Conflict Management: Hard Knocks or Opportunity Knocks?

Thanks to: J. Wiseman, the Faculty Development Team, L. Snell, C. Goyer, & Y. Steinert
DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Plan for the morning

• Interactive Plenary: Conflict and Negotiation Key Concepts
• Break
• Small Group Work – Role Play and Debrief
• Conclusion/Take Home Points
Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop you will be able to:

• Define “conflict” and “negotiation” & “power”
• Recognize 5 conflict handling modes/styles
• Analyze the components of conflicts with and without power differences
• Describe an approach to negotiation
• Discuss how to manage conflict up, down and sideways in a hierarchy
Conflict Quiz: myth or reality??

• Conflict is always avoidable
  T  F

• Conflict is inevitable and natural
  T  F

• Conflict makes us uncomfortable & defensive
  T  F

• Unresolved conflict can do relational harm
  T  F

• Conflict makes dialogue easier
  T  F

• There are times when conflict is desirable
  T  F

• When effects may be negative, conflict should not be addressed
  T  F

Adapted from: Picherack & Aherne, www.grad.ubc.ca/gradpd/guides/conflict.html
Anybody can become angry: That is easy. But to be angry with The right person To the right degree At the right time For the right purpose & In the right way... That is not easy.

Aristotle
The **language and behaviours** that occur when humans:

- **Perceive** that their own goals and those of others are incompatible
- **Feel threatened**
- **React** by opposing or preventing each other from accomplishing their goals

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Conflict Cycle

Language & Behaviors

React

Perception

Feel Threatened

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Conflict Between A et B

B’s point of view

A’s point of view

Different Perceptions

A sees :

B sees :

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Is Conflict Good or Bad?

Traditional View

*Bad: A Problem*
- Waste of time and resources
- Poor relationships
- Demoralizing
- A sign of poor leadership

Modern View

*Good: An Opportunity*
- Catalyst for change & problem solving
- Engagement and passion
- Encouraging
- A sign of good leadership

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What are the Sources of Conflict?

Increasing Difficulty

- False or incomplete information
- Different perceptions or expectations
- Competition for limited resources
- Interdependent or incompatible roles and responsibilities
- Cultural differences
- Differing values and beliefs
What Factors Influence How We May Experience the Conflict Cycle?

- Context
- Culture
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Previous Experiences
- Religion

.............?
The Opposite of Conflict Is...?

Apathy
How Do You Respond to Conflict?
Conflict Styles
Low   Focus on agenda   High
Avoiding
Let’s talk another time
Conflict? What conflict?
I lose/you lose

Directing
Do it my way
Get it done
I win/you lose

Compromising
Let’s meet halfway
You win some/I win some

Harmonizing
Whatever…
Sure, I’m flexible
I lose/you win

Cooperating
Let’s help each other come up with an even better solution for each of us
I win/you win
**Avoiding**
*Useful* if issue trivial, relationship unimportant, little power to resist but disagree
*Worst* if issue important, if overuse leads to “freeze-out” & explosions

**Directing**
*Useful* if emergency, no time, to protect weak from strong, if goal is to win now
*Worst* if need support and cooperation of others seeing themselves as your equal

**Compromising**
*Useful* if any solution better than none or a stalemate,
*Worst* when deep principles/values are at stake

**Cooperating**
*Useful* if issues, long term ability to work together & creative solutions important
*Worst* if time is short, goals of others wrong beyond doubt

**Harmonizing**
*Useful* if issue important to others & not to you, no power & fear retaliation
*Worst* if you feel resentful, overuse to gain acceptance
Conflict Management Approaches

Avoidance

Informal problem-solving

Negotiation

Mediation

Administrative decision

Adjudication

Arbitration

Most commonly seen in medical education

Non-violent Struggle

Legislation

Violence
Define “Negotiation”

- A process of creating alternative solutions that neither side had previously seen or thought of
- A give-and-take discussion between interdependent parties attempting to reach an agreement or settle a dispute
- Both parties have the power and choice to agree or walk away
- Participants are problem solvers whose goal is a wise outcome reached efficiently and amicably
Negotiation

Mediation

Arbitration
Negotiation Iceberg

Issues

What you see
Negotiation Iceberg

Issues

Positions

Interests

Culture

What you see

What you find

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Negotiation Iceberg

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Negotiation Iceberg

Issues

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BATNA: Best Alternative(s) to a Negotiated Agreement

• What courses of action each side can choose to take if an agreement better than the BATNA cannot be reached or the other party refuses to negotiate

• Based on objective evidence/reality

• NOT a “wish list” nor what you “deserve” nor your “bottom line” (worst agreement you would accept)

• Dynamic - many alternative choices can be created or emerge over time

• “True source of power” in a negotiation
BATNA Example

• Want to buy a used car
• Dealer A:
  – Right make, model, colour
  – 7500$
• Dealer B:
  – Right make, less desirable model and colour
  – 6500$
• While negotiating with Dealer A, your BATNA may be to buy from Dealer B if Dealer A doesn’t drop ≤6500$ (walk away from Dealer A)
BATNA example (2)

• Finishing student wants to take on a full case load in clinic to see how that goes before going into practice

• Supervisor A
  – Gives great feedback
  – Doesn’t think students should have full case loads (“they are still learners”)

• Supervisor B
  – Gives ok feedback
  – Will let the student take a full case load

• While negotiating with Supervisor A, your BATNA may be to go with Supervisor B if A won’t let you have a full or near full case load
• If proposed agreement is better than your BATNA, take it
• If not, continue/re-open negotiations
  – If still not: walk away and pursue your BATNA
• There is a cost in pursuing your BATNA also
  – Have to decide what is important to you:
    • Eg. Learning how to manage a full case load, or getting the best feedback
Other Factors Affecting Zone of Agreement

Integrity
What rules shall we follow?

Procedural interests

Relationship interests
How do we feel about each other?

Benevolence

Substantive interests
What can we share/exchange?

Ability

Adapted from Moore, C. (2014). *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Resolving Conflict*. John Wiley & Sons Inc. Figure 4.2 page 128
Perceived Trustworthiness =

\[(\text{Ability} + \text{Benevolence} + \text{Integrity}) \times (\text{Past Experiences}) \times (\text{Complexity, Time & Resource pressures})\]

For a given task

Should We Agree?

No    Maybe    Yes

BATNA’s    TRUST
Arm Wrestling Contest

Champions surrounded by cheer leaders/counters

Champions’ task:
• Link up your hand with your opponent in an arm-wrestling position.
• When I say “go” get the arm of the opponent down into a horizontal position as many times as possible in 30 seconds

Cheerleaders’ task:
• Cheer your champion on (extra points for loudness)

Counters’ task
• Count how many times your champion gets the other’s arm horizontal & yell out the final number
Framing and Reframing

Framing
- The manner by which parties perceive, describe and interpret a conflict situation

Reframing
- A process by which parties develop a new, shared perception of a situation
  - The principal objective for ALL negotiation steps
Reframing

Win-Lose Frame
- Exploit your opponent cause you can
- One side takes all & the other loses (and usually only once)
- Tit for tat (ghosting, revenge, sabotage)
- Easy in short term, difficult over long term

Win-Win Frame
- Exploit mutual creativity & different strengths
- Both sides benefit and continue benefiting repeatedly over time
- Mutual help & trust
- Difficult in short term, easy over long term

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Telltale Signs of Negotiation Win-Win Potential

• BOTH parties share a lot of information
• There is more than a single issue and/or additional issues can be brought in
• There are differences in preferences, expertise & resources across each issue
• There is a possibility of making explicit (not hidden!) side deals involving other people for each issue
Managing Across, Up & Down

- Your colleague is suddenly ill and you must cover his/her duties & tonight is your loved one’s birthday party
- Your director schedules a mandatory meeting at 5 PM. You have 2 young children at day care
- Your student has not been checking the patients’ medications despite repeated feedback
- Peers – much of what’s been discussed
- Superiors – how to manage up (in following slides)
- Students/subordinates – some similarities but be ever-conscious about power differentials
How to Manage Up

Define what you really care about
• Patients’ best interests are always a good argument
• Discuss honestly your own development and aspirations

Understand what your leader really cares about
• Work to truly understand their expectations and priorities
• Take time to understand their obligations to those above them and know what they are “on the line for”.
• Keep them appropriately informed
• Assume that they have the best intentions
How to Manage Up

Build trust with your leader
- Clarify expectations and work on trying to see the current situation & tasks in the same way
- Follow through on tasks and make sure they know they can count on you to “do the right thing”
- Ensure you have the resources, skills and time needed to complete the tasks you take on

See your leader as part of the team
- Come to your boss with solutions, not just problems
- Consider their strengths, weaknesses, preferred work styles
- Acknowledge differences in cultures, values
# The ABCD’s of Negotiation

**Preparation: 80% of Time & Effort**

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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Anticipate potential agreements</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Behold: Listen actively to each other in turn</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
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<td>Detect &amp; disarm dirty tricks</td>
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<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Debrief: What went well, what to improve?</td>
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The ABCD’s of Negotiation

**The Short Negotiator Side A**

A Assure safety & dignity
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Have you (and others) calmed down?
- Is this a problem? Whose problem does it appear to be?
- When and where should this be addressed?

A Anticipate what an agreement could look like
- What are the arguments (positions), what do we (& stakeholders) really care about (interests)?
- Can we trust each other (How can we show & share Ability, Benevolence & integrity)?
- What will happen if we cannot agree (BATNA’s)?
- How could asymmetries in power or rights be used to help or hinder an agreement?

B Behold. Listen actively to each other in turn
- Ask the other party to tell their point of view, listening for
  - Issues (words used)
  - Positions (arguments expressed)
  - Interests (true needs)
  - Emotions (how the other party feels)
- Summarize the content and emotion of what the other party said to their satisfaction
- Ask the other party to listen to your point of view
- Ask the other party to re-state your point of view to your satisfaction

B Brainstorm & share ideas for possible agreements and better BATNA’s
- No criticism of ideas initially – get out as many as possible, build on ideas & combine
- Ideas are not offers – no one is bound later to any ideas they suggest
- Look for mutual gain (win/win): Put yourself in the other party’s shoes and strive to help them find/design solutions to their problems

**The Short Negotiator Side B**

C Collaborate on implementation of an agreement
- Keep a record, as appropriate, of the who, what, where, when and how

C Check back to ensure all is going as planned
- Take the initiative to give/ask for feedback

D Detect and disarm and desist from “dirty tricks”
- Deception
  - Selective disclosure, misrepresentation of information, false promises
  - Put in provisions that cannot be offensive unless the other party is deceiving you ("Please let me/others verify the facts.")
- Debasement
  - Direct or indirect behaviors towards you or with your superiors, the public or peers in order to embarrass or sabotage
  - Document it, denote it to (the other side +/- a neutral 3rd party), describe consequences ("If you want my help please stop doing XYZ otherwise I will just walk away.")

- Deal-dropping at last minute to get concessions
  - Walk away/No deal and choose your BATNA
- Decision-maker surrogate ("I need a higher authority to approve/decide.")
- Stop negotiating until you are speaking directly with the decision-maker
- Deluge with irrelevant details
  - Ask "What does this have to do with the real issues we are working on?"
    - Repeat prn.
  - Decoy gifts
    - Ignore, reciprocate in value or decline politely as culturally appropriate

D Debrief
- What went well, what needs to improve? What did you (do you need to) learn?
The “5-Minute Negotiator”

A3
- **Affect**: observe, listen & feel
- **Ask**: yourself & others: Prepare!
- **Active listening** with other party

B2
- **Brainstorm** for possible solutions
- **Build** elements of an agreement

C2
- **Collaborate** on implementing the agreement
- **Check back**: did all go as planned?
5-Minute Negotiator

A1: Affect

• What is the risk of violent behavior?
• Wait until your are both calm
5-Minute Negotiator

A2: Ask Yourself & Others:

• Is this a problem / opportunity?
• Whose problem does it appear to be – Yours? Theirs? Others? Shared?
• When and where should this be addressed?
• Why and how might this problem have occurred? Can you anticipate the Issues, Positions and Interests?
5-Minute Negotiator

**A3: Active Listening**

• Ask the other party to tell their point of view listening for
  – **Issues** (things said by the other party)
  – **Positions** (arguments expressed by the other party)
  – **Interests** (true needs of the other party)
  – **Emotions** (how the other party feels)
• Summarize the content and emotion of what the other party said to their satisfaction
• Ask the other party to listen to your point of view
• Ask the other party to re-state your point of view to your satisfaction
• Facilitate non-judgmentally using “I” or “We” words
5-Minute Negotiator

**B1: Brainstorm**

- Get out as many ideas as possible
  - No criticism or judgment of ideas initially
  - Ideas are not offers: No one is bound to agree later to any ideas they suggest
  - Combine or build on ideas of others
5 Minute Negotiator

**B2: Build** Elements of an Agreement

- Look for mutual gain: How can you actively help each other get more than what either would get with no agreement?
- Make your opponent’s decision easier by putting yourself in their shoes and helping them find solutions to their problems.
5 Minute Negotiator

C1: Collaborate & C2: Check back

- Collaborate on implementing the agreement
- Check back: did all do as planned and agreed?
Set up role play

• After break – 1 hour total
• Give scenario, instructions for role play 5 min
• How to debrief guidelines 5 min
• 5 min prep time in roles – plan your negotiation using worksheet (“students” separated from “supervisors”)
• 10 min role play
• 15 min debrief in group
• Back to large group for lessons learned, wrap up and evaluations
Summary

1. Sharing & reframing **differing perceptions** is the basis of all conflict management
2. Peoples’ **reactions** to conflict can be automatic (emotions) and/or a choice (conflict styles & style flexibility)
3. Successful negotiations require **planning** (80%) & **active listening** (20%)
4. Never lose sight of **Patient-care**
5. Negotiation is worth trying despite **large power differences**
6. Do not escalate unless you have attempted negotiation
7. **Don’t surprise/torpedo the other party**
8. **Choose your battles, time and place**