

Communications

Styles

A problem adequately stated, is a problem well on its way to being managed.

Strategies

R. Buckminster Fuller

Avoid defensiveness and listen

If you are defending your position, you are likely not listening

We do things because they make sense to us

Attack and defend

Strategize

Listen – pause

Paraphrase

Legitimize

Describe and not evaluate – careful not to judge

Deal with the conflict at the appropriate levels – content, relationship

Future oriented – learn from the past and look to the future

Flex to other styles – direct versus indirect

Conflict management response

Fight or flight. Fight is preferred to flight IF MANAGED and CONTROLLED.

Is the conflict worth addressing? What are the consequences to confronting or not? What makes it so difficult to address this conflict? Would you want to know?

Feedback

Giving feedback is the process of sharing information with another person for the purpose of reinforcing or changing behavior. Providing feedback can build trust and guides others toward improved performance. It can also stimulate uncomfortable feelings about how what we say might come across.

Guidelines

- Ask permission to give feedback – this acknowledges a service.
- Describe behavior. This provide a common and specific point of reference.
- State the impact of the behavior on others or work performance. This illustrates the consequences.
- Inquire about the cause of the behavior. This can deepen the understanding.
- Ask about what could change or make a suggestion.
- Build an agreement on next steps.

During a meeting, when a conflict starts, bring attention to it by asking what is going on. Create an atmosphere where members are comfortable describing that they see.

Working with groups – things to observe

Are people listening to each other? Is the group reaching agreement? Is the pace too slow? Too fast? Is the group clear about the process? The issue? How well is the facilitation? Are members sharing responsibilities?

Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How do we get there? How will we know when we are there?

We find comfort among those who agree with us and growth in those who don't.

Frank A. Clark

No 2 people think alike on everything. No 2 people feel the same all the time. We are in fact, autonomous, different & unique. Yet we are dependent on others. We need them to help us get many things we want. We are also dependent on others to validate our existence & worth.

Virginia Satir, 1967