

Executive Summary

Resolve Conflict

Introduction: One of the most common shortcomings of a leader is the inability or unwillingness to resolve conflict. This is a skill area that needs to be developed and practiced as conflicts arise before the impact escalates in terms of many key factors like retention, engagement, productivity and profitability. The purpose of *Resolve Conflict* is to help leaders move from avoidance or mishandling conflict to handling it productively, with confidence and competence.

CPP, Inc., *Michael Segovia Webinar*, 2014

- Employers in the US pay \$1 billion each year due to workplace conflict
- Managers spend 20-40% of their time responding to employee conflict
- 2.8 hours per week are spent by individual employees dealing with conflict
- Workplace conflict is a decisive factor in more than 50% of employee departures and in over 90% of cause related terminations

Conflict is:

A disagreement that escalates to a point that you can't move forward productively. Emotion is a key component.

Common reasons for conflict:

- Personal issues
- Infrastructure issues
- Limited resources
- Unclear expectations

The Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument is used in this workshop. There are five basic responses to conflict.

Five conflict modes are introduced based upon two factors – assertiveness and cooperativeness. The modes include: Competing, Collaborating, Compromising, Avoiding and Accommodating.

To understand how to manage conflict, we'll discuss the key components of the **Conflict Model**.

- Defining expectations.
- Agreeing to the expectations.
- Living the expectations.
- A variation/unmet expectation that occurs when someone does or says something different from what you expected, based upon your agreement.
- NER (negative emotional reactions).
Negative emotional reactions are natural responses during conflict. In contrast, planning a positive response will result in conflict being resolved more productively.

Minimize Negative Emotional Reactions

- Talk through the conflict together
- Seek areas of potential agreement
- Express ideas and feelings and urge others involved to do the same
- Offer solutions and encourage others to participate
- Focus on the facts, not on things you have heard through the grapevine
- If you criticize the best solutions others have tossed out, you are obligated to present substitutes
- Discuss expectations in the beginning
- Disagree with the idea, not the person
- Be quick to forgive
- Legitimize others' feelings without agreeing
- If you are a leader of others, provide guidance in helping them solve conflicts

Summary: This workshop creates understanding about handling conflict either productively or unproductively. It explains why conflict occurs and offers strategies to overcome it. Leaders will understand and appreciate different approaches to handling conflict and develop an action plan to address an existing conflict.