CONFLICT
A clash between individuals arising out of a difference in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions.

STYLES OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT
Identify the style you use most. If you identify with one of the more dysfunctional styles, choose a healthier one to shift toward.

Competing. Asserting one position without considering other viewpoints. “My needs are more important than yours.” Can sabotage the relationship. High aggression and low cooperativeness.

Accommodation. “Your needs are more important than mine.” Preserves the relationship at all costs. Can make relationship unequal.

Avoiding. “If we don’t talk about it, it will go away.” Conflict can fester to unmanageable levels. Takes the form of stalling or ignoring. Used to buy time while gathering more information to make a better decision. Can destroy the relationship.

Compromise. “We trade-off. I give up something and you give up something.” Satisfactory but not satisfying. To achieve temporary settlement on a complex issue. To reach a solution due to time pressures. If used exclusively, it breeds mistrust in relationship.

Collaboration. “We’re better together than we are apart.” Combined efforts encompass individual needs, strengths, and common goals. Cluster of possibilities increases time, energy, and ideas. Solution focused. Builds the relationship.

PATTERNS OF CONFLICT AVOIDANCE
• Avoid the conflict completely.
• Deny the conflict.
• Change the subject whenever the conflict comes up.
• React emotionally; become aggressive, abusive, hysterical, etc.
• Find someone to blame—a scapegoat.
• Delegate the situation to someone else.
SKILLS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

1 Active Listening:
   (1) Name the feeling that the other person is conveying. (2) State the reason for the feeling.

2 “I” statements:
   “I feel ___ when ___ because ___. What I need is ___.”

3 Understanding Perspective:
   Perspective taking is the ability to look beyond your own point of view, so that you can consider how someone else may think or feel about something. You must understand others’ thoughts, feelings, intentions.

ADDITIONAL TOOLS

Self-talk. “Talking appropriately with (colleague) may not bring about the change I want, but not talking with (colleague) absolutely will not bring about any change.”

Preface. “Remember when that person was here doing training on conflict? He told us to ‘have the conversation’ with our team members. This is my attempt to do that.”

Lead with “I.” “I find myself feeling frustrated when I am interrupted during a meeting prior to being able to finish my point. I feel I only speak up when the things I have to say are relevant and important.”

Make a request. “In the future would you please allow me to finish my thought/statement prior to you speaking to your points? I feel this positively impacts the meetings and result in both of us feeling respected. I will do the same when you are speaking.”

Agree to revisit as necessary. Especially when conflict is of the manageable type.

EVALUATE

- 1 - What worked?
- 2 - What did not work?
- 3 - What can I improve upon?
- 4 - What should I continue to do?
- 5 - How would I rate my experience?
- 6 - How would I rate the experience of others?

Intermountain Employee Assistance Program
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