




CONFLICT TO COLLABORATION

Navigating Staff Conflict in the Workplace

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TAMUC Professional Development Day



GOOD LEADERS RECOGNIZE THAT
CONFLICT DOESN'T NEED TO BE
DESTRUCTIVE
AND SHOULD BE LEVERAGED
RATHER THAN “MANAGED” OR
“CONTROLLED”



OBJECTIVES

#1

Understand “Conflict” in the workplace

#2

Understand and apply key actions in establishing collaboration

#3

Apply concepts to real work situations

#4

Set foundation for further development and learning

SCENARIO A

You get off on the wrong foot with a new coworker

They ask you for help responding to a customer inquiry, but you refuse to lend a hand because you are working on a tight deadline and don't want to waste time. There has been tension between you two ever since, and now you need their help on a project, but they're not being very responsive.

How do you recover?

SCENARIO B

Someone sends you urgent requests after hours

You're frustrated because your colleague keeps messaging after hours. They send you seemingly urgent requests and you're sick of being bombarded with 11 requests before you've even sat down at your desk. You get the vibe they don't like you very much and you don't know how to approach them.

SCENARIO C

Things got awkward between you and your work friend after you got a promotion

You got a promotion that your friend at work was also gunning for. Now things are awkward between you two. You definitely want to keep the friendship going, but they aren't even speaking to you outside of team meetings.

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

Conflict refers to a struggle or disagreement between two or more parties who have incompatible goals, interests, or values.

It can manifest in various forms, such as verbal arguments, physical confrontations, or emotional tension.



TYPES OF CONFLICT

Conflict can be categorized into several types, including:

- Interpersonal conflict (between individuals)
- Intrapersonal conflict (within oneself)
- Intergroup conflict (between different groups)
- Organizational conflict (within or between organizations)



- While conflict can escalate to toxic levels, it is crucial to understand why it can also be constructive.
- Teams need to feel safe debating ideas and disagreeing with suggestions in order to build commitment for outcomes.
- Healthy conflict is necessary for building commitment to decisions.
- Healthy conflict allows for the robust testing of ideas, which leads to a stronger commitment to the final group decision.





MOST COMMON REASONS FOR CONFLICT



MOST COMMON REASONS FOR CONFLICT

- Communication Issues
- Personality Clashes
- Differences in Values or Goals
- Power Struggles
- Workload Imbalance
- Unclear Expectations



NEGATIVE IMPACT OF UNSOLVED CONFLICT





- Decreased Morale and Productivity
- Increased Turnover
- Toxic Work Environment
- Damage to Reputation
- Loss of Trust and Collaboration



AVOID THE AVOIDANCE



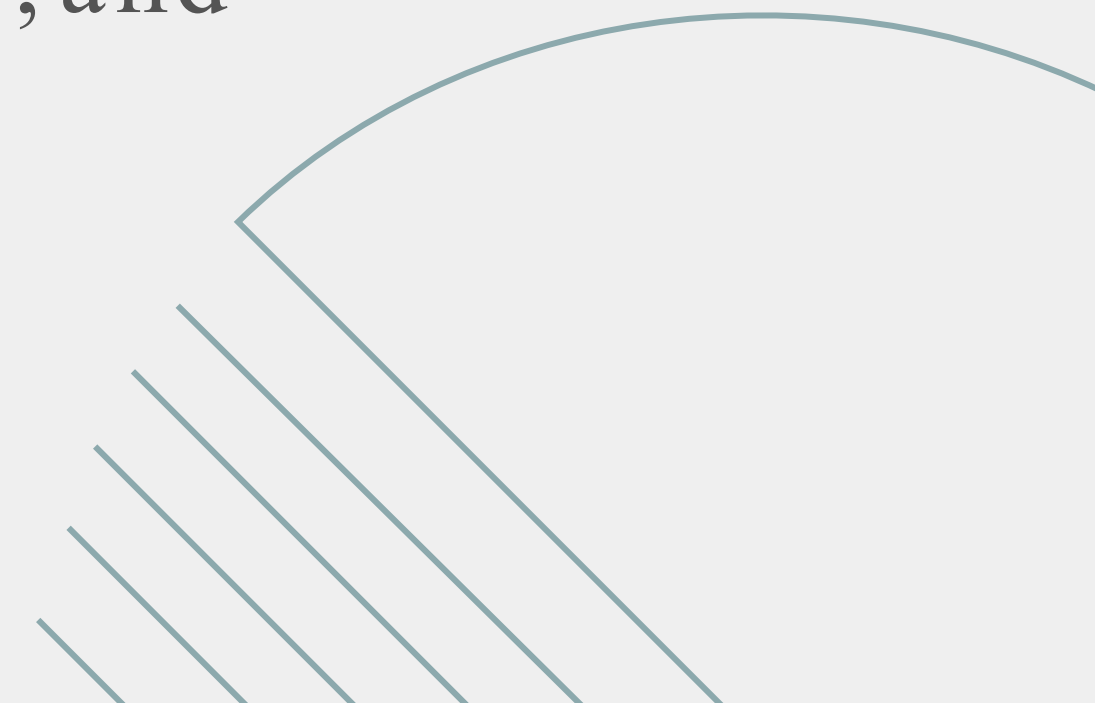
- Leads to resentment and frustration.
 - The relationship becomes based on assumptions and expectations rather than communication.
 - Creates more conflict than resolution
 - Perception of Weakness or Apathy
 - Could miss out on developing your communication, negotiation, or assertiveness skills, which are essential for your personal and professional success.
 - Collaboration deteriorates
- 
- 

LEADING THE WAY VS. GETTING IN THE WAY

While we do our best to be perfect in our work,
perfection is out of reach.

A more realistic approach to our work includes an
emphasis on professionalism and improved
performance through learning, experience, and
reflection.

Perception vs. Perspective



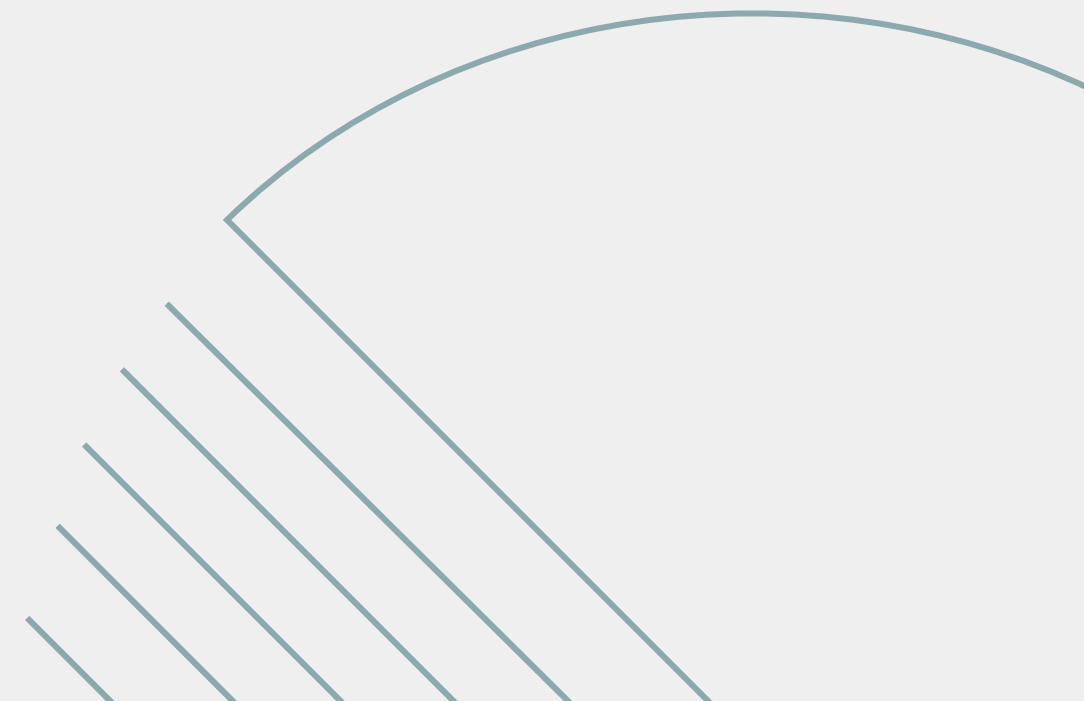
LEADING THE WAY VS. GETTING IN THE WAY



What's the difference?

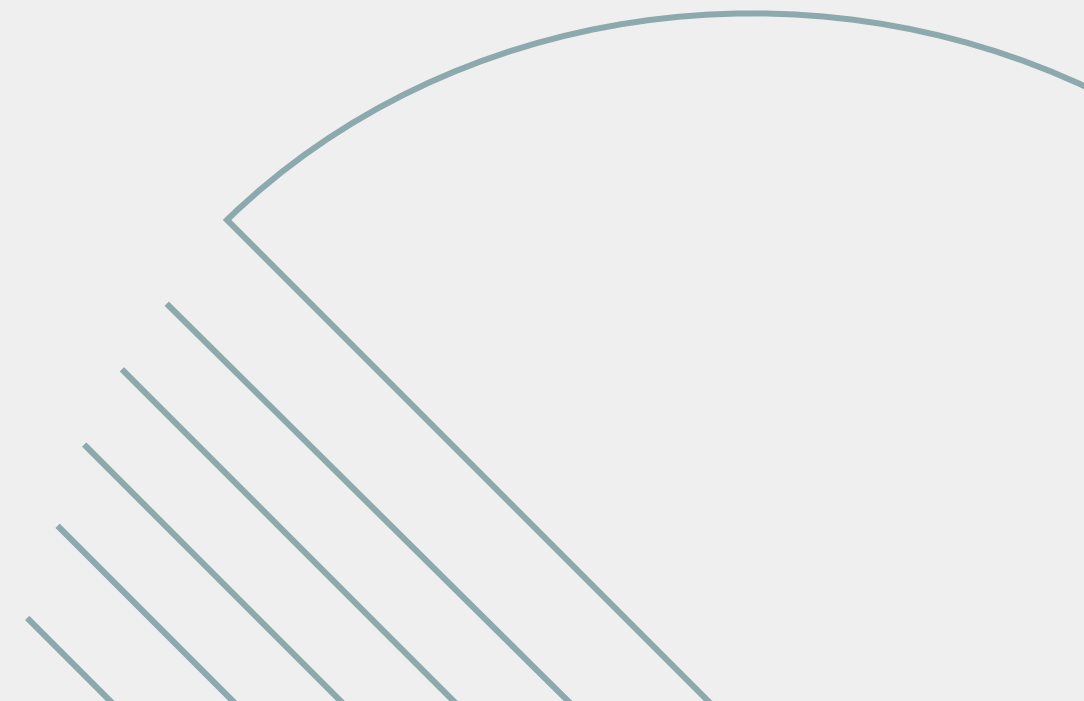
How do you most often “Lead the way?”

How do you most often “Get in the way?”



5 STRATEGIES FOR TURNING CONFLICT INTO COLLABORATION

- Active Listening
- Empathy and Perspective - Taking
- Communication Skills
- Establishing Clear and Consistent Expectations and Guidelines
- Ongoing Staff Training & Team Building Activities



COMPASSIONATE ACCOUNTABILITY

BE MORE OPEN

- Empathize
- Understand motives, emotions, and responses
- Listen and then validate feelings

BE MORE RESOURCEFUL

- Avoid sharing your ideas first
- Ask others for their thoughts
- Disagree while respecting others' intentions

BE PERSISTENT

- See things through with integrity and respect
- Be clear about your expectations
- Hold yourself and others accountable
- Acknowledge when you make mistakes, and try to make them right

SCENARIO A

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They ask you for help responding to a customer inquiry, but you refuse to lend a hand because you are working on a tight deadline and don't want to waste time. There has been tension between you two ever since, and now you need their help on a project, but they're not being very responsive.

How do you recover?

SCENARIO A (SOLUTION)



- Go own it!
- Find an appropriate time to walk up to them and say, "I understand that we got off on the wrong foot. My apologies for that."
- Regardless of who the conflict is with - an employee, your boss, etc., they'll think more highly of you if you demonstrate self-awareness.
- It's all about how you approach the situation.
- At the end of the day you are trying to resolve something so that you can move forward and execute on whatever project or plan you need to deliver.

SCENARIO B

Someone sends you urgent requests after hours

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SCENARIO B (SOLUTION)



- Avoiding confrontation is making your situation worse, not better!
- Bring the spirit of collaboration to the table!
- Uncover the root of the problem by asking questions.
- Once you understand why they're doing it, you can help them articulate their needs.
- Have a candid conversation to ease any tensions.
- Collaborate! Determine a solution that works for both of you.

SCENARIO C

Things got awkward between you and your work friend after you got a promotion

You got a promotion that your friend at work was also gunning for. Now things are awkward between you two. You definitely want to keep the friendship going, but they aren't even speaking to you outside of team meetings.

SCENARIO C (SOLUTION)



- Own It! Tell them that you know it's an uncomfortable situation and that you'd like to continue the relationship.
- These situations are tough, but radical candor is important.
- Don't avoid! Be proactive. Break the ice. Figure out how to work together! (Collaboration!)



THANK YOU

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