

Interpersonal Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions 25:
Questions To Consider Before Having a Conflict Conversation
[Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)

Whenever there is a conflict, it is usually best for us to raise the issue if possible since it gives us time to think about what we want to do, what we want to say and how, what our and the other person's true interests are in this situation, and what creative solutions we see to resolve this conflict satisfactorily. It is also helpful to script beforehand how we will invite them into the conversation and how we will initially approach it (e.g., will we lead with our needs, or will we lead by asking them to share their perspective and feelings?). In addition, it will be easier to avoid many of the mistakes we make during conflict conversations. Ask yourself the following questions before having the conversation, and whenever possible, write them out and script what you will initially say. For additional information, see the [Conflict Resolution Skills Packet](#) and the [Conflict Resolution Skills Card](#) ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)).

Step # 1: Questions To Answer Before Having a Conflict Conversation:

1. Who is the conflict with?

2. What happened? What is this conflict about? What impact has the conflict had on me and our relationship?

3. How do I feel about this situation? How do I feel towards the other person regarding this conflict?

4. What judgments and assumptions am I making about the other person?

5. How have I contributed to this problem? What is my contribution to this conflict?
6. What are my true interests—my needs, wants, hopes, and fears regarding this situation? (versus my position)?
7. How do I think the other person sees this conflict? What impact, if any, has this conflict had on the other person?
8. How do I think they feel about it? How do I think they feel towards me regarding this conflict?
9. What is their contribution to the problem?
10. What do I think the other person's interests are—that is, their true needs, wants, hopes, and fears regarding this situation? (versus their position)?

11. What do I think they want to happen? What do I think they see as a satisfactory resolution?
12. Can I reach a satisfactory resolution to this conflict by only changing my contribution? If so, what will I do?
13. Is raising this issue the best way to address this conflict and achieve my goal?
14. If I don't raise this issue, how will it affect the relationship? How do I think I will feel about this person if I do not raise it?
15. If I don't want to raise the issue, what do I need to do to help myself to let go and move on from this situation?
16. What creative solutions do I see that meet my true interests and needs and the true interests and needs of the other person?

17. What, if anything, am I willing to give up?

18. What am I willing to do?

19. What do I hope to accomplish? What are my goals? What do I see as a satisfactory resolution?

20. Has the person said or done things in the past that make me feel defensive or attacked, or that push my buttons and get me thrown off track? If so, what have they said or done?

Scripting My Responses:

21. How will I invite the other person into the conversation?

22. When they accept the invitation to have the conversation, what will I initially say?

23. What genuine inquiry questions do I want to ask to better understand their perspective and needs?

24. Using “I Statements,” what will I say to state my creative solutions to this problem that will meet my interests and needs as well as theirs?

25. If I start to feel defensive or attacked, what will I do and/or say in order to slow things down and avoid getting thrown off track?

Things To Avoid. Before raising the issue, check to make sure I avoid:

- Saying or doing anything to make them feel defensive, threatened, and/or attacked.
- Blaming them
- Assuming their intentions are bad
- Assuming I have all the information and that I am right (and they are wrong or bad)
- “You Statements”
- Trying to control their response
- Focusing on my position versus my needs.