



UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

LEVEL 3 PROJECT



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INTRODUCTION



In Toastmasters, as well as your personal life, you may find that people do not always agree. When conflict arises due to misunderstandings or varying points of view, you may need to address and resolve it. Using effective conflict resolution techniques can help you develop your interpersonal and management skills.

In this project, you will learn how to identify and explain conflict resolution techniques and place value on other points of view. You will practice positive interaction techniques, recognize an appropriate point to intervene in a conflict between others, and employ active listening to facilitate conflict resolution within a team.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop or enhance your understanding of the steps and strategies to address conflict.

Overview: Complete the conflict resolution video activity in the project. Prepare a 5- to 7-minute speech to discuss how you manage conflict, how you can develop a stronger strategy, and your best attributes in a conflict situation. You may also share the impact of the video activity. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any style that appeals to you. This project is not a report on or a critique of the content of this project.

For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist on page 11.



Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.

ASSESS YOUR SKILLS

Evaluate your current skill level by rating each statement.



Select the appropriate number based on your skills today:

5
EXEMPLARY

4
EXCEL

3
ACCOMPLISHED

2
EMERGING

1
DEVELOPING

Pre-Project					Statement	Post-Project				
5	4	3	2	1	I am able to employ conflict resolution techniques.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I can identify and place value on others' points of view.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I practice positive engagement and interaction techniques.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I am confident when mediating a conflict.	5	4	3	2	1
5	4	3	2	1	I recognize how this project applies to my life outside of Toastmasters.	5	4	3	2	1

COMPETENCIES

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Identify and explain conflict resolution techniques.
- Place value on other points of view.
- Practice positive interaction techniques.
- Recognize an appropriate point to intervene in a conflict between others.
- Employ active listening to facilitate conflict resolution.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict can be defined as a disagreement or disharmony between individuals or groups. Conflict is often inevitable and if not resolved, can escalate and worsen any situation. However, if managed well, conflict can be an opportunity to improve relationships and strengthen organizations.

KNOWING WHEN TO INTERVENE

One of the greatest challenges facing any leader is identifying the most effective point of intervention in a conflict between team members. There is value in allowing team members to resolve differences their way, without a leader's intervention, but there are times when outside guidance is required.

For most leaders, the time to intervene is:

- When a project stops progressing successfully due to conflict between team members.
- When two or more team members are unable to communicate productively.
- When one or more team members requests help to help resolve a conflict.

CAUSES OF CONFLICT

Conflict can arise for many reasons. You can prepare to resolve it by first understanding some of the common causes of conflict.

Misunderstanding

Misunderstandings occur when one or more parties don't have all the vital pieces of information or fail to comprehend what the other party wants to convey.

Conflicting Styles

Diverse styles of communication, time, and stress management can often cause conflict.

Varying Points of View

Conflict can occur when there are value differences, opposing attitudes, and contradictory perspectives.

Situational Challenges

Conflict can arise from situations beyond the control of those involved. Examples of these challenges may be loss of resources or delays created by external influences.



MEDIATING CONFLICT RESOLUTION



You may find yourself in situations that require you to mediate or facilitate conflict resolution between others. There are several steps you can take to effectively mediate the resolution of a conflict.

IDENTIFY THE CONFLICT

Invite all parties involved to meet with you to work through the conflict. Establish the interests of all parties by asking them to clearly state their needs and concerns. Ask questions objectively to increase understanding and ultimately, to resolve the conflict.

ACTIVELY LISTEN

Active listening is essential to conflict resolution. When people are sharing information, avoid interrupting and remind others to do the same. Ensure you understand everyone's positions and perceptions by restating, paraphrasing, and summarizing their statements when appropriate.

- Try to identify areas of agreement. Look for common goals, interests, and values.
- Identify areas of disagreement. Make sure to deal only with the present situation.
- Encourage parties to speak in "I" messages and avoid accusation or generalization about people with opposing views.
- Finally, stay focused on the issues. Narrow the scope of the conversation if people are beginning to go off topic.

NEGOTIATE SOLUTIONS

Brainstorm possible solutions to the conflict and consider all options. People are more satisfied with the outcome when they played a part in generating the solution.

EMPATHIZE

Diverse underlying needs and goals can cause people to perceive problems very differently. Consider everyone's perspectives to better appreciate their varied positions. With a greater understanding, you may help each side explain their interests to each other.

Ask each party to think about the others' interests and positions to increase understanding and awareness. Individuals are more likely to work together toward a mutual goal when they know and trust each other.

THE BEST POSSIBLE RESULT

The goal of conflict resolution is to solve an organizational or personal issue. This is achieved when all parties are in agreement at the end of the process. Once a decision has been made, encourage all parties to accept the outcome and focus on the future.



The most effective way to understand conflict resolution strategies and how they work for you is to try them when conflict arises in your relationships. To practice finding a solution to a conflict, log in to Base Camp to complete the video activity included in this project. The exercise is designed to help you see the impact of different conflict resolution strategies. During this activity, you will watch short videos and make choices that either resolve or escalate a conflict between coworkers.

Before you make your selections, think carefully about resolving the challenge without creating greater conflict. For the most effective outcome, focus on the challenges faced by the members of the group, not the decision they are trying to make.

When you have finished, take time to make a few notes about your experience. You may choose to share some or all of your experience in your 5- to 7-minute speech to your club.

REVIEW AND APPLY



Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions you see here. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- What are some areas in which you can practice your conflict resolution skills?
- What strategies can you use to better understand a conflict before trying to resolve it?
- How does it help to be empathetic when resolving conflicts?
- How do you recognize the effective point at which to intervene in a conflict between others?

COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report.

Review: Return to page 3 to review your assignment.



Organize: Use the Project Checklist on page 11 to review the steps and add your own. This will help you organize and prepare your assignment.

Schedule: Work with the vice president education to schedule your speech.



Prepare: Prepare for your evaluation. Review the evaluation resources on pages 13–15 and share all resources with your evaluator before your speech. You may choose to share your evaluation resources online.

PROJECT CHECKLIST

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to develop or enhance your understanding of the steps and strategies to address conflict.

Overview: Complete the conflict resolution video activity in the project. Prepare a 5- to 7-minute speech to discuss how you manage conflict, how you can develop a stronger strategy, and your best attributes in a conflict situation. You may also share the impact of the video activity. Your speech may be humorous, informational, or any style that appeals to you. This project is not a report on or a critique of the content of this project.

This project includes:

- A conflict resolution video activity
- A 5- to 7-minute speech

Below are tasks you will need to complete for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You may alter the following list to incorporate any other tasks necessary for your project.

Complete the conflict resolution scenario activity in the project online.

Record your results. Be sure to track all of your outcomes, even if you chose to complete the activity a second or third time to reach your desired result.

Schedule your report with the vice president education.

Write your 5- to 7-minute speech.

EVALUATION FORM

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Member Name _____ Date _____

Evaluator _____ Speech Length: 5 – 7 minutes

Speech Title _____

Purpose Statement

- The purpose of this project is for the member to develop or enhance his or her understanding of the steps and strategies to address conflict.
- The purpose of this speech is for the member to share some aspect of his or her experience learning about and/or resolving conflict.

Notes for the Evaluator

During the completion of this project, the member:

- Reviewed or learned about resolving conflict

About this speech:

- The member will deliver a well-organized speech.
- The speech may be about the member's experience with a conflict resolution activity in the project or it may be on some other aspect of conflict resolution. The speech may be humorous, informational, or any other style of the member's choosing. It should not be a report on the content of the "Understanding Conflict Resolution" project.

General Comments

You excelled at:

You may want to work on:

To challenge yourself:

EVALUATION FORM – Understanding Conflict Resolution

For the evaluator: In addition to your verbal evaluation, please complete this form.

5 EXEMPLARY	4 EXCELS	3 ACCOMPLISHED	2 EMERGING	1 DEVELOPING
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<p>Clarity: Spoken language is clear and is easily understood</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Vocal Variety: Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Eye Contact: Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Gestures: Uses physical gestures effectively</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Audience Awareness: Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Comfort Level: Appears comfortable with the audience</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Interest: Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:
<p>Topic: Shares some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution*</p> <p>5 4 3 2 1</p>	Comment:

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Understanding Conflict Resolution

This criteria lists the specific goals and expectations for the speech. Please review each level to help you complete the evaluation.

Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
- 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
- 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
- 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
- 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood

Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

Audience Awareness

- 5 – Engages audience completely and anticipates audience needs
- 4 – Is fully aware of audience engagement/needs and responds effectively

- 3 – Demonstrates awareness of audience engagement and needs
- 2 – Audience engagement or awareness of audience requires further practice
- 1 – Makes little or no attempt to engage audience or meet audience needs

Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

Interest

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed

Topic

- 5 – Delivers an exemplary speech about some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution*
- 4 – Delivers a compelling speech about some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution*
- 3 – Shares some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution*
- 2 – Mentions some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution but does not fully address*
- 1 – Does not speak about some aspect of his or her experience with conflict resolution*

**The speech may be based on a video activity in the project*



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