

Conflict Management: A DiSC®-Based Approach

INTENDED AUDIENCE:	Individuals and teams seeking to build skills in positive and productive conflict resolution.
PROGRAM LENGTH:	3½ - 4½ hours
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:	<p>We've probably all been in interactions at work where we experienced conflict with others. More often than not, these disagreements have hampered the group's progress. But what if we could create environments where conflict doesn't linger, people feel better understood, and good decisions get made? The goal of this program is to help people move productively through conflict so that everyone can contribute and spend their energy doing things that matter.</p> <p>Participants will be introduced to the DiSC® Learning Model, after which it will inform each step of the process. The program consists of five modules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first module explores four different approaches to conflict and helps participants understand how their natural styles influence those approaches. ▪ In the second module, participants discover the importance of finding common goals in conflict situations. ▪ In the third module, participants learn how to ensure all perspectives in conflict situations are shared in a productive rather than a harmful way. ▪ The fourth module provides participants the opportunity to explore ways of improving their ability to generate solutions when in conflict. ▪ In the final module, participants discover how a balanced approach can lead to better decisions that satisfy the needs of all involved.
PROGRAM DETAILS: Length: 40 - 50 minutes Video: 9 minutes Activity: Small & Large Group, Personal Reflection Materials: Conflict Approach Cards	<p>MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO YOUR TENDENCIES IN CONFLICT</p> <p>Goals:</p> <p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discover their natural tendencies in conflict. ▪ Understand how others' tendencies differ from theirs. <p>Activity Description:</p> <p>Participants are introduced to the program as a whole and are given a definition of conflict. They participate in a card activity that makes them aware of how they prefer to approach conflict situations. This is followed by a video introduction to the DiSC® Learning Model and the four approaches to conflict. Participants read and personalize individualized feedback about their own conflict approaches, based on their responses to the program's prework. They then share what they learn about their approach in mixed-style groups.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Continued on next page</i></p>

Length: 40 - 50 minutes

Video: 2 minutes

Activity: Small & Large Group,
Partner, Personal
Reflection

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers

MODULE 2: IDENTIFYING COMMON GOALS

Goals:

Participants will:

- Understand the value of finding common goals among the parties in a conflict.
- Learn an approach for finding these common goals.
- Discover how their natural tendencies might affect how they participate in finding common goals.

Activity Description:

Based on individualized instructions in their workbook, participants are assigned to focus on one of two characters in a video showing a conflict. After watching the video, they break into small groups with others who watched the same character to generate a list of priorities and goals that are driving their characters to act as they did in the conflict situation. They then share their lists of goals with the large group and identify common goals between the two characters. After a discussion of the value of finding common goals in conflict, participants reflect on a conflict they have experienced and consider the goals that drove their actions and the potential goals of the other person. They share their reflections with a partner, and consider potential common goals and how the situation could have been helped by identifying these early in the conflict. Participants then read and personalize their individualized feedback to understand their natural tendencies when finding common goals, reflecting on areas they may want to improve.

Length: 45 - 55 minutes

Video: 10 minutes

Activity: Small Group, Partner,
Personal Reflection

Materials: None

MODULE 3: ACKNOWLEDGING ALL SIDES OF AN ISSUE

Goals:

Participants will:

- Understand the need for all parties in a conflict to have their perspectives heard.
- Learn to share their perspectives in a productive way.
- Discover how their natural tendencies might affect how they share and receive perspectives.

Activity Description:

Participants read a passage describing a conflict. Unknown to the participants, there are two versions told from different perspectives, assigned based on DiSC[®] styles. After reading the passage, participants choose who they believe is most responsible for the problems, and are then individually assigned to groups of four that include two people with each version of the passage. Participants are told to determine which employee is at fault and what opinion to give to the shop owner. As they work through the problem, they discover that they have different ways of understanding the situation. After this introduction, participants learn about three principles for sharing perspectives productively. They watch a video segment for each principle that demonstrates what happens when it isn't used. They choose one of the principles they find personally most challenging, then share with a partner what they discovered. Finally, participants read and personalize individualized feedback about their natural tendencies in this area, and reflect on areas they may want to improve.

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Length: 40 - 50 minutes

Video: 2 minutes

Activity: Small & Large Group,
Personal Reflection

Materials: Flipchart paper, markers

MODULE 4: FINDING SOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT

Goals:

Participants will:

- Understand the importance of focusing on solutions rather than problems.
- Discover how they may often underestimate available options for resolution.
- Learn strategies for generating options that resolve conflicts.
- Reflect on how their natural styles might affect their ability to find solutions.

Activity Description:

Participants watch a video showing someone being problem focused in a conflict situation. As a large group, they discuss why this happens and how it affects the work environment, after which they individually consider an experience where someone was problem focused. Participants watch a second video segment of co-workers in conflict. They discuss the problems seen in the video in their small groups and are then challenged to find solutions to the conflict. After sharing their solutions, the trainer reports one they didn't think of, and participants consider how limitations and assumptions can hinder being solution focused. Participants are introduced to guidelines for brainstorming and are asked to use these to again generate possible solutions. They compare their results with the first list, and realize that they limited their options by not being open to even far-reaching possibilities. Finally, participants read and personalize their individualized feedback about how their approach might affect how they generate solutions, and consider areas for improvement.

Length: 45 - 55 minutes

Video: 6 minutes

Activity: Small & Large Group,
Personal Reflection

Materials: Conflict Resolution
Guides, flipchart paper,
markers

MODULE 5: USING A BALANCED APPROACH TO ACHIEVE RESOLUTION

Goals:

Participants will:

- Get the tools they need to come to better decisions in conflict situations.
- Be able to bring resolution in a way that allows conflict to dissipate, people to feel understood, and good decisions to get made.

Activity Description:

Participants discuss the characteristics of what makes a good resolution to conflict. In same-style groups, they defend the value of their conflict approaches in bringing resolution to conflicts. The Direct Approach group reports, then everyone reads and personalizes their individualized feedback on how comfortable they are likely to be using this approach. This process is repeated for the other three approaches. Participants are reminded of the importance of using a balance of all four approaches when resolving conflict, after which they watch a video showing how a balanced approach can be used to bring positive resolution to conflict situations. Participants then create action plans for using all four approaches in a more balanced way. The module ends with a review of all concepts learned in the program.