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Agenda

• Welcome/ Goals of this Presentation
• What is Conflict? How does it Happen in Work Teams?
  _ Importance of Perceptual Filters & Frames
  _ Personal Responses to Conflict/ Styles
  _ What are some important conflicts you are called upon to address?
• Eight Step Conflict Resolution Process
How do Conflicts Arise in Work Teams?
What is Conflict?

• We define conflict as a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns:
  - Disagreement
  - Parties involved
  - Perceived threat
  - Needs, interests or concerns
What is Conflict?

- In conflict, the parties perceive a threat to their needs, interests, or concerns
- They perceive finite resources, limited options, and limited solutions
- People respond to the perceived threats, rather than to an “objective” reality
  - The role of “perceptual frames and filters”
Needs in Negotiation

- **Substantive needs** = the “stuff” of the conflict... typical definition of problem
- **Procedural needs** = how we foster a fair and well understood process... “Ground Rules”
- **Psychological needs** = concerning trust, honesty, safety, security, integrity
Personal Responses to Conflict

• Behavioral Responses:
  _ Competing
  _ Accommodating
  _ Avoiding
  _ Compromising
  _ Collaborating
• Emotional Responses
• Physical Responses
• Cognitive Responses
Reflection Questions:

- What are some important conflicts that you face in your work teams?
- In what ways are they addressed?
- What works? What gets in the way of an effective response?

*** Identify a conflict... use it as a way to ‘track’ the steps of the process we discuss.
The Key Skills of Conflict Resolution

- Active Listening
- Assertive Communication
- Flexibility in Problem Solving
- Collaborative Negotiation
- Managing Impasse
Step #1: Understand the Surprise!

What’s Happening Here?

• **Take a moment to reflect:** Clarify needs (substantive, procedural, and psychological) threatened by the conflict

• **Identify desired outcomes** from negotiation

• **Look at your alternatives...** *What will happen if we can’t work this out?*
Step #2: Establish a “Safe Space” for Negotiation

- Consider privacy, neutral location
- Utilize third parties (mediators, facilitators, advocates), as appropriate
- Establish “ground rules” to support a collaborative negotiation process
Step #3: Take a Listening Stance

- Non-verbal messages
  - Body Language
  - Tone of voice
  - Eye contact
  - Removing distractions
Active Listening

- Verbal responses:
  - Encouraging
  - Clarifying
  - Restating
  - Reflecting
  - Summarizing
  - Validating
Step #4: Assert Your Needs Clearly and Respectfully

- Clarify your needs in the situation
- Identify specific desired outcomes
- Start with an “I-message”
  _ “I feel____ when you___ because____”
- Continue to listen with respect
Step #5: Problem Solve w/ Flexibility

- Focus on underlying interests and needs as the basis for solutions
- Take one issue at a time
- Generate several possible responses
- Clarify criteria
- Stay flexible! There are solutions out there!
Step #6: Manage Impasse with Respect

If you get stuck...

- Set aside the issue and “name the impasse”
- Review definition of the problem - reframe the question in front of you
- Reiterate “ground rules”
- Consider a structured break
- Treat the impasse with respect
Step #7: Build an Agreement that Works!

- Patiently address all key issues
- Review the agreement for clarity
- Define in “actionable” terms, as much as possible
- Look for “Hallmarks” of a good agreement
Hallmarks of a Good Agreement

• Fair
• Balanced
• Realistic
• Responds to Needs of the Conflict
• Specific *Enough*
• As self-enforcing as possible
• Future-oriented
Step #8: Follow Through - Implement and Evaluate

- Do all you can to implement the Agreement
- Arrange a time to meet together and review the Agreement:
  - Did we follow through with the agreement?
  - Is it working? How can it be improved?
  - Are there any additional areas of concern?
Next Steps - Taking It Back!

• Everyone has ‘homework’ to practice
• Set up a ‘conflict coaching’ relationship with a friend/ co-worker
• Use the Conflict Resolution Skills site:
  www.ohrd.wisc.edu under “Leadership & Management Development”
• Please follow-up with Harry:
  hwebnebehrman@ohr.wisc.edu or
  608-262-9934
In Conclusion…

• Conflict resolution is a process
• Conflicts occur as a normal part of our work and relationships
• We need to establish processes to manage conflicts effectively
• We need to model effective approaches and support efforts to acquire skills
Additional Resources

• Roger Fisher & William Ury, *Getting To Yes*

• Susan Heitler, *From Conflict to Resolution*

• Robert Bolton, *People Skills*