

CONFLICT RESOLUTION



Do disagreements within your organization stall progress? *Conflict Resolution* is essential in the success of an organization. Through effective methods of resolving conflict, positive outcomes arise out of seemingly negative circumstances.

Here are some guidelines for conflict resolution:

- Conduct discussion in a comfortable setting such as a coffee shop, a park, or a living room to alleviate tension.
- If possible, have everyone sit during discussion. This establishes a relaxed posture.
- Use *Active Listening* (see *Active Listening* tip sheet) skills to clarify understanding.
- Maintain a calm and relaxed demeanor. Body language says a great deal when interacting with others.
- Shift conflict from confrontation to cooperation. Emphasize that everyone is working toward the same goal.
- Turn problems into creative opportunities. Focus on the positive aspects of ideas presented.
- Draw attention to the group's objectives. Brainstorm for ideas (see *Brainstorming* tip sheet).
- Document the ideas provided. Shift the discussion away from "who is right" to finding solutions.
- Focus on strategies that will meet your objectives. This too takes the spotlight off winning the argument.
- Emphasize your desire to help. Be objective and supportive without being judgmental.
- Make yourself available for individual discussion. This provides you with information or ideas from those less likely to share in group settings.
- End the discussion with a review of the constructive aspects of the meeting, recapping the decisions made.

"Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict." - William Ellery Channing (1780 - 1842)