Discuss

Training Session Checklist

This checklist should be used to help you gather all necessary materials for the training session.

Meeting Preparation

- Determine your training objectives.
- Measure the current status of your participants, using the Pretraining Survey.
- Choose different ways to train to ensure transfer of information.

Location

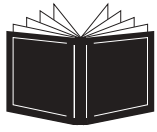
- Create a relaxed environment.
- Make sure all seats have a good view of the visuals.
- Make sure there is enough light to take notes when participants view the video *Solving Conflict*.
- Provide an adequate writing surface for participants.
- Assure good acoustics.
- Assure that your room is accessible and equipped for participants with disabilities.

Video Equipment

- Make sure the VCR is properly connected to the monitor.
- Test the VCR, and check monitor for proper picture, color, and volume.
- Make sure the tape is rewound and ready to play before beginning your session.
- Check all other equipment for proper operation.

Materials

- Training Leader's Guide
- Videotape—*Solving Conflict*
- AMI How-To Book—*Managing Workplace Conflict*
- Overheads
- Paper and Pencils
- Additional Equipment
- Participant Handouts



*Managing Workplace
Conflict*
by Jean Lebedun

Trainer's Instructions for Using the Book **Managing Workplace Conflict**

Group Training Sessions

Managing Workplace Conflict, part of Coastal's How-To Book Series, is an excellent complement to your group training session. This guide includes an exercise on taking responsibility for conflict from *Managing Workplace Conflict*. To use the book effectively, you may:

- Use the exercises we have developed for this course, incorporate other exercises from the book that you feel better meet the needs of your organization, or use a combination of both.
- Assign reading of an entire chapter of the book that covers an area you wish to emphasize in your session.
- Assign reading of the entire book and completing of assigned exercises.

Self-Study

No time to call everyone together for training? No problem—Coastal has made training even easier with its self-study programs. By combining the effectiveness of the video *Solving Conflict* and Coastal's How-To Training Book *Managing Workplace Conflict*, your employees can improve their skills through self-guided study.

Written in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand style, the book includes interactive exercises in each chapter to help the reader process the information and put it into action—ensuring that the information makes an impact.

On-the-Job Reference Tool

Providing copies of the book to each training participant allows you to continue instilling the importance of improving workplace performance after your session is completed. The book is an excellent tool for continued learning and provides an easy, hands-on reference for use on the job.

Tips for Transferred Learning

Keep in mind the following tips when conducting any adult training. You may wish to review these tips and incorporate them into your session planning.

1. Adults learn when they feel they need to learn.

Discuss ways your training will help participants improve job performance by learning how to motivate employees.

2. Adults learn through practical application.

Use the exercises found in this Training Leader's Guide or create your own to give participants an opportunity to practice skills they can take back to their jobs. Also, provide reinforcement tools, such as copies of the How-To Book *Managing Workplace Conflict*, for your participants to take back to their jobs for continued and reinforced learning.

3. Adults learn by solving realistic problems.

Discuss and analyze actual on-the-job situations. Allow the trainees to solve these real-life problems by using what they have learned.

4. Adults learn in an informal environment.

Design your training room to be as informal as possible. Avoid classroom-style seating. If appropriate, encourage training participants to wear casual clothing. Encourage discussion and interaction to make participants feel more comfortable.

5. Adults learn by different training methods.

Vary your training methods. Combine discussions, role-plays, case studies, self-evaluations, and action planning in your training session. Using a variety of methods reinforces your message and promotes audience involvement.

6. Trainers learn through follow-up methods.

Follow-up methods are crucial when determining the success of transferred training. Feedback from your participants' managers; follow-up surveys or training sessions; three-, six-, and nine-month skill-testing sessions; etc., can help you evaluate the information being used on the job site.

Possible Session Agendas

Two session agendas have been provided to help guide you through your *Solving Conflict* training session. You can modify these agendas to meet the needs of your participants. A blank agenda sheet is also provided on page 13 if you wish to create your own agenda.

1½-Hour Session

Activity	Time	Page
Introducing the Session to Participants	10 minutes	18
Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part One</i> , and Review Questions	35 minutes	20
Using the Three Rs of Conflict Management— Exercise from the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>	10 minutes	23
Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part Two</i> — Conflict Vignettes Discussion	30 minutes*	24
Session Evaluation Form	5 minutes	

3-Hour Session

Activity	Time	Page
Introducing the Session to Participants	10 minutes	18
Analyzing the Emotional Side of Conflict— Exercise from the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>	15 minutes	19
Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part One</i> , and Review Questions	35 minutes	20
Break	10 minutes	
Ground Rules—Exercise	15 minutes	21
Active Listening Techniques—Discussion	10 minutes	22
Using the Three Rs of Conflict Management— Exercise from the Book <i>Managing Workplace Conflict</i>	10 minutes	23
Break	10 minutes	
Show <i>Solving Conflict, Part Two</i> — Conflict Vignettes Discussion	45 minutes*	24
Posttraining Survey	15 minutes	31
Session Evaluation Form	5 minutes	

* The Conflict Vignettes are Part 2 of the *Solving Conflict* video. The 5 vignettes are each about 1 minute long. For a 1½-hour session, allow about 5 minutes of discussion after showing each vignette. For a 3-hour session, allow about 8 minutes of discussion after showing each vignette.

Trainer's Personalized Session Agenda

You may want to plan a session that is different from the agendas provided on page 12. Below is a blank agenda to assist you in outlining your session.

Activity	Time	Page
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Invitation Memo to Participants

This memo can be sent to your participants approximately one to two weeks prior to your training session. Modify the memo to fit your specific needs.

(Today's Date)

TO: (Participant's Name)
FROM: (Trainer's Name)
RE: ***Solving Conflict*** Training Session

Have you ever found yourself hoping that conflicts among your employees or team members will just work themselves out? Unfortunately, conflicts are rarely self-healing conditions. This course will show you how to intervene in conflicts and give you specific steps for turning conflict into a challenge to grow.

Please plan to attend our training session on conflict resolution skills. The session will be held (**Insert Date**) at (**Insert Time**). During the session, we'll cover how to:

- Take responsibility for resolving conflicts.
- Uncover, define, and discuss the real problem.
- Ask questions and listen objectively.
- Develop an action plan to resolve the problem.

The training will be tailored to your specific needs, so please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed Pretraining Survey and return it to me by (**Insert Date**). Be candid! I'll use the responses to develop a program that addresses critical areas participants have identified.

Please mark your calendar so that you may attend this very important training session.

Trainer's Instructions for the Pretraining Survey



1. Complete the Invitation Memo to Participants on the preceding page. Be sure to fill in the correct name, date, and time where indicated.
2. Enclose a copy of the Pretraining Survey (included with Participant Materials) with each invitation memo. Ask participants to return their completed surveys at least five days before the session.
3. Distribute the memo and the survey to each participant.
4. Upon receiving the completed Pretraining Surveys, read each one to assess potential questions, problems, or scenarios to discuss in your training session. Because all questions call for personal responses, answers will vary.
5. Be prepared to tailor your session to focus on areas participants identified in the Pretraining Surveys. In addition to two proposed agendas, we've provided a blank agenda sheet to assist you in customizing your session.
6. After the session, use the Pretraining Survey and the Posttraining Survey (both are included with Participant Materials) to help you determine if you met your training goals or if more training is needed.

Solving Conflict

T r a i n i n g M a t e r i a l s

Introducing the Session to Participants

Trainer's Instructions



Time Required:

- 10 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Overhead 1

Objective:

- To set the stage for training by emphasizing the importance of the topic and introducing participants to each other.
-

1. Start the session by introducing yourself. Read or paraphrase the following:
Conflict is about differences. People have different preferences, habits, and opinions—sometimes those differences create conflict. Because of the increasing diversity of the workforce, we're seeing more workplace conflict than ever before.

Conflict can be a positive or negative experience. What makes the difference? Your skill in conflict intervention.

First we'll watch a video about two managers who realize that conflict won't just go away. Each follows a step-by-step process for resolving conflict, which turns these conflicts into an opportunity for growth.



2. Display Overhead 1, Learning Objectives. Read or paraphrase the following:
After completing this training session, you should be able to:

- **Take responsibility for resolving conflicts.**
- **Uncover, define, and discuss the real problem.**
- **Ask questions and listen objectively.**
- **Develop an action plan to resolve the problem.**



3. Have participants answer the questions below individually. You may wish to write responses to the last question on a flipchart page to review at the end of the session.

Q. What is your name and what department do you work in?

Q. What types of conflicts are typical among the people in your area?

Q. What is one thing you would like to learn from this session?

Analyzing the Emotional Side of Conflict— Exercise from the Book

Managing Workplace Conflict

Time Required:

- 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- How-To Book *Managing Workplace Conflict*

Objective:

- To identify the two basic elements of conflict.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Read or paraphrase:

Conflict is a struggle between two different parties who perceive their goals as incompatible. Often both goals could be met. But win-win solutions can be hard to find because a conflict can quickly become a battle. The only way to achieve a lasting solution is to address both dimensions of conflict: the issue and the emotions.

2. Ask participants to turn to page 24 of *Managing Workplace Conflict*. Read or paraphrase:

To understand how emotions influence conflict, we're going to read pages 24–26 and then complete the Take a Moment activity on page 27.

As you read, you'll notice a case study about a conflict between Oscar and Nancy. Their conflict began when Oscar handed a vacation request form to Nancy, the department secretary. She responded angrily, "You know I have to get this form one month before you intend to start your vacation. You're just giving me 21 days' notice. Sorry. Rules are rules." Oscar protested that he needs the time off to see his mother, who is ill. After you finish reading about this conflict, jot down your answers to the questions in the Take a Moment box on page 27. You'll have about 8 minutes to read pages 24-26 and answer the questions on page 27.

3. If time permits, you might ask participants to share their answers to the Take a Moment activity or to comment on the most important thing they learned from their reading.

Show Solving Conflict, Part One, and Review Questions

Time Required:

- 35 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Video: *Solving Conflict*
- Overheads 2, 3, and 4

Objective:

- To reinforce key points covered in the video *Solving Conflict, Part One*.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Show the video *Solving Conflict, Part One*. Encourage participants to take notes as they watch.
2. After viewing Part One, display Overhead 2, Take Responsibility for Resolving Conflicts. Ask:
 - Q. What made the team leaders in the video realize that they needed to take responsibility for resolving conflict?
 - A. John realized that the only resolution he could see to the ongoing conflict between Kelly and Harold was for one of them to leave. Sue discovered that her assumptions about what was causing her team's conflict were incorrect.
 - Q. Describe how the team leaders took responsibility for the conflict.
 - A. Both John and Sue asked for help from Human Resources. John then used ground rules to get Harold and Kelly talking to each other. Sue asked open-ended questions to uncover the real problem.
3. Display Overhead 3, Uncover, Discuss, and Define the Real Problem, and ask:
 - Q. To uncover, discuss, and define the real problem, you usually have to get the people involved in the conflict together. Can you think of a time when it would be unwise to do this?
 - A. Situations in which parties to the conflict should not meet include cases of sexual harassment, threats of violence, and legal suits. If you are unsure about whether those involved in the conflict should meet, consult your human resources department or your manager.
4. Display Overhead 4, Suggested Ground Rules, and ask:
 - Q. Think of a conflict you expect to have to resolve at work. How would these ground rules apply to that situation?
 - A. Answers will vary.

Ground Rules—Exercise

Time Required:

- 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- One copy of Ground Rules Scenarios for each team (cut along the dotted line and distribute to each team's role-playing participants)
- One copy of the Observer's Guide for the observer(s) on each team
- One copy of the Team Leader's Guide for each team leader
- Overhead 4: Suggested Ground Rules

Objective:

- To practice using ground rules when bringing conflicting parties together.
-

Trainer's Instructions

1. Have participants roleplay a conflict resolution scenario.
 - a. Divide participants into groups of four.
 - b. Ask each team to choose a team leader, two team members, and an observer. (More than one participant may observe.)
 - c. Hand out the Ground Rules Scenarios, the Observer's Guide, and the Team Leader's Guide to the participants taking those roles on each team. The participants playing the team members should take on the character roles from the Ground Rules Scenarios and roleplay the conflict.
 - d. The participant playing the team leader should facilitate the resolution of the conflict by allowing ventilation of emotions and by implementing the ground rules from the Team Leader's Guide.
 - e. The participant(s) designated to observe should use the guidelines from the Observer's Guide to analyze how team members interact with each other and how the team leader facilitates the resolution of the conflict.
 - f. After 10 minutes, have the observer(s) give feedback to the team.
2. Display Overhead 4: Suggested Ground Rules.
3. Ask and discuss:
 - Q. How effective were the ground rules in keeping the conflicting parties on track? Explain.
 - Q. Can you think of additional ground rules that might be helpful?



Active Listening Techniques—Discussion

Time Required:

- 10 minutes

Materials Needed:

- Overheads 5 and 6

Objective:

- To demonstrate and emphasize the importance of active listening techniques.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Read or paraphrase.

The next steps in conflict management are to *ask questions* and *listen objectively* to explore all sides and ensure understanding. Solving a conflict requires a high degree of communication between the conflicting parties and the team leader. *Active listening skills* are essential to this communication.

Most people believe they are pretty good listeners. However, studies have shown that most people listen at only 25 percent efficiency. These active listening techniques can improve your listening efficiency.

2. Display Overhead 5, Active Listening, and read or paraphrase:

To be an active listener:

- Stop what you are doing and make eye contact.

Let your nonverbal communication show that what you are doing is important.

- Think about all aspects of the conflict.

Ask yourself questions about what you are hearing. (What are the key elements in this conflict? What does she mean?)

- Ask questions to ensure understanding.

Asking questions helps you stay focused and alert.

3. Ask and discuss:

Q. Should you ask open-ended or closed-ended questions?

Q. Can you give me some examples of effective questions?

4. Display Overhead 6, Things to Avoid, and read or paraphrase:

Avoid:

- Making judgments about the conflict.

- Mentally rehearsing what the conflicting parties will say and do next.

- Assuming you know all the facts.

- Interrupting or completing sentences.

- Telling how the conflicts should be resolved without involving parties in the solution.

Using the Three Rs of Conflict Management— Exercise from the Book

Managing Workplace Conflict

Time Required:

- 10 minutes

Materials Needed:

- How-To Book *Managing Workplace Conflict*

Objective:

- To explore ways to initiate discussion of conflicts.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Read or paraphrase:
Like John and Sue, we know that taking the initiative in solving conflict is the right thing to do. But it's easy to say that we should take responsibility for solving the conflict. Often, it's hard to find a way to even bring up the issue.
2. Ask participants to turn to page 36 of *Managing Workplace Conflict*. Read or paraphrase:
Pages 36–38 have several examples of how to handle a conflict responsibly. After reading the section Taking Responsibility, which begins on page 36, take the self-test in the Take a Moment box on page 39. You'll have about 9 minutes for this activity.

Show Solving Conflict, Part Two— Conflict Vignettes Discussion

Time Required:

- 5½ minutes to show 5 vignettes, plus 30 to 40 minutes of discussion. (For a 90-minute session, allow about 5 minutes of discussion after each vignette. For a 3-hour session, allow about 8 minutes to discuss each vignette.)

Materials Needed:

- *Solving Conflict, Part Two* video
- One copy of the Conflict Vignettes Exercise for each participant

Objective:

- To practice identifying, resolving, and analyzing conflict situations.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Read or paraphrase:
We're going to watch five brief scenes in which Al tries to resolve a conflict between Jill and Steve. As you watch, notice the techniques Al uses to handle the conflict. After each scene, we'll stop and discuss the questions on this Conflict Vignettes Exercise handout.
2. Distribute one copy of the Conflict Vignettes Exercise to each participant.
3. Play the first vignette. (See page 25 for the script.)
4. Following the first vignette, stop the video and discuss the first two questions from the Conflict Vignettes Exercise.
5. Continue to the next vignette. (See page 26 for the script.)



Conflict Vignette One—Discussion

1. Show video to the first fade to black.

SCRIPT

Scene: Meeting Area—Al is meeting with Jill and Steve.

- Al:** Well. We're getting together here to talk about your big project, Jill. I thought it would be best if Steve joined us for this discussion. But let's start with you, Jill. You told me you walked out of a meeting. Why?
- Jill:** (to Steve) I just don't understand why the plan we agreed on was changed at the last minute!
- Steve:** I'm sorry, Jill, but some of us felt your plan might not work, so our group played it safe and made some changes. I just went along with that.
- Jill:** (takes a deep breath) I don't think you gave it a chance.
- Steve:** The feeling was. . . (hesitant) that maybe the plan wasn't as well thought out as it should be. Someone didn't do their homework.
- Jill:** Whoa! Wait a minute!
- Al:** (putting up a hand) Uh. . . Excuse me a minute. . . .



2. Ask and discuss:
 - Q.** What should Al do to allow for ventilation of emotions while still keeping the conversation on track?
 - A.** Set some ground rules.
 - Q.** What would you say to the conflicting parties if you were Al?
 - A.** The goal is to get to the heart of the problem, not to place blame.



Conflict Vignette Two—Discussion

1. Show video to the next fade to black.

SCRIPT

Al: Our goal here is not to place blame, but to get to the heart of the problem so we can find a solution. To keep us on track, let's set some ground rules, okay? (He waits for nonverbal approval from Jill and Steve.) Good. We all need to be open and honest, and I promise that before you leave, everyone will have a say and be heard. We need to listen to each other without argument or interruption. Okay? Any opinions or feelings we express should be backed up by facts or specific examples. Does that sound fair?

2. Ask and discuss:

Q. What specifically did Al do right?

A. First, he got Jill and Steve together and talking. Then he communicated the ground rules and asked for a commitment to follow them.

Q. What should Al do next?

A. Ask open-ended questions to uncover the real problem.

Q. How can Al be sure he listens objectively?

A. Stop whatever he's doing and make direct eye contact, draw out both sides, and be sure that communication is open.





Conflict Vignette Three—Discussion

1. Show video to the next fade to black.

SCRIPT

Al: Now let me ask you some questions so that we can get *both* sides of this situation on the table. Jill, what's your understanding of how the team arrived at the final plans for this project?

Jill: In our initial team meeting, after I gave a *detailed* presentation on the total plan, we talked about using some new resources and revising the format so that. . . .

A few minutes later, Al is obviously listening carefully after he asks questions.

Al: Steve, apparently Jill understood there was agreement on her plan. What happened to change the situation after that original team meeting?

Steve: (uncomfortable) Well. Later some of us were talking about it and we began to see some problems that weren't brought up in the team meeting, and. . . .

A few minutes later...

Al: Let's go back to that original meeting when you all agreed on the plan Jill proposed. (turning to Steve) How did the discussion go before a decision was made?

Steve: Well. . . (hesitantly) . . . there wasn't much discussion. That's part of the problem. I'm afraid some of us didn't realize what we were agreeing to.

Jill: (interrupting quickly) But after I explained it, you said, "Sounds good to me!" You understood it!

Al: Excuse me, Jill, but remember we agreed to hear each other out without interrupting?

Jill: (closes her mouth but doesn't respond to Al's question)

Al: (waits a beat and when Jill still doesn't look at him or respond, asks again—sincerely concerned) Can we stick with that?

Jill: (quickly) Okay. Sure.

Al: Good. (to Steve) Let's go on, Steve. I think I heard you say you didn't feel part of the planning process? Or. . . is it something else?

Steve: If I agreed to all the changes she wanted, I sure didn't realize it! Excuse me for saying this. . . but I don't think Jill and some of the others realize they sometimes just "railroad" their ideas through!

Jill protests strongly with her body language and expressions but is obviously careful to keep her mouth closed. Steve looks unhappy and sits back, "closing up."



2. Ask and discuss:

Q. How should Al respond to Steve's comment that "they sometimes just 'railroad' their ideas through"?

A. Ask Steve to provide specific examples.

Q. What body language clues are Jill and Steve sending to Al?

A. Both are defensive and very closed.

Q. What should Al do now?

A. Ask Steve for specifics and change the focus from a personal attack to the actual problem.

Q. How do you think you can address messages sent by nonverbal communication?

A. Answers will vary.



Conflict Vignette Four—Discussion

1. Show video to the next fade to black.

SCRIPT

- Al:** (gently) Excuse me, Jill, but your reaction is a kind of interruption. Do you see what I mean?
- Jill:** (agreeably) You're right.
- Al:** (takes a moment to react approvingly to Jill's change in attitude, then turns back to Steve) Steve, can you tell us something *specific* that was said or done that makes you feel (smiles) "railroaded," as you put it?
- Steve:** Something specific. . .? (pause to think) Yes. For example, I didn't find out until the last minute that part of Jill's plan meant revising our printed materials. I had no choice but to just *do it* at that point, but I had a lot of *unhappy* people to deal with!
- Jill:** (diplomatically) Al, can I just say this? (waits for permission) The revisions were all written out and they weren't complicated. I really think Steve is overly concerned about people getting upset.
- Al:** She has a point, Steve.
- Steve:** (shrugs and retreats back into his chair, saying defensively) I guess *I'm* the problem.

2. Ask and discuss:

Q. How objectively is Al listening at this point?

A. He appears to be taking Jill's side before he's heard everything Steve has to say.

Q. What can he do to avoid the danger of "taking sides"?

A. Give both parties a fair say, listen objectively, keep asking questions, and paraphrase what both parties are saying.

Q. How can Al be sure he understands both sides?

A. Answers will vary; many appropriate questions may be suggested.

Q. What do you feel is the real problem?

A. Since Al isn't actively listening, he has no way to identify the real problem.





Conflict Vignette Five—Discussion

1. Show video to the next fade to black.

SCRIPT

Al: It's important for us to understand your point of view, Steve. Give us your feelings on this and please be open with us.

Steve: Well. . . I don't want to sound like sour grapes. I do know a few things from being around as long as I have. But my input isn't asked for very often—and that bothers me. Another thing that concerns me is. . .

After a few minutes. . .

Al: I've been listening to the two of you for some time now, and I think we're getting to the heart of our problem. Let me see if I understand. Steve, I hear you saying that you don't feel certain plans are as well-researched as they could be. Is that right?

Steve: (nods) Yes. Maybe the problem is (to Jill) you understand your plans (taps his head) up here and don't realize that you haven't shared the details with all of us. Some of us need things spelled out!

Al: Jill, you feel that the team agrees with your plans but then won't give them a chance to work. Did I put that right?

Jill: That's right! If they would just come to me and let me *explain* it again, or at least *discuss* the situation with them, I'm sure we could make it work!

Steve It's beginning to sound like our whole problem is *communication*—or rather—*lack of communication*.

Al I think you've just defined the real problem, Steve. If we get the team together and work out a more structured way to keep everyone informed and up to date on *what, when, and how*, do you think that might solve this problem?

Steve: (nods) I don't object to trying new things. I just want to be sure what we try is going to *work!*

Jill: (smiles) I have no trouble with that!

Al: Now that we've agreed on the basic problem, let's work together on a solution. Can we look at our calendars and schedule some meetings?



2. Ask and discuss:
 - Q. Is Al's job done?
 - A. No; he needs to set up an action plan and follow up with both parties.

Q. What is the most important thing you learned from watching these vignettes?

A. Answers will vary.



3. Give each participant a copy of the Action Plan handout to take with them.

Posttraining Survey

Time Required:

- 15 minutes

Materials Needed:

- One copy of the Posttraining Survey for each participant

Objective:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the training session.
-

Trainer's Instructions



1. Read or paraphrase the following:
This worksheet is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of this training session. It will help us determine what areas we need to improve for future sessions. Your honest response to these questions is appreciated. In no way will it be used to penalize you.
2. Distribute the Posttraining Survey (included in the Participant Materials) and give participants time to complete it. Collect completed surveys. If time allows, discuss answers as a group. Answers will vary for each participant.

Posttraining Survey

1. How can you defuse the emotions aroused by conflict?
2. What ground rules will you set for the next conflict situation you handle?
3. How can you show you are listening to the people involved in a conflict?
4. Name three things to avoid when handling conflict.
5. Identify a conflict for which you plan to take responsibility. How will you use what you learned today to handle that conflict?

Follow-Up Memo

This memo should be personalized and sent to your participants one week after the training session. Modify the memo to fit your specific needs. The Conflict Self-Evaluation to be enclosed is on the following page.

(Today's Date)

TO: (Participant's Name)
FROM: (Trainer's Name)
RE: *Solving Conflict* Training Session

As we learned last week, conflict is unavoidable. However, handling conflict effectively allows you to obtain win-win results.

Enclosed is a Conflict Self-Evaluation for future reference. This self-check will help you evaluate your growth and performance in resolving conflict.

I am interested in your reactions to this evaluation. Please contact me if you have any questions resolving conflict management. I can always provide you with more resources or arrange for you to view *Solving Conflict* again.

Conflict Self-Evaluation

This self-check will help you evaluate your personal growth in conflict management.

1. At what point did the conflict occur?
2. What kind of questions did you ask to uncover and define the real problem?
3. Was the conflict resolved? Explain.
4. What issues or problems created the conflict?
5. What behaviors escalated the conflict?
6. What behaviors helped resolve the conflict?
7. How did you determine a goal and action plan?
8. How well did you listen to both sides of the conflict?
9. Explain how ground rules affected the conflict.
10. If the same conflict were to happen again, would you do anything differently?

Solving Conflict

P a r t i c i p a n t M a t e r i a l s

Ground Rules Scenarios

Alex:

Your attitude:

You work in the billing department and have to deal with Mel on a day-to-day basis, but you find him/her impossible. Every time you need some flexibility, the answer is *no*. Mel's paperwork is sloppy, and invoices and filing are backed up. What a jerk.

You need to bill your clients in a timely fashion, and that means processing invoices by the cutoff time. Clients don't care about company policy, and they shouldn't have to.

Your behaviors:

Interrupt Mel as much as possible.

Show your opinion that Mel is a jerk in your nonverbal communication.

The facts:

Clients need to get their invoices in specific time increments. The billing department will not accept any invoice inquiries after 3:30 P.M. That makes it impossible to help clients who call late in the day with queries about invoices.

Mel:

Your attitude:

You work in the billing department and have to deal with Alex on a day-to-day basis, but you find him/her impossible. You find Alex very difficult to work with and consider him/her a nitpicker who obsesses on silly details.

Invoices are always turned in after the cutoff time, and Alex makes impossible demands. You don't set the policy, you just follow it.

Your behaviors:

Talk about your opinions and feelings without backing them up with facts.

Show your resentment of the way Alex treats you.

The facts:

You cannot accept any invoice inquiries after 3:30 P.M. Closing time in your department is 4:30 P.M., and accepting invoice inquiries after the deadline would require costly overtime.

Observer's Guide for Ground Rules Exercise

INSTRUCTIONS: Observe the role-play scenarios and answer the following questions about the way the participants interacted. Your observations will help provide specific feedback for participants.

1. How did the team leader use ground rules?
2. Which ground rules were used?
3. What behaviors did Mel and Alex exhibit?
4. Were any nonverbal behaviors addressed? Explain.
5. What advice do you have for the team leader?

Team Leader's Guide for Ground Rules Exercise

INSTRUCTIONS: You are the person who takes responsibility for helping Mel and Alex resolve their conflict. Decide whether you are a manager, supervisor, or team leader. Then use ground rules to keep the discussion between Mel and Alex on track. Remember that ground rules allow for the ventilation of emotions while keeping the focus on uncovering facts.

Ground Rules

1. Everyone will be open and honest.
2. Everyone will have a say and be heard.
3. Everyone will listen to each other without argument or negative reaction and show a positive, caring attitude.
4. Opinions and feelings must be supported by facts or specific behavior.

Conflict Vignettes Exercise

Vignette #1

1. What should Al do to allow ventilation of emotions while still keeping the conversation on track?

2. What would you say to the conflicting parties if you were Al?

Vignette #2

1. What specifically did Al do right?

2. What should Al do next?

3. How can Al be sure he listens objectively?

Conflict Vignettes Exercise

(continued)

Vignette #3

1. How should Al respond to Steve's comment that "they sometimes just 'railroad' their ideas through"?
2. What body language clues are Jill and Steve sending to Al?
3. What should Al do now?
4. How do you think you can address nonverbal communication?

Conflict Vignettes Exercise

(continued)

Vignette #4

1. How objectively is Al listening at this point?
2. What can he do to avoid the danger of “taking sides”?
3. How can Al be sure he understands both sides?
4. What do you feel is the real problem?

Vignette #5

1. Is Al's job done?
2. What is the most important thing you learned from watching these vignettes?

Action Plan

Define the conflict: _____

Set the goal: _____

Action Plan

Problem	Action	Deadline	Person Responsible

After you've developed an action plan, make sure you communicate it to all those involved—anyone who has responsibilities for carrying out or supporting the plan.

Session Evaluation Form

Solving Conflict

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the number that best describes your evaluation of the training session.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
This training program concentrates on the skills needed for effective conflict management.	5	4	3	2	1
As a result of this program, I am more confident in my ability to effectively resolve conflicts.	5	4	3	2	1
The objectives of the program were clearly presented.	5	4	3	2	1
Opportunities to ask questions and discuss issues were sufficient.	5	4	3	2	1
The session was well organized.	5	4	3	2	1

The best part of this program was: _____

This program could be improved by: _____

Additional comments: _____

I would recommend this session to others. (circle one) **Yes** **No**

Solving Conflict

O v e r h e a d s

Learning Objectives

- **Take responsibility for resolving conflicts.**
- **Uncover, define, and discuss the real problem.**
- **Ask questions and listen objectively.**
- **Develop an action plan to resolve the problem.**

**Take responsibility
for resolving conflicts.**

**Uncover, discuss, and define
the real problem:**

- 1. Allow ventilation
to defuse emotions.**
- 2. Suggest ground rules.**
- 3. Ask open-ended questions
to explore all sides.**
- 4. Listen objectively.**
- 5. Offer feedback to ensure
understanding.**
- 6. Define the problem and
get commitment to solve it.**

Suggested Ground Rules

- **Everyone will be *open* and *honest*.**
- **Everyone will have a say and be heard.**
- **Everyone will listen without argument or negative reaction.**
- **Opinions and feelings must be supported by facts or specific behavior.**

Active Listening

- **STOP** what you are doing and make eye contact.
- **THINK** about all aspects of the conflict.
- **LISTEN** and ask questions to ensure understanding.

Things to Avoid

- **Making judgments about the conflict.**
- **Mentally rehearsing what the conflicting parties will say and do next.**
- **Assuming you know all the facts.**
- **Interrupting or completing sentences.**
- **Telling how the conflicts should be resolved without involving parties in the solution.**

Notes

Notes

Notes