

Conflict Resolution Skill Card 25

Conflict Resolution Skills Module

See the Conflict Resolution Skills Packet for a complete explanation of these skills

Before Having the Conversation Answer the Following Step 1 Questions

If I raise this issue, what do I hope to accomplish? What do I see as a satisfactory result? Is raising this issue the best way to achieve my goals? Can I reach a satisfactory resolution to this conflict by only changing my contribution? If I don't raise it, what can I do to help myself let go and move on? If I decide to have the conversations make sure to answer the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions (Conflict Resolution Skills Module) for a complete list of the questions): *What is the conflict about? How do I see the problem, how do I feel about it, and how do I feel about the other person regarding this conflict? What judgments and assumptions am I making about the other person? How have I contributed to this conflict? What are my interests—that is, my true needs, wants, hopes, and fears regarding this situation? (versus my position)? What do I want to happen? What do I see as a satisfactory resolution? What creative solutions do I see that meet my needs and the needs of the other person?* When I have answered all these questions, answer the same questions from the other person's perspective.

Skill # 1. Invite Them into a Conversation

"I would like to talk with you about something that is very important to me. Is now a good time?"

"I would like to talk with you about... I know this has been a source of conflict between us. I would like to come to a resolution that meets both of our needs (so that we can stop fighting about it). Is now a good time?"

If they are aware of the conflict, especially if it is an ongoing conflict, it may be most effective to have them share their feelings/perspective/needs first. Say:

"I want to talk with you about _____. I want to explain what is bothering me, but first I want to hear your perspective."

Skill # 2. Actively Listen

"It seems to me that you..."?

"It appears to me..."?

"I can see that you are feeling..."?

"It seems to me that you are feeling...because?"

"Let me make sure I understand..."? (your feelings, what you want me to do, why you are angry with me, etc.) *"Did I get that right?" "Did I hear you correctly?"*

Always paraphrase with a question in your voice. It gives them an invitation to continue and avoids making you come off as an expert about them and their feeling.

Skill # 3. Ask Genuine Inquiry Questions

"I would like to understand your perspective/position. Would you be willing to share it with me?"

"Tell me about what led you to that conclusion"

"I'm not sure I understand completely. Would you say some more about..."

Skill # 4. Summarize

"Let me make sure I understand" and then summarize what they said. Then ask:

"Do I understand what you are saying?" Then if they don't volunteer any new information: ask:

"Is there anything else?"

"Is there anything else I need to know to fully understand?"

Skill # 5. When Speaking: Use “I Statements

“I feel... or “I would like to tell you how I see things”. “From my perspective I...”

“I feel...when you...

“I would like it... or I would appreciate it if...”

**Skill # 6. Collaborate/Negotiate/Problem Solve to Invent Solutions
That Meet Each Other’s Most Important Needs.**

“I wonder if we can work to find a creative way to meet your needs and mine. Are you willing to do that?”

“What is most important to me is....”

“What is most important to you?”

“I am willing to...if you are willing to... Are you willing to do that.”

**Skill # 7. If They Do Not Initially Agree:
Continue to Collaborate/Negotiate/Problem Solve Together**

“What do you suggest we both do so that both of our needs are met?”

“Help me understand how that helps (meets your needs)...

“My concerns is that...” “What is most important to me is...”

“So you would like me to...”? “You are willing to...”

Skill # 8. When You Reach an Agreement: Summarize What You Both Agreed To.

*“Let me make sure I understand what we agreed to. “I agree to...and you agree to... Is that right?”
“Have I left anything out?” It is essential that you live up to what you agreed to.*

Skill # 9. What to Say If You Cannot Reach AnAgreement

“I need to take a break. Can we revisit this later?”

*“I would like to take some time to consider what you are saying. “It’s a lot for me to process.
Can we find a time in the near future to get together again to discuss this?”*

Skill # 10. Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened/Attacked

1. Don’t respond immediately. Take several deep breaths. Don’t attack back.
2. Try to focus on their feelings and what they are upset about, not about the accusations or put-downs. Remember: anger is usually a secondary feeling (they may be feeling disappointed or hurt) and their feelings are legitimate even if their accusations and judgments are not. Translate their attacks into legitimate concerns.
3. Summarize and ask inquiry questions – it slows things down: Say: “So you are angry at me because...?” “You think I...?” “What led you to that conclusion?”
4. If you need to take a break say: “I am feeling attacked. I need to take a break. I want to listen to what you are saying and understand and consider what you are saying but I am having trouble listening now. Can we schedule a time when we can continue this conversation?”
6. If you have done something to hurt them apologize: “I am sorry for...!” See How to Apologize