

Curriculum Guide for Presentations on:

Managing Conflict

Goal: To understand the benefits and challenges of conflict and to provide tools for managing conflict as it arises.

Points to cover when presenting on managing conflict:

1. Conflict is part of the growth process; it happens when individuals encounter change, including technical change; introduction of new personnel or loss of group members; misunderstandings; personal needs not met; power shifts; cultural misunderstandings; and the broad-based and more challenging adaptive change.
2. Conflicts can be prevented by the following actions:
 - a. Respectful behavior toward others
 - b. Clearly communicating expectations
 - c. Encouraging teamwork
 - d. Empowering people
3. Scripture guideline: Matthew 18:15-17—solve the problem at the lowest level possible
 - a. The offended takes the initiative to “go” (negotiation)
 - b. The result may be reconciliation (gained your brother)
 - c. If reconciliation is not achieved, go again with one or two others (mediation) but contain the problem by keeping the circle having knowledge about the matter relatively small.
 - d. Consider Matthew 18:22 where Jesus recommends 70 times 7; the intermediate steps may be used repeatedly before taking the final step of involving a larger audience in the matter.
 - e. The final decision is determined by the community and is imposed upon the parties (arbitration).
 - f. Biblical style is relational—i.e., “brother”
4. *Styles of conflict management:
 - a. Persuade
 - b. Compel
 - c. Avoid/accommodate
 - d. Collaborate
 - e. Negotiation
 - f. Support
5. A Scripture model of conflict resolution: Acts 15:1-35

*There are many names for conflict management styles which a presenter may choose to use. Below are resources for other examples of styles of conflict management.

Resources:

www.peacemaker.net

Furlong, G. T. (2005). *The conflict resolution toolbox: Models & maps for analyzing, diagnosing, and resolving conflict*. Mississauga, Ont: J. Wiley & Sons, Canada. ISBN: 0470835176 (256 pages)

Leas, S. (1997). *Discover your conflict management style*. Washington, D.C.: Alban Institute. ISBN: 1566991846 (44 pages)

Lederach, J.P. (2014). *Reconcile: Conflict transformation for ordinary Christians*. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press. ISBN: 13: 978-0836199031 (191 pages)

Sande, K. (2004). *The peacemaker: a biblical guide to resolving personal conflict*. (3rd edition). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Author's Note: A presentation on managing conflict is an ideal opportunity to demonstrate the styles of conflict management through case analysis. The presenter may wish to either ask the audience to share a conflict case, or prepare a case themselves. Walking through a real-life situation and applying the principles will enhance learning.