

# Conflict and Confrontation Skills for Women

## Participant Notebook

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# Start, Stop, Continue

Start	Stop	Continue

# Women and Conflict

## Why is it so critical for women to learn to deal with conflict?

- Negative stereotypes
- Double standards
- Women don't speak up

## Four-step formula for managing conflict

1. Maintain emotional composure.
2. Assess and diagnose the situation.
3. Determine the most appropriate response.
4. Resolve the conflict.

# Step One: Maintain Emotional Composure

## Stop, listen, think: how to avoid overreacting

- Learn how to **respond** to conflict instead of reacting to it.
- Jack Canfield's equation:  $E + R = O$

E

+ R

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O

## Why techniques like pouting, the silent treatment, and other negative responses do more harm than good

1. You lose your own composure.
2. You escalate the situation.
3. Communication breaks down.
4. It takes more effort to repair the damage.

## Effective tips to help you maintain composure

1. Don't take it personally.
2. Change your perspective.
3. Consider the source.
4. Detach.
5. Use a Q-Tip.
6. Practice deep breathing.
  - ✓ Breathe in through the nose — hold — exhale through the mouth.
  - ✓ Do this four to six times in a row.

# Step One: Maintain Emotional Composure, continued

## Regain control if you feel tears coming, or your voice quavering

1. Look up and to the right.

2. Do math — in your head.

3. Physically distract yourself.

4. Squeeze your buttocks!

5. Drink water.



# Step Three: Determine the Most Appropriate Response

## The Conflict Response Continuum



## Types of communication

- Passive
- Aggressive
- Passive-Aggressive
- Assertive

## Become more assertive during a conflict

1. Identify the negative behavior.
2. Begin your sentence with the word “when.”
3. Clearly identify the impact the other person’s behavior has on you or the team and clarify why the behavior is a problem.
4. Ask for a behavior change.
5. Validate and support the behavior change.
6. Gain a commitment.

# Step Four: Resolve the Conflict

## Fundamental steps

1. Show empathy — use empathic statements.
2. Apologize.

## Big dos and don'ts during conflict and confrontations

Don't	Do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use escalating words such as “but...” or “can’t.”</li><li>• Ignore or minimize feelings.</li><li>• Use absolutes.</li><li>• Bring up past problems or issues.</li><li>• Use a sarcastic or condescending tone.</li><li>• Use passive-aggressive responses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listen without interrupting.</li><li>• Validate the other person’s viewpoint.</li><li>• Find a common ground.</li><li>• Clarify the outcome and negotiate what each person requires.</li><li>• Be assertive.</li><li>• Set up a win-win outcome.</li></ul>

## How to follow up once the confrontation is over

- Choose the best approach.
  - ✓ “Let sleeping dogs lie.”
  - ✓ Address the problem head on.
- Take it up the ladder if the conflict escalates and begins to affect work performance.

# **Bonus**

# **Materials**

Dear Customer,

You are a valued customer and to say “thank you,” we have included the following as a bonus for you. We believe you’ll find it helpful as a job aid or to further your knowledge beyond today’s broadcast.

Thank you,

Sara Valins  
Director, Curriculum Development

# Bonus Materials: The Conflict Resolution Toolbox

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# Conflict Assessment Checklist

<b>Stage One — Daily Events</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Coping Strategies</b>
1. Are individuals willing to meet and discuss facts?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep parties looking at both sides.</li> <li>• Encourage “what if” thinking.</li> <li>• Identify residual emotions.</li> </ul>
2. Is there a sense of optimism?			
3. Is there a cooperative spirit?			
4. Does a “live and let live” attitude typify the atmosphere?			
5. Can individuals discuss issues without involving personalities?			
6. Are the parties able to stay in the present tense?			
7. Is the language specific?			
8. Do solutions dominate management efforts?			
<b>Stage Two — Challenges</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Intervention Strategies</b>
1. Is there a competitive attitude?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get details — the more the better.</li> <li>• Minimize logic and reason.</li> <li>• Establish goals and obtain commitment.</li> <li>• Keep perspective.</li> </ul>
2. Is there an emphasis on winners and losers?			
3. Is it hard to talk about problems without including people?			
4. Is the language generalized?			
5. Can you identify these statements:			
– “They... ”			
– “Everyone is...” .....			
– “You always...” .....			
– “He or she never...” .....			
6. Is there a cautious nature when issues are discussed?			
7. Can you detect a “cover-your-hind-end” attitude?			
8. Do parties make efforts to look good?			

# Conflict Assessment Checklist, continued

<b>Stage Three — Battles</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Management Strategies</b>
1. Are attempts being made to get rid of others?			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a safe environment.</li> <li>• Be hard on facts, and soft on people.</li> <li>• Challenge extremes.</li> <li>• Keep group accountability.</li> </ul>
2. Is there an intention to hurt?			
3. Have obvious leaders or spokespersons emerged?			
4. Is there a choosing up of sides?			
5. Has corporate good become identified with a set of special interests?			
6. Is there a sense of “holy mission” on the part of certain parties?			
7. Is there a sense that things will never stop?			
8. Has there been a loss of middle ground, allowing only black or white options?			

# Personal Behavior Checklist

You can minimize conflict and impact how others react by modifying your own behaviors. Some behaviors promote empathy, cooperation and synergy, while others stir anger, frustration and division.

<b>Modify Your Behavior</b>	
<b>Soothing Behaviors</b>	<b>Conflict-Driving Behaviors</b>
Demonstrating respect	Disrespectful actions such as interrupting, ignoring or discounting others
Listening attentively	Acting impatient or bored
Speaking calmly, with an even tone of voice	Using derision, sarcasm, passive-aggressive behaviors and verbiage
Focusing on the behavior and motivators, not the person	Making it personal
Telling the truth	Hedging, falsifying information or outright lying
Recognizing the individual's needs	Looking for a personal agenda
Treating everyone as an individual	Acting like it's "business as usual" and treating the individual as a "problem," statistic or annoyance
Keeping an open mind	Making snap decisions
Waiting to form an opinion until you have all the facts	Passing judgment
Giving others opportunity to express their ideas or opinions	Interrupting
Looking for mutually-beneficial solutions	Making unreasonable demands
Making direct eye contact, smiling	Acting distracted, putting up emotional barriers and failing to look the individual in the eye
Praising and recognizing others	Discounting achievements, ignoring or qualifying recognition

# Personal Behavior Checklist, continued

<b>Modify Your Behavior</b>	
<b>Soothing Behaviors</b>	<b>Conflict-Driving Behaviors</b>
Matching verbal message to body language and behaviors	Sending mixed messages
Demonstrating patience	Acting irritated or in a hurry
Show flexibility and willingness to compromise	Taking an “it’s my way or no way” approach and refusing to cooperate
Allowing others opportunity to express frustrations and decompress	Interrupting and monopolizing the conversation and the time of others
Respecting personal space and belongs of others	Crowding, physically touching others inappropriately, using or touching personal belongs without permission
Keeping your word and follow through	Breaking a promise or agreement
Sharing information freely	Withholding information, sharing only part of the facts
Using open, welcoming gestures and body language; during emotional confrontation using neutral body language	Using body to accentuate anger or emotion, such as pounding on a table, waving your arms, shaking a fist, pointing a finger
Treating every person as an individual	Grouping others together and stereotyping
Using positive words and phrases	Use negative or derogatory words and phrases
Demonstrating ethical and honorable behaviors	Lying, cheating, taking advantage of others
Letting go of competitiveness and taking the opportunity to learn from others or build relationships	Focusing on the need to win or always be right
Collaborating and cooperating with others	Disagreeing, overriding decisions, and blocking successes of others

# Quick Reference for Conflict Negotiation Techniques

There are seven primary conflict negotiation techniques — not one. Most people adopt a “my way or no way” attitude and fail to use the rest of the tools at their disposal. The key is to not only use one technique but to use the different techniques as the situation requires. By becoming familiar with and mastering these techniques, you arm yourself with information and choices and can achieve a more successful outcome.

Negotiation Techniques		
Soothing Behaviors	When it Works	When it Doesn't
1. Denial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When it is necessary to separate personal feelings from the situation</li> <li>• When time is needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If others know you have information</li> </ul>
2. Withdrawal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is participation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is much to lose</li> </ul>
3. Placating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the other person requires status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you are right</li> </ul>
4. Suppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the information is damaging</li> <li>• When time is needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When others have information</li> </ul>
5. Dominance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the highest levels of conflict or stress when power is in your control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When others do not respect abilities</li> </ul>
6. Compromise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When both parties are right</li> <li>• When relationships need to remain open and communicating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When only one party is right</li> <li>• When there is little to give</li> </ul>
7. Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When there is time</li> <li>• When a good relationship exists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When time is short</li> <li>• When there is a lack of trust</li> </ul>