



Ethical Dilemma

[Story of Two Pebbles](#)

[Solution](#)

COMMUNICATION ETHICS

What is Communication Ethics?

ETHICS

- a system of moral principles
- deals with values relating to human conduct and behaviour.

Unfortunately there is no commonality around the word ethics.

Morality and values across the globe defines ethical rights & wrongs based on individual cultures often developed over hundreds of years.



Two principle views exist regarding how ethics may be approached:

Ethical Relativism- Suggests that no country's cultural ethics are better than any other country. So looking globally, there are no specific rights & wrongs.

Ethical Imperialism- Takes a single view of ethics, esp. the western view. Demonstrates a situation where a code of **ethical** behavior or attitude is imposed on another community or society. Does not provide satisfactory answer as many cultures will be in disagreement with a western philosophy.

- Ethical Imperialism implies cross-cultural proliferation of one's ethical code. One example of this includes **the notion of time cards**. A large retailer (American) once suggested that employees in a Chinese factories use time cards to note the start and end of each work shift, similar to many employees in the US. The rationale was to be able to view labor decisions made within the factory and thus control costs.
- But most manufacturers in China operate very differently than the US. The Chinese employees live in company housing and work atypical shifts not pertaining to a definite time period. To impose an American time-check process for reasons stated above would be an example of ethical imperialism.

Branches of Ethics

- **Applied Ethics** – Application of ethics to social issues. It addresses the rights and wrongs including controversial subjects, for example euthanasia or the impact of advanced artificial intelligence.
- **Normative Ethics** – Implies the manner in which moral issue should be resolved. Focuses on how to act when trying to resolve a known ethical challenge or morally/ethically sensitive subject. Ex: My dad was a man of integrity

Society's views on ethical rights and wrongs are continuously developing, sometimes rapidly. Hence moral lines seem blurred & understanding where these lines should be drawn in the first place & how opinions are likely to develop into the future are exceptionally difficult task.

COMMUNICATION ETHICS

- The principle governing communication, the right and wrong aspects of it, the moral- immoral dimensions relevant to Interpersonal communication are called the ethics of Interpersonal communication.
- Interpersonal communication is the process by which people exchange information, feelings, and meaning through verbal and non-verbal messages: it is face-to-face communication.
- It is not just about what is actually said - the language used - but *how* it is said and the non-verbal messages sent through tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and body language.



What does it mean to be an ethical communicator?

- Getting your point across without offending the audience
- Maintaining and sustaining a relationship with your audience
- Presenting information to the audience without deliberately withholding vital information.

Problem 1

- Understanding that ethics are related to values and may differ for the audience
- Making sure all information is accurate and researched.
- All relevant parties must be fully informed about the facts in any decision making process within the organization.
- Information that is not true is worse than no information at all.

COMMUNICATION ETHICS

- Maintaining the correct balance between the speaking and listening
- The legitimacy of fear and emotional appeal
- Degree of criticism and praise



FUNDAMENTALS OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

- Responsible thinking
- Decision making
- Development of relationships and communities.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wl3hT-blyjw>

PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

- Advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty, and reason as essential to the integrity of communication.
- Endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and tolerance of dissent to achieve the informed and responsible decision making fundamental to a civil society.
- Strive to understand and respect other communicators before evaluating and responding to their messages.



PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

- Being committed to the courageous expression of personal convictions in pursuit of fairness and justice.
- Advocate sharing information, opinions, and feelings when facing significant choices while also respecting privacy and confidentiality.
- Accept responsibility for the short- and long-term consequences for our own communication and expect the same of others.

PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL COMMUNICATION

- Promote access to communication resources and opportunities as necessary to fulfill human potential and contribute to the well-being of families, communities, and society.
- Promote communication climates of caring and mutual understanding that respect the unique needs and characteristics of individual communicators.
- Condemn communication that degrades individuals and humanity through distortion, intimidation, coercion, and violence, and through the expression of intolerance and hatred.

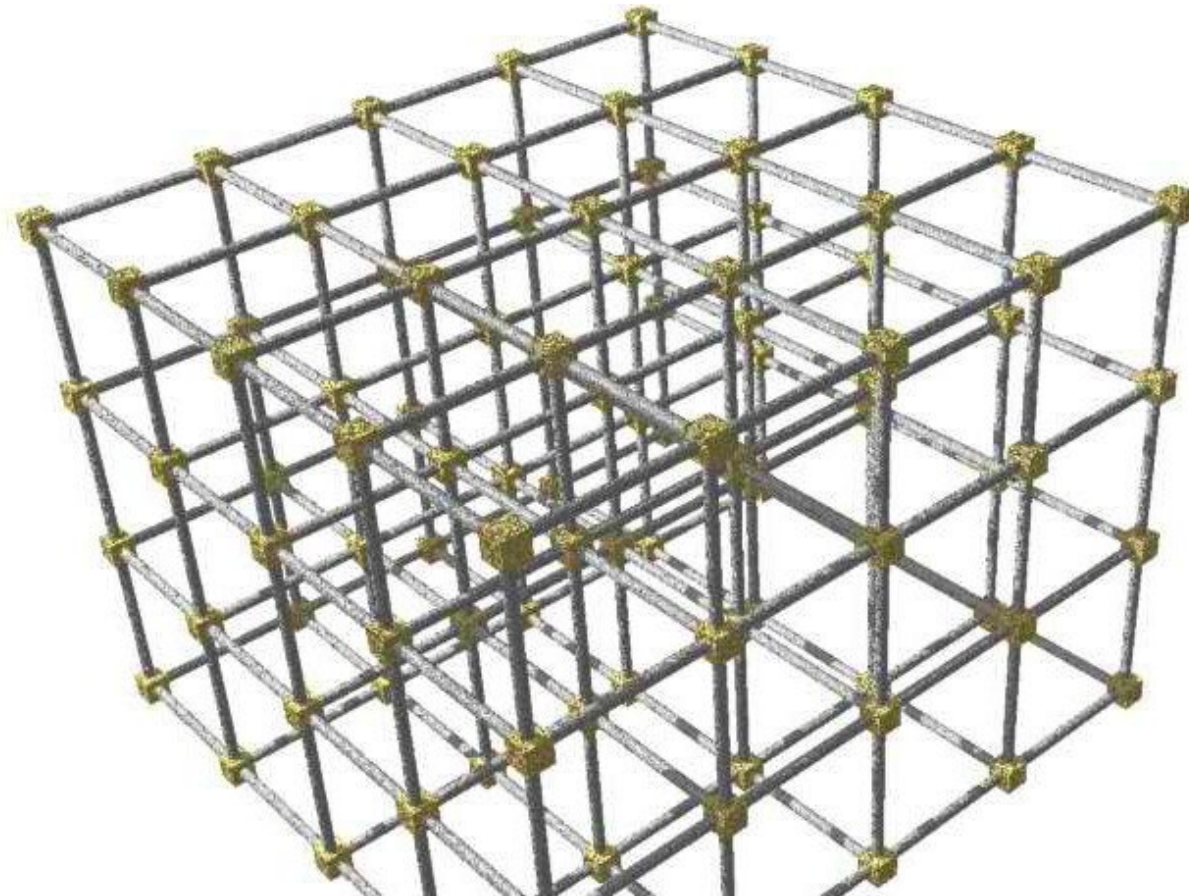


Types of Unethical Behaviour

Type	Example
Coercive	Intimidation and threatening others.
Destructive	Backstabbing and inappropriate jokes.
Deceptive	Euphemism and lying.
Intrusive	Eavesdropping, tapping telephones or monitoring Internet use
Secretive	Hoarding information and cover-ups
Manipulative-exploitative	Acts which attempt to gain compliance or control through exploitation

- Cultural ethical dilemma
- Case 1
- Case 2

ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS



UTILITARIAN ETHICS



- Focuses on the results and whether or not it would benefit the majority.
- Utilitarianism focuses on the consequences of each action or decision, the rightness or wrongness is judged by **its consequences.**



VIRTUE

ETHICS

- Concerned with moral character and places more weight or value on **the dignity of an individual** and a humanity's task of caring for one another.
- It emphasizes character as opposed to duty or consequence.



Example of Virtue Ethics at workplace:

How you conduct yourself at work says a lot about your sense of ethics. Ethics and behaviour at work can help make or break a company because values and ethics helps to maintain order in the office, helps the company's operations run smoothly and they help maintain the company's profitability. Virtues often work hand in hand with ethics when it comes to an employee's behaviour at the workplace.

- **Displaying Trustworthiness**
- **Being Respectful**
- **Taking Responsibility**

SITUATIONAL OR CONTEXTUAL ETHICS

- There is no absolute approach to situations, each situation should be addressed as different from each other.
- Every problem should be evaluated in its particular context or situation.



Business Meetings/Conferences

Running Effective Meetings

Meeting Planning Checklist

- Why meet?
- Who to include?
- What to discuss?
- How to record ideas?
- Where to meet?

Meeting Goals and Purpose

Identifying problems	Solving problems
Brainstorming ideas	Gathering information
Organizing	Decision making
Completing	Planning for implementation
Present Information	Collaborate- review, evaluate, discuss, decide

- To belong
- To achieve and make an impact
- To communicate, build and share a common reality.

Balancing Competing Needs

Maximize speed

Maximize input

End on time

Take time needed to be thoughtful & creative

Prioritize task by emphasizing a fast decision

Prioritize process by promoting discussion and inclusion

Be individually accountable; resist “groupthink”

Be mutually accountable: move with the group

Work with limited perspective and resources

Work with diverse perspectives and resources

Build Shared Clarity

Planning a Meeting

- **Be Specific** – clear objective & outcome

Example: *Objective* – Finalize budget recommendation

Outcome – Finalise departmental fiscal year budget for corporate budget review.

- **Create Agenda**
- Specify the purpose and the participants
- Schedule agenda items
- Explain each agenda item
- Decide on the discussion format

- Decide on a decision-making technique
- Distribute the agenda in advance
- Prioritize Agenda Items
- Assign realistic time to each agenda

Who to Invite?

- How many participants?
- What type of group do you want?
- Who needs to be there?
- How much background or new information do they need?

Orchestrate the Roles

- Who will serve as facilitator?
- Who will serve as scribe?
- Who will serve as timer?
- Who will serve as minutes writer?

Opening the Meeting

- Set the tone (serious & positive, identify participants unknown to the group, discuss agenda in general, give a background)
- Remind participants of their roles
- Reach agreement on ground rules
- Involve people early (dominant/people who talk little, throw questions, take everyone's opinion into consideration)

Mental Listening Skills

- Remove internal and external barriers
- Show an active interest in understanding others
- Hear the difference between issues and motives
- Distinguish between logical and emotional content

Nonverbal Listening Skills

- Posture –“an open center”
- Eye contact –“listening/speaking connection”
- Facial expressions and nodding
- Hand and arm gestures
- Awareness of others’ body language

Decision-making Models

- Executive or expert decisions
- Majority vote
- Consensus

Ending the Meeting

- Know when to end (on time)
- Summarize the meeting
- Confirm the summary
- End on a positive note
- Follow-up to ensure implementation

Control or Collaboration?

When you are the leader & you need to maintain control

1. Conduct the meeting yourself to signal, 'I am in charge'.
2. Stand while others are sitting to signal, 'I am in control'.
3. Sit at the head of the table to signal, 'I am in charge.'

If you want highly participative meeting, tips to be followed:

1. Ask a team member to conduct the meeting to signal, 'Let's share leadership'.
2. Sit while others are sitting to signal, 'I am with you'.
3. Sit on one side, instead of the head to signal 'I am with you.'

Expecting Confrontation?

Confrontational position - stand or sit directly across

Resolve your differences – Sit as close as you can

Rapid Consensus by large Groups:

- Clear Focus on Moving Forward Together
- Integrate with more parts of the Organization (Think about other departments and how that might affect)
- Consensus with Leader as Time-breaker (A group reaches consensus rapidly under the pressure of time)
- A good leader knows how to suspend an issue, allowing the group to decide, all the while letting the group know that if they do not, the leader will.

Minutes of the Meeting

[Sample Format of Meeting Minutes](#)

[Minutes of the Meeting Sample 1](#)

- Conflict is a dreaded word in any workplace. Yet, there is no organization that exists without conflict. Though conflicts have negative connotation, but if handled well conflicts can result in personal growth and effective inter-personal relationships. Therefore, conflict resolution is considered by many as a key leadership skill. Still many managers are at a loss when faced with a conflict.
- Communication skills play a key role in conflict resolution. Most conflicts arise out of miscommunication, poor articulation or misinterpretation of a message. However, communication is also the strongest tool at hand for conflict resolution.
- Effective communication helps in avoiding conflict and also resolving them, once they have arisen.

Approaching a conversation across difference:-

- **Debate**
- **Discussion** – goal is to come to conclusion or decision about something.
- **Dialogue** – goal is to understand the other person, gain perspective. First step towards bridging difference.

Dialogue

- **Talking** – ask open ended question
- **Listening** – engage in humble listening (empathy, perspective & no judging)

“Dialogue allows you to connect even in disagreement”.

It is not about seeking closure but discovering new points.

Communication is a "two-way street" and you can only control yourself. The best you can do is be a role model and try.

1) Assume Positive Intent: Consciously choose to believe that people have good intentions, and act and speak to the best of their ability. By assuming positive intent, we put our own judgments, viewpoints, and biases aside to focus on what the person actually means, rather than what we *think* we hear or see. We recognize that we do not always fully understand a situation or what another person is experiencing.

2) Ask Clarifying Questions: Check your understanding often by paraphrasing what the other person said with clarifying language such as, "*It sounds like you are saying...*" or "*I think I heard you say [...], is that correct?*" Don't be deterred if you are still unclear. Use additional questions to reach an understanding: "*Can you say more about that, please?*" or "*This is an unfamiliar way of thinking about this for me. Can you give me more detail?*"

You can get good information by varying the types of questions you ask, such as open-ended questions, close-ended questions, fact-based questions or opinion-based questions,"

3) Listen Humbly: Put your own ego, assumptions, and viewpoints aside to consider and learn from someone else's experiences as you listen. Use verbal and non-verbal cues to show that you are actively listening. These can include phrases like *"Go on"* or gestures such as simply nodding your head.

4) Use Pauses Intentionally: Take a moment to pause and listen with intention to what is being said, and resist the urge to respond immediately.

5) Find Common Ground: When possible, try to find common ground, such as a shared value, viewpoint, or idea. If you can't, at least you can set the tone for civility, and respectfully agree to disagree. For example, *"I appreciate your perspective on this, even though I don't hold the same view."*

Conversation Ground Rules:

Micro-affirmation –

- i) small actions done everyday
- ii) focus on employees minutely
- iii) relationship building/extending your hand

Micro-affirmations are associated with some **impressive effects**:

- Those who receive them **may perform more effectively** and may be **more satisfied** with their work and achievements.
- They can be contagious—as micro-affirmations spread, they may **raise morale and productivity**.
- They can proactively **create an overall culture of inclusion** and acceptance and can help counteract and even prevent "unconscious slights."

I'd love to learn more about what brought you here. Can we have coffee sometime?

I wanted to let you know that Aman was a terrific facilitator at the training yesterday.

Mohan, what do you think?

I really like what he suggested.

I know you might feel uncomfortable with what Ajay said on that call. What can I do to help?

Guidelines for Micro-Affirmations

- **Be on the Lookout:** First and foremost, be on the lookout for opportunities to provide micro-affirmations. When you're actively thinking about ways to help people succeed and trying to see others' achievements and skills, you'll be more likely to find them.
- **Keep it Small:** You don't need to be a superhero all the time. The smaller and simpler you keep your micro-affirmations, the more likely you'll be to engage in them naturally throughout the day.
- **Delivery Matters:** Consider the best way to deliver your message; methods will depend on the context and setting.
 - a. In public or private (or both!)
 - b. Through words you say or write and/or actions you take
- **Don't Let the Moment Go By:** Think about when your affirmation will be most effective. Typically, it's best to give positive feedback as soon as possible.

ALLYSHIP IN DAILY LIFE

Take an Interest and Learn: Being an ally isn't about having the answers.

- It's about being willing to learn about different perspectives.
- Ignoring or avoiding these conversations can make it appear that you don't care about other people or their beliefs. Asking about them builds trust and understanding.
- *What You Can Do:*
 - **ASK** and don't assume that your life experience is universal.
 - **LISTEN** to what people different from you have to say.
 - **BELIEVE** what they tell you, even if it seems wrong from your own world view.

- **Offer Support:** Allies show public support and help raise awareness for people who may be on the margins of a group or who may not be visible.
- *What You Can Do:*
 - **GET INVOLVED** by attending Employee Resource Group events or joining an advocacy group that represents people of a different race, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity than your own.
 - **PAY ATTENTION** when people are being overlooked or interrupted. For example, notice and publicly praise a great job done by a colleague on an aspect of a project that was not as visible.
 - **VISIBLY SHOW YOUR ALLYSHIP** for other groups or individuals.
 - **STAND UP FOR OTHERS** when you can. For example, when a woman noticed a Russian-speaking immigrant being mistreated poorly by a receptionist, she joined the man at the counter. "I just stood next to him and wouldn't leave until the receptionist finally helped him."

- Communicating **courteously** is imperative during conflict resolution. Conflicts may escalate if others perceive your communication as being rude or discourteous. Using words and phrases like “*please*”, “*thank you*” and “*I apologize*” can go a long way in ensuring a courteous conflict resolution. We realize that many times conflicts may arise due to discourteous communication to begin with.
- **Recognize Need for a Mediator**

When there is conflict in the workplace that revolves around legal or ethical issues, it may be to the company's advantage to bring in a professional mediator. This can help ensure that the conflict is resolved while helping to protect the business from possible legal actions that could arise if the situation is not properly handled. For normal, everyday conflicts within the workplace, an in-house facilitator can be used. With everyone following a few conflict-resolution rules, the situation can usually be resolved.

- **Take Turns Speaking**

Many conflicts arise in the workplace when someone feels he is not being heard by the other person. Each person involved in the conflict should be given an uninterrupted time to explain his side of the situation. Setting a timer may be beneficial to keep the conversation moving forward and to make sure each person is given the same amount of time to air his grievances.

Open Communication

- Conflicts create a relationship between the participants that doesn't end with the resolution of the problem. This relationship lasts forever and needs to be nurtured for the conflict to remain solved.
- Creating an open line of communication between the two parties is the best approach for fostering a healthy, long-term relationship. Both parties can check in on one another and make sure that both ends of the agreement are being upheld. If new challenges arise, this communication channel makes it easier for participants to address the roadblock without risking any progress they've previously made.
- While these skills can help you and your team manage conflicts and prevent them from escalating, it's important to understand how you can use them in action to work towards resolutions. In the next section, we break down some of the ways you can use these skills to produce effective conflict resolutions.

Don't jump to the defense.

- In any conflict, whether it be professional or personal, it's easy to jump to the defense. Your banter might include a series of "no's" and "yes, but" statements that show that you're unable to see another perspective.
- Rather than getting defensive about an attack on your argument, take it as an opportunity to see things from a different point-of-view. You don't have to agree with that person, but you can try to understand where they're coming from. Just as you have your opinion, they have theirs, and refusing to hear their point of view creates an impossible scenario to navigate.
- Instead, change those "yes, but" statements into "I understand, and" statements that build off one another, rather than tearing each other down.

Don't point fingers.

- On the opposite side, jumping on the offensive is also disrespectful and creates a negative foundation where a final solution is often hopeless.
- Don't put blame on others or create a space in which someone feels unsafe to voice their opinion. The best way to solve a conflict is by allowing each person to frame their argument without being blamed or shut down. After all, you wouldn't appreciate the same being done to you, either.

Use "I" statements.

- Similarly to pointing fingers, a series of statements that begin with "you" clearly come off as blaming. Conflict isn't about what the other person is doing wrong; it's about what you believe you're doing right.
- Thus, using "I" statements, such as "I feel like I'm not getting the chance to explain myself" rather than "You're not listening to me" can totally transform your conversation. These sentences will make your argument more about your emotions, opinions, personal beliefs, and morals, rather than about all the things you don't like about the opposing party. No one can disagree with something you believe or stand by, and it makes for a more respectful debate.

Maintain a calm tone.

- No effective conflict resolution was ever born from anger and tears. You need to remain level-headed in order to think rationally about a solution that appeases both parties.
- Wait until you've let out your emotions before you plan a time to meet and discuss with the opposing party. You're allowed to yell, cry, vent, or whatever else you need, but do it on your own time. When you enter the conflict resolution meeting, you should be calm and ready to debate with consideration for differing perspectives.

Pay close attention to nonverbal communication.

- Not everyone is great at handling conflict head-on. These are the people who might typically lean towards avoiding or accommodating as their conflict management styles. Basically, these people don't like conflict and won't always be transparent with you about what they want or need. In these situations, it's important to pay attention to their nonverbal communication.
- Body language can tell you when someone is saying one thing but means another. By being emotionally aware, you can notice when someone's posture, gestures, or facial expressions differ from their words. When someone says "I'm fine," you can tell they're not fine if they avert their eyes. Then, you can create an environment that makes that person feel more comfortable being honest with you.

Communication Roadblocks

Communication roadblocks occur when two people talk in such a way that neither one feels understood. Research has found four particularly negative styles of communication, often referred to as the “four horsemen of the apocalypse,” (Gottman, 1999, p.27) because if left unchecked, these styles of interaction can eventually become lethal to relationships. These styles are criticism, contempt, defensiveness, and stonewalling

- **Criticism** attacks the character or personality of another. While it is normal to have complaints about another's specific actions, it is very different to put them down as a person because of those actions. For example, a complaint might be, "I felt worried when you did not call to tell me that you were going to be home late." A criticism in the same situation would be expressed as "You are so inconsiderate, you never call me when you are going to be late." Critiques focus on certain behaviors; criticism negatively focuses on the person's intentions and character.

- **Contempt** portrays disgust and a lack of respect for the other person through body language, such as eye rolling or sneering, or by name calling, sarcasm and cutting remarks.
- **Defensiveness** is a seemingly understandable reaction that individuals take to criticism and contempt; however, it often escalates the conflict. When we are defensive, we tend to stop listening to the other's viewpoint and communication is shut down.
- **Stonewalling** is withdrawing from communication and refusing to engage in discussion. In other words, it is the adult version of the “silent treatment” that young children utilize when they are upset. Conflict resolution is impossible without communication!

- Some additional examples of communication roadblocks include (Miller & Miller, 1997):
- Ordering (“Stop complaining!”)
- Warning (“If you do that, you’ll be sorry.”)
- Preaching (“You shouldn’t act like that.”)
- Advising (“Just wait a couple of years before deciding.”)
- Lecturing (“If you do this now, you won’t grow up to be a responsible adult.”)

- Interpreting (“You don’t really believe that.”)
- Sympathizing (“Don’t worry, it’ll all work out.”)
- Questioning (“Who put that idea into your head?”)
- Diverting (“Let’s talk about something more pleasant.”)
- Agreeing, just to keep the peace (“I think you’re right.”)
- Ridiculing (“OK, little baby.”)

When does a conflict occur?

- Conflicts occur when two or more competing responses or courses of action are considered for a single event.
- Organizational conflicts arise when two or more parties, with **perceived incompatible goals**, seek to **undermine each other's goal-seeing** capability. It involves varied issues- sometimes it involves work related issues such as scheduling, funds and work assignments; at other times, it focuses on personal issues such as the amount of socialization during work hours\, sexual harassment, or whether appointed consultants are doing their job efficiently or not.

Are conflicts good?

A skilfully handled conflict can result in several benefits. It acts as a safety valve, letting people ventilate frustrations that block their effective functioning. Solves troublesome problems.

So it is the responsibility of the upper management, department heads not only to resolve conflicts but also to minimize the effects of their sources through responsible communication with each other and with their employees. Overcoming conflicts make people feel that together they have made progress towards their mutual goals.

The following attitudinal principles are the basis of successful communication for everyone, particularly when dealing with conflict:

- Caring about what others are saying.
- There is always new information to learn from a communication,
- Good communication requires focused energy.
- Effective communication demands joint effort between speaker and the listener.

Strategies of Managing Conflict

Collaborating (win-win)

- Communicators are committed to working together to resolve conflicts.
- This is the desired goal in all conflict situations
- Communicators put their frustration aside & looks at the situation
- Discusses different viewpoints calmly and professionally
- Work together so that both parties are happy with the final outcome
- Work on reframing the conflict, think laterally and come to an agreement
- Negotiate. What are the points they can concede in order to obtain agreement for what is most important. Both sides give and take some until both are satisfied.

Drawbacks

- The process takes a lot of time and energy.
- Some may take advantage of other people's trust and openness.

Example

The management of a company announces a new policy involving the change in timings. One particular department does not agree with the management on this new policy while all others do agree. Here, a collaborative effort is one of the ways to manage the disagreement.

Compromising (win/lose – win/lose)

- Each party sacrifices something he/she is seeking to reach an agreement.
- This approach is used when attempted collaboration has been unsuccessful
- When the relationship or the issue is important enough to not give it up altogether
- When both sides strongly believe they are correct and you want each to get nearer their goal, so you come to an agreement by mutual concessions.

Drawbacks

- Important values and long term objectives can be derailed in the process.
- May not work if initial demands are too great.
- Can spawn cynicism, if there is no commitment to honor the compromise solutions

Example

The employee union of an industry goes on strike, as the management does not accede to their request for more benefits. A compromise between the two sides might be a solution.

Accommodating (lose – win)

- Accommodators give ground as a way of maintaining harmony.
- There are times when it is most appropriate to “give in,” in a conflict situation. This can occur when for one reason or another you were wrong (possibly you did not have all of the information), or when the other person has legitimate authority (e.g., the conference president). In such circumstances, particularly if you feel strongly about the situation, calmly state your reasons for disagreeing and then “accommodate” with dignity. Again, someone loses—you. You need to decide if it is worth it.

Drawbacks

- One's own ideas do not get attention.
- Credibility and influence can be lost.

Example

Despite the hint from the market survey conducted by the marketing department, the production department of an organisation did not change the design. Above all, the marketing division also accommodated this negligence and launched the product that turned out to be a failure. It is easy to imagine that a less accommodating approach might have caused the production department to take the survey seriously and redesign the product.

Competing (win-lose)

- This approach is based on the assumption that the only way for one party to reach its goals is to overcome the other.
- This is when you force the issue to get the decision you want, usually for safety or ethical/ moral/legal issues. As the leader you are ultimately responsible for decision-making. If you have strong biblical principles for your decision on any of these issues you must stand firm. Share your reasons. Sometimes it is a good strategic move to ask the group to go away and think about the decision, pray and then meet again to make the decision. That way you may have the team share in the decision rather than imposing your view upon them. Remember, you are not omnipotent—they may come back with a better idea or solution ! Someone always loses and somebody may want to even the score.

Drawbacks

- Conflict may get escalated.
- Losers may retaliate.

Example

An employer might find that the cost of providing on-site equipment is more than offset by reduced absenteeism and greater appeal when recruiting new employees and hence decides in favour of it. Unsympathetic management turns a deaf ear to the request of employees to make provisions for on-site exercise facilities, implying- or even stating outright – that the physical condition of employees and that providing easy access to exercise would require a cash outlay and reduce time spent on the job. Therefore, a competitive approach seems the only way.

Avoiding (lose – lose)

- One way to deal with the conflicts is to avoid them whenever possible and withdraw when confronted.
- When the issues are trivial, or circumstances dictate that a solution is better left until later.
- Maybe until you or the other people have calmed down, or reinforcements have arrived.
- Perhaps it is better to avoid decision making when you are so tired / stressed that your judgment may not be sound
- When moral or safety issues are involved.
- Not to be used just because you are afraid to deal with conflict! Issues will only build up and become more complicated.

Drawbacks

- Important decisions may be made by default.
- People may take advantage of a person who constantly avoids confrontation.

Example

In the workplace, a communicator who avoids conflicts might accept constant schedule delays or poor-quality work from a supplier to avoid confrontation or might cover up for a co-worker's frequent absences even if it means doing the other person's work. Avoidance may have the short-term benefit of preventing confrontation, but there are usually long-term costs, especially in ongoing relationships.

The Five Steps in Resolving Conflicts

1. Pray about the Problem Together

Do this humbly not as a way to bring judgment down on the other person! Commit to trying to find a solution, and then define the conflict as a mutual problem. In the majority of conflict situations, neither side is totally wrong or totally right. In most cases there are things to sort out on both sides. So try to perceive the situation as a mutual problem not a win / lose struggle.

2. Clarify the Issues—Focus on the Needs And Goals

Reframe the situation with the questions: What do we need to do to get out of this situation? What are our goals? What are the concerns? Don't be dragged back into recriminations or old gossip that is quite destructive.

3. Understand Each Other's Perspective.

Treat the other person and their viewpoint with respect. Take the time to give each other time to state a viewpoint (active listening without interruption). Once we really understand the other person's viewpoint it is much easier to want to come to an agreement. Use specific communication—use “I” words instead of “you” words. (Instead of “You make me so mad when you do that!,” I might say, “I feel so angry when something is said to me without considering my perception in the situation”)

4. Break the Conflict into Small Steps

If the conflict is serious it may not be possible to sort all of the problems out at one time. Identify the options and develop the ones that give everyone more of what they want. Try to agree to deal with one issue at first, and then you can move on to the next.

5. Give and Take.

Take a long-term view. Support what is legitimate and fair—resist greed and injustice. “Give” in areas that are high value to others and easy for you to give. Remember that you cannot expect to have everything go your way.

6. Focus on What Your Opponent is Saying Instead of Planning Your Rebuttal

7. Avoid the Blame Game

8. Remember that Leadership and Conflict Resolution Go Hand-in-Hand

9. Attack the Problem, Not the Person

10. View Conflict as Opportunity

Words and Phrases in Conflict Resolution

1. Apology – when one party is fixated on an apology, sometimes asking the person to reframe his or her desire is helpful. The person may say that he/she just wants to hear the other party say that they regret what has happened.
2. Compromise – this word is a volatile term and should be avoided in mediation.
3. Any phrase such as ‘or else’ or sentence, such as, ‘you will be sorry’, is a block to communication.
4. Side, story, facts, truths – Consider this opening used by a mediator, ‘Each of you will have an opportunity to tell your side of the story. I want to know the facts and what you consider to be the truth in this case.’

This opening is loaded with explosive words – ‘side’, ‘story’, ‘facts’, ‘truth’. Any of this can block communication. The parties involved believe that they are not telling a story and that there are no sides, only the truth and facts. The mediator should rather say: ‘Each of you will have an opportunity to voice your perspective or view of the situation.’

Positive/Neutral words- Full, curiosity, spontaneity, habit, calm, active, pleasure, life, enthusiasm, ready.

Negative words – Anger, forgiveness, closure, complain, compromise, criticism, cynicism, pride, superior, skeptic, tough.