

Conflict Resolution: Be Constructive, Sound Cooperative, and Manage Your Conduct (739 words)

We all wish we could skip conflict. I don't think any of us really enjoy conflict. None of us go home at the end of the day and say, "Honey, let's have a conflict tonight." However, conflict is a healthy sign in relationships. It demonstrates that people still care and are willing to share what they think and how they feel. So, conflict can be constructive, if we sound cooperative, manage our conduct, and approach it with the right attitude.

Be Constructive: It is important to understand the positive role of conflict. Conflicts make us more aware of problems in our relationship that need to be solved. Conflicts encourage change, because someone is dissatisfied. Conflict energizes and increases motivation to deal with problems because of the fight or flight stress response. Conflicts make life and work more interesting because you can't believe people can think the way they do. Better decisions are generally made when there are disagreements because through conflict we fully consider the strengths and weaknesses of ideas and options.

Conflicts reduce the day-to-day frustrations of relating and working to someone. Conflicts help you understand what you are like as a person and what is really important to you. Conflicts can be fun when they are not taken too seriously. I suggest you see yourself as a consultant and simply ask questions and make suggestions. If handled properly, conflicts can deepen and enrich a relationship. Finally, conflict can lead to growth and development as an individual and in relationships because of the clarity of ideas it provides. Yes, conflict can be constructive, if we approach it with the right attitude, and consider all of the benefits. Conflict is often beneficial to the problem-solving process.

Sound Cooperative: Sometimes when people disagree, they raise the volume of their voices and sound aggravated. Conflict can ignite the stress response and cause us to take shallow breaths. This stress response can raise the pitch of our voice and cause us to sound anxious. We don't want that to be you.

One of the best ways to sound warm and cooperative is to deep breathe. When you properly deep breathe you can lower the pitch of your voice and soften the tone of your voice. Follow this formula for deep breathing: inhale five seconds, hold it fifteen seconds, and exhale slowly for ten seconds. Do that four times. It takes two minutes. It gives the heart the opportunity to pump your blood through the system twice. Oxygenated blood is fuel for the brain and you have just gone from unleaded gas to jet fuel. Deep breathing increases your lung capacity to nearly 80%. It lowers the pitch of your voice and softens the tone of your voice. You sound warm and cooperative, even if you're not. If you know you are going into a meeting where there is going to be conflict, make sure you deep breathe before the meeting, not during it, otherwise people may misunderstand your intentions.

Manage Your Conduct: You may not be able to manage every element when it comes

to conflict, however, you can manage your own conduct during conflict. Sometimes in conflict situations people get irrational and emotional and stop listening to each other. Engage only in those behaviors that are both good for the relationship and good for the outcome, whether or not other people respond in kind. Be rational, even if other people are acting emotionally, balance emotion with reason. Communicate understanding, even if other people deliberately misunderstand you, try to understand them. Listen to the other person, even if they are not listening to you. Consult with them before deciding on matters that will affect them. Be reliable, even if other people are trying to deceive you, neither trust nor deceive them, be reliable and rely on your persuasive skills. Communicate acceptance of their point of view, even if other people disregard your concerns as unworthy of their consideration, try to understand their perspective and be open to learning from them.

Sometimes conflict is simply a misunderstanding. Often you will find, that when you listen well, you can find common ground and create win-win solutions to your disagreements. Keep your composure, and the people you work with will like solving problems and resolving conflicts with you.

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