

## Basics of Conflict Management

### Clarifying Confusion About Conflict

Conflict is when two or more values, perspectives and opinions are contradictory in nature and haven't been aligned or agreed about yet, including:

1. Within yourself when you're not living according to your values;
2. When your values and perspectives are threatened; or
3. Discomfort from fear of the unknown or from lack of fulfillment.

Conflict is inevitable and often good, for example, good teams always go through a "form, storm, norm and perform" period. Getting the most out of diversity means often-contradictory values, perspectives and opinions.

### Conflict is often needed. It:

1. Helps to raise and address problems.
2. Energizes work to be on the most appropriate issues.
3. Helps people "be real", for example, it motivates them to participate.
4. Helps people learn how to recognize and benefit from their differences.

Conflict is not the same as discomfort. The conflict isn't the problem - it is when conflict is poorly managed that is the problem.

### Conflict is a problem when it:

1. Hampers productivity.
2. Lowers morale.
3. Causes more and continued conflicts.
4. Causes inappropriate behaviors.

### Qualities that Cause Conflicts:

1. Poor communications
2. Conflicting personalities
3. Leadership problems, including inconsistent, missing, too-strong or uninformed leadership (at any level in the organization)

### Ways People Deal With Conflict

There is no one best way to deal with conflict. It depends on the current situation. Here are the major ways that people use to deal with conflict.

1. Avoid it. Pretend it is not there or ignore it. Usually this approach tends to worsen the conflict over time.
2. Accommodate it. Give in to others, sometimes to the extent that you compromise yourself.
3. Competing. Work to get your way, rather than clarifying and addressing the issue. Competitors love accommodators.
4. Compromising. Mutual give-and-take. Use when the goal is to get past the issue and move on.
5. Collaborating. Focus on working together. Use when the goal is to meet as many current needs as possible by using mutual resources. This approach sometimes raises new mutual needs. Use when the goal is to cultivate ownership and commitment.

## **How to Remove a Leader/Member**

### **Who can remove an elected leader?**

Can the chapter president or board remove an elected chapter leader? NO.

If a chapter leader is elected by the membership, the membership is the only entity that can legally remove that leader from office. In these cases, it is important that there be a just and serious cause for removal. In this event, a special meeting of the membership must be held, evidence presented to the members and the leader must then be voted out by ballot (just as they were voted into office).

All appropriate notice should be given, however, if an elected leader is to be removed. Issues with performance should be clearly communicated to that leader, notes should be made about any and all communications, and action plans should be created. If the leader's performance still does improve, removal can be taken to the membership. This process is very daunting and embarrassing and situations rarely come to this step – the leader will either improve or resign first.

Can anyone remove an elected national leader? NO.

If the board member is elected, only the delegates who elected the national board member may remove that leader. A special notice will be sent to the entire membership, with details about the situation and leader in question, and delegates will be called to vote for the removal of the elected board member. If the board member is appointed by the national board (ie: At Large director), only the board may remove that leader. If there is an issue with the CPC Chair, or any CPC representative, only the members of the Chapter Presidents' Council (all chapter presidents) may elect to remove the representative.

### **Who can remove an appointed leader?**

Can anyone on the board remove an appointed leader? NO.

An appointed chapter leader can only be removed by the person or persons who appointed that leader. Refer to your chapter bylaws for the appropriate protocol. Usually, appointed board/chair positions are appointed either directly by the chapter president or by a vote of the chapter executive committee.

All appropriate notice should be given, however, if an appointed leader is to be removed. Issues with performance should be clearly communicated to that leader, notes should be made about any and all communications, and action plans should be created. If the leader's performance still does improve, he or she may be removed from that appointed office.

### **Who can remove a member?**

Can a chapter leader remove a member? NO.

The only cause for revocation of a membership is if a member violates the NACE Code of Ethics, and there must be clear evidence of the violation. In cases like this, a formal complaint must be made to the NACE National Ethics Committee, in writing, for review. This committee is the only entity that can authorize removal/revocation of a membership.