

Conflict Resolution Skills

Occasionally as a leader in an organization, you will be in a position where you'll need to deal with conflict between two people or among several. When this occurs, you'll need skills and knowledge to deal with conflict effectively. Below are a few simple ideas.

1. Don't take sides.
2. Don't allow yourself to become emotionally involved.
3. Assume from the beginning that all participants have valid positions.
4. Listen quietly no matter how unreasonable or violent the remarks are.
5. Judging isn't your task. The listener's role isn't that of reformer, so avoid "I'm right and you're wrong."
6. All expressions and emotions should be allowed to be voiced without any interference or negative reaction on the listener's part.
7. Listen with all your senses to understand whether a person is really conveying one message but meaning to convey something else.
8. Avoid interrupting or arguing.
9. Remember the importance of individual differences.
10. Be wary of telling your own personal experiences or using yourself as an example. Listen instead.
11. Being told that "everyone feels that way" makes it seem that you think this "immediate and crucial catastrophic predicament" is rather common and insignificant.
12. Be aware of your biases or prejudices in relating to groups or individuals whose personalities may clash with your own.
13. If the participants can't talk to each other, have them talk separately with you.
14. Don't be afraid to clarify a point: What was he/she trying to say? What was he/she feeling at this point? Was the other person listening to what was said? "I heard you say... Is that it?"