



Advanced High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson AHS.22

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

Unit.

Stage Two of Development—WE

Problem Area.

How Do I Build High Performing Teams?

Precepts.

M4: Communicates appropriately with co-workers and supervisors.

National Standards.

NPH-H.9-12.5 -Demonstrate strategies for solving interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Define team conflict.
- 2 Define conflict resolution.
- 3 Identify strategies for resolving conflict.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Covey, Sean. *7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*. New York, New York: Simon & Schuster Publishers, 1998.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ AHS.22.TM.A-or a good-sized picture of a famous person as a teenager.
- ✓ AHS.22.TM.B-or a determined series of decisions the famous person made as an adult AHS.22.TM.C
- ✓ AHS.22.TM.D
- ✓ AHS.22.TM.E
- ✓ AHS.22.Assess-one per student.



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Team conflict
- ▶ Conflict resolution
- ▶ Mediation
- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Negotiation



Interest Approach

Show a picture to the class of a famous person as a teenager. An example is provided on AHS.22.TM.A. Other examples might include: George W. Bush, Oprah Winfrey, etc. Have them consider the following question:



Do we think, just by the way this person looks that we'll be in conflict with him or her at some point in time?

Have them imagine that they are on a working team with that person. Tell a fact or series of facts about the famous person regarding decisions he or she has made in his or her lifetime. For example, George Bush approved the largest government reorganization since the 70s. An example for Michael J. Fox is found on AHS.22.TM.B. A note: make sure the answers to the question are controversial. After revealing some of the answers, have students consider this question:



Now, do we find ourselves in a personal conflict with this person over one or more of the decisions he or she has made in his or her lifetime?



Process with the following questions:



What caused the conflict with this person?

Some anticipated responses might include: I didn't agree with the choices he made, he was not responsible, maybe he didn't tell the truth, it seemed like he placed his own issues over the team's.



What specific decision did he or she make that caused us to disagree with him or her on a personal level? If we were on a team with him or her, how might our disagreement with his or her decision affect the performance of a team?

Some responses to listen for include: we start blaming each other, the disagreement causes tension, it may lead to anger or revenge, it may lower the morale of the team, or it may end up affecting the integrity of team members. Lead to the fact that team performance can suffer because of conflict.

Challenge students to keep an open mind and take on the attitude of a discoverer throughout the day.



How would a discoverer act?

Elicit answers.



Treat this day as if it was an opportunity to learn the best and most useful information ever discovered in a classroom setting. Sit up, lean forward, nod when we understand, and ask useful questions today as we discover more about teams and how they deal with conflict.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Define team conflict.

Have students take a moment and consider their personal experiences with conflict on teams they've worked with in the past.



Think back to a time when we were a part of a team. Ponder the following three questions. Did we experience any type of conflict on that team? What was the cause of conflict? How did the conflict affect our team? Find some clear space and write down your thoughts about your experience with conflict.



Allow time to write. Share as a group. After several students have shared, have students pair up to process the activity using this question:



Pair up to answer this question: What was similar about each of the situations we just heard?

Some anticipated responses might include: they all resulted in a poor experience, there was a lack of communication, people involved in conflict failed to listen, personalities were very different, or they had differences of opinion. Lead students to the conclusion that in each example the underlying issue is that there was a difference of opinion. Write on a writing surface or show AHS.22.TM.C. For item B below have the students generate a list from discussion about their own experiences in groups.

I. Understanding conflict on teams

- A. Team conflict: differences of opinion on a controversial issue between two or more members of a team
- B. There are many events that may happen in the life of a team that can result in a difference of opinion:
 - 1. Making assumptions.
 - 2. Different responses to change.
 - 3. Different priorities
 - 4. Poor communication.
 - 5. Weak or unfair group decision-making process.
- C. Conflict is natural on teams; it is how you deal with it that affects team performance.
- D. Unresolved conflict can result in a poor performing team.

Have students role-play the five examples mentioned above. Assign students to groups, give them one of the five examples listed above, and have them come up with a real-life scenario where they may have seen this happen. Have the group do a short 30-second role-play of the examples they've experienced like this in the past.



Consider this question: Which of the examples just given do we personally have the most experience with? In a moment, we will work with a group to create a 30-second role-play that shows others what one of those examples might look like in real life. Listen for your name and the event our group you will role-play. We have five minutes to complete this task.

Assign students to a group and give each of them one of the five examples. Allow them time to work and then share as a large group.



Objective 2. Define conflict resolution.

Ask a leading question.



We know that unresolved conflict can result in a poor performing team. How then do we resolve conflict on teams?

Have them work in pairs to come up with solutions to conflict on teams



Work with a neighbor and create a list of solutions to team conflict.

Allow them time to discuss. Elicit responses at the end. Some anticipated responses might include: we reach an agreement, we meet as a team to discuss it, we get rid of the poor performing person, we ignore it, we let it work itself out, or we communicate about it. Lead students to the conclusion that there are a number of ways to deal with conflict; however, not all solutions are going to work for every situation.

Write the following on the board or show AHS.22.TM.D.



Let's take a look at some possible conflict resolution techniques. Please capture this information in your notebooks.

II. Defining conflict resolution

A. What is conflict resolution.

1.1. Conflict resolution: is an agreement between two or more people that settles a difference in opinion

B. The key to conflict resolution: effective communication.

1. Five keys to effective communication.

a. Listen to understand.

b. When speaking, use "I" statements rather than "You" statements.

i. "I" statements sound less blaming of others.

ii. For example: Rather than saying, "You never listen to me at all," try saying, "I don't feel as though I am being listened to when I talk."

c. Ask questions to seek information

d. Ask questions to find out what you can do to resolve the conflict.

e. Look for solutions that will benefit everyone involved in the conflict.

Hold a discussion with the class in which they identify situations in which these keys to effective communication have worked well. To stimulate maximum discussion, have them share in pairs or small groups first and then open it up for the large group. Here are some questions to get this started:



Where have we personally experienced the keys to effective communication?

Which one of the keys to effective communication do we most identify with?

Which of the keys to effective communication do we believe most people forget to practice?

Why?

Which of the keys to effective communication do we personally need to work on using the most?



Objective 3. Identify strategies for resolving conflict.

III. Identifying strategies for resolving conflict

Make a transition from the last objective to this final objective with an internal review question.



What do we know about conflict and conflict resolution?

Some anticipated responses might include: definition of conflict, causes of conflict, definition of conflict resolution, definition of an agreement, or some keys to resolving conflict.



It sounds like we know a lot about what conflict and conflict resolution are. The question before us now is: how will we approach reaching an agreement to resolve conflict? Think back to a time when we experienced a conflict with someone we were working with, and we actually did something about it. How did we come to an agreement? Allow some time to think.



Jot down some of our thoughts on a sheet of paper. How did we come to an agreement?

Allow time to write. Some anticipated responses might include: we ignored it and let it go away, we brought in someone else like a parent to help us work it out, or we talked through what was bothering us. Capture the responses on a writing surface.

Summarize with this main point.



We know that not all of the ways we mentioned earlier are the best ways to reach an agreement. Reaching an agreement doesn't just happen; everyone involved must commit to making something happen.

Discuss the main point as a group. Elicit responses to seek if students agree or disagree with the last statement. Have them think of experiences where they've found this to be true.



Raise your hand if you disagree with that last statement. Thank you hands down. Raise your hand if you agree with that last statement. Thank you, hands down. Why did you answer those questions in that way?

Elicit responses.



- Who can share an example of a personal situation in which we have found this statement to be true?

Elicit responses.

Write the following on a writing surface or show AHS.22.TM.E.





Let's take a look at some strategies for reaching an agreement. As we discover each of these, think to yourself how this strategy might be useful to you in resolving conflict.

A. What are some strategies for reaching an agreement?

1. Mediation: An unbiased third person, who is not involved in the conflict, but is trusted by both people involved, is brought in to help reach an agreement for action. This strategy works best when the conflict is very heated or emotional.
2. Collaboration: The people involved hold a meeting to brainstorm and discuss possible solutions for the problem. This strategy works best when the conflict is between two to three people.
3. Negotiation: Everyone involved comes to a meeting with a list of possible solutions. The group reviews each list, and the solutions most beneficial to the group are selected and implemented. This strategy works best in large groups.

Have students do a Bob the Weather Guy Moment using the information shared above. The students will work in groups of three or four. Each group will pick one of the three strategies mentioned above and then deliberate to present the idea as if it were a weather report. They should forecast what will happen, show how other people and activities will be affected, and tell where they think this strategy will be seen next.



What do weather forecasters do?

Elicit responses.



What's included in the weather forecast?

Anticipated responses: telling what the weather pattern is doing, where the pattern is going, what it means, how it will affect other people, or what others need to do to be ready.



Let's forecast some of those very same things, only this time use the strategies we just discovered. Here are some things to consider. Jot down these questions: What does the strategy mean? How will it affect other people in a team setting? What should others remember to do to make sure they use the strategy correctly? When would this strategy be best to use? Where do we see our group being able to use the strategy in the future? In a moment, we will work with a group to develop a forecast for one of the three strategies associated with reaching an agreement. Be creative as we plan to deliver our information. After seven minutes of prep time, we will deliver our presentations to the class. What questions are there?

Students should be split into groups of three or four. Tell the group where to go to start working. After seven minutes bring the group back together and share presentations.





Review/Summary

Write conflict resolution down the left side of a sheet of paper. Next, create a phrase or word that relates to the content discussed today using these letters as the beginning letter of the word or phrase. For example C = carefully listen. Share if time permits.

At this time pass out AHS.22.Assess.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students create a workshop to explain the concept of conflict resolution to other groups. Have them deliver the workshop at least once.

►FFA Activity:

Have the class offer a workshop as the program at the next FFA meeting or at another youth group gathering.

►SAE Activity:

Have the students write a report on a conflict that they observed in the workplace and then propose a plan that explains how the conflict might have been resolved by using the concepts discussed in this lesson.



Evaluation

AHS.22.Assess

Answers to Assessment:

Part One: True or False

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. False
5. False

Part Two: Short Answer

1. Team conflict-differences of opinion on a controversial issue between two or more members of a team.



2. Conflict resolution-an agreement between two or more people that settles a difference in opinion
3. Any two of the following:
 - a. Listen to understand.
 - b. When speaking; use "I" statements rather than "You" statements. For example: Rather than saying, "You never listen to me at all," try saying, "I don't feel as though you listen when I talk."
 - c. Ask questions to seek information.
 - d. Ask questions to find out what you can do to resolve the conflict.
 - e. Look for solutions that will benefit everyone involved in the conflict.
4. Any one of the following descriptions:
 1. **Mediation:** An unbiased third person, who is not involved in the conflict but is trusted by both people involved, is brought in to help reach an agreement for action.
 2. **Collaboration:** The people involved hold a meeting to brainstorm and discuss possible solutions for the problem.
 3. **Negotiation:** Everyone involved comes to a meeting with a list of possible solutions. The group reviews each list and the solutions most beneficial to the group are selected and implemented.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

►Part One: True or False

Decide whether each statement is true or false. Write “True” or “False” beside each statement.

- _____ 1. Conflict on teams is natural.
- _____ 2. Unresolved conflict usually does not lead to a poor performing team.
- _____ 3. Different responses to change may result in a conflict.
- _____ 4. When listening to understand you should use “You” statements.
- _____ 5. The key to conflict resolution is getting your ideas across to the other person.

►Part Two: Short Answer

Briefly answer the following statements.

- 1. Define team conflict.

- 2. Define conflict resolution.

- 3. What are two keys to effective communication.

- 4. Pick one of the strategies for resolving conflict—mediation, collaboration, negotiation—and describe it.





IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT...

◆ You are a popular star working on the set of a hit situation comedy for television.

◆ Your co-worker has made several decisions lately that are affecting the morale of the other actors.

◆ What do you think about some of these decisions he's made.

→ He dated and then married one of the team members you work with.

→ He slowed down production because he needed more time with his family.

→ He used the name of the show you work with to build support for his Parkinson's Disease Research Foundation.



UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT ON TEAMS

◆ What is team conflict.

→ *Team conflict is a difference of opinion on a controversial issue between two or more people*

◆ There are events that may happen in the life of a team that can result in a difference of opinion:

- Making assumptions
- Different responses to change
- Different priorities
- Poor communication
- Weak or unfair group decision-making process

◆ A couple of keys to remember...

- Conflict is natural on teams; it is how you deal with it that affects team performance
- Unresolved conflict can result in a poor performing team



DEFINING CONFLICT RESOLUTION

◆ What is conflict resolution.

➔ *Conflict resolution is an agreement between two or more people that settles a difference in opinion.*

◆ What is the key to conflict resolution.

◆ Effective communication

➔ Listen to understand

➔ When speaking, use “I” statements rather than “You” statements. For example: Rather than saying, “You never listen to me at all,” try saying, “I don’t feel as though you listen when I talk.”

➔ Ask questions to seek information

➔ Ask questions to find out what you can do to resolve the conflict

➔ Look for solutions that will benefit everyone involved in the conflict



WHAT ARE SOME STRATEGIES TO USE.



◆ **Mediation**—A third person, who is not involved in the conflict but is trusted by both people involved, is brought in to help reach an agreement for action.



◆ **Collaboration**—The people involved would hold a meeting to brainstorm and discuss possible solutions for the problem.

Note to instructor: often times this word comes with a negative connotation. Make clear the distinction that this form of confrontation is positive and does not involve the emotions sometimes associated with confrontation.



◆ **Negotiation**—Everyone involved comes to a meeting with a list of possible solutions. The group reviews each list, and those solutions from each list that offer the most benefit to everyone are selected and implemented.

