

April

Dealing with Conflict

Conflict – in the workplace and beyond – is inevitable. Differences of personalities, ideas, expectations, and emotions can bring about situations that may be hostile and uncomfortable, and it may be difficult to know how to respond. If we make every effort to be empathetic, rational, and humble, we have a much better chance of resolving a workplace conflict.



Tips for Healthy Conflict Resolution

- Do not avoid the situation in hopes that it will disappear. Tension and anger may build the longer a situation is avoided, and will affect all those around you.
- Inviting the other person to discuss the issue is often the hardest part. Extend a hand, even if it's at the expense of your pride.
- Meet face-to-face with the person with whom you are having the conflict. E-mail and phone conversations will not be as effective, and miscommunications may occur.
- Listen for what is felt as well as said, which requires empathy on your part.
- Decide if this is "the hill you wish to die on". Unless you feel so strongly about an issue that you are willing to risk your relationship with this person on being right, choose your battles. Most issues are not worth it.
- If a situation is particularly hostile, bring in a calm, objective third-person to mediate.
- Apologize for your part in the conflict. Do not use your apology to try to justify your actions – simply offer a genuine apology.
- Let the other person speak. Withhold judgment or commentary until all perspectives – motivations, emotions, concerns – are on the table.
- Make resolution the priority, rather than winning or being right.
- Use the four point method: decide what each person in the conflict can:
 1. Start doing
 2. Do more of
 2. Stop doing
 4. Do less of

"Conflict cannot survive without your participation." – Wayne Dyer