

Strategies for Resolving Workplace Conflict

Why does conflict happen?

- Assumptions
- Misunderstandings
- Misaligned priorities/goals
- Communication breakdowns
- Cultural and generational differences
- Illness/fatigue/discomfort
- Personality Styles
- Stress

My top three stressors:

How my stressors may be contributing to any recent conflict:

What influences how we manage workplace conflict?

- Parents/families
- Prior experiences
- Trauma history
- Mentoring/education

Influences on how I manage conflict at work:

Positives that have come from my prior conflict experiences:

Conflict resolution strategies

- Ensure emotions are not running high
- Meet face to face in a private, neutral location
- State the problem
- Practice active listening
- Outline the facts
- Brainstorm solutions

- Seek common ground and 'win-win' solutions
- If communications break down, reschedule
- Involve a third party

Commitments for success

- Don't delay
- Make personal contact
- Keep it positive
- Separate people from problems
- Stay on topic
- Reflect empathy
- Own your part
- Put it in writing
- Spend time together

Notes:

Practice

Mike and Jill are assigned a project for an important customer. Mike is 'old school' and has been with the company over 25 years. Jill is a millennial and newer with the company. Both Mike and Jill want to do a good job on the project and impress their boss and customer. In their first meeting, Mike made it clear he is the senior employee on the project and outlined his plan of action, never asking Jill's opinion. At one point, he stopped and told Jill not to worry about anything because he was very experienced, and he could practically do all the work without her help. However, he suggested she take notes and take care of some other administrative things to help keep them on track. Jill was nearly speechless. She felt Mike was chauvinistic and condescending in how he treated her in the meeting. She had done her 'homework' and had come to the meeting with what she felt were some innovative ideas that would both impress the customer and resolve some of their key concerns. Jill felt like Mike was treating her just like her dad does, never listens or gives her any respect.

What are some factors you think might be impacting Mike's handling of the meeting?

What are some factors you think might be impacting Jill's response to the meeting?

What are some recommended steps for Jill to take?

If Jill decides to talk to Mike about the meeting, what should she do to prepare?

What are some recommended strategies both Mike and Jill should try help them have a successful conversation about their issues?