



Managing Conflict Well

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The “C” Word

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The “C” Word

It took the hard way for me to learn
the right way to handle conflict.

by Janine Petry



I remember the meeting like it was yesterday. A woman in leadership at our church was asked to oversee the planning of a girls’ youth retreat.

To support her in this, several of the younger women—myself included—were asked to join her at a meeting to chart out the weekend.

The meeting began well, and as it progressed, a young woman with a dominating personality emerged as the group’s leader. The meeting flowed smoothly, the retreat was planned quickly, and the meeting was soon adjourned.

Several days later, the church youth pastor approached me to discuss the meeting.

“I just wanted to make this clear,” he said. “We have already have leadership in place for the teen retreat. You were only asked to help with ideas, not to take over.”

Okay, so it was me. I was the dominating young woman. And I was shocked by the youth pastor’s confrontation. I didn’t even know there was a problem. After all, the meeting ran smoothly, and everyone was in agreement. Or maybe it just seemed that way to me.

In retrospect, I wish the conflict had been handled differently. The youth pastor’s comments left me hurt and embarrassed. The woman I had offended never approached me, and I was too wounded to bring it up to

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her. We just waited for it to disappear. And it was a long wait.

But it’s not as if I can’t understand why it happened the way it did. Let’s face it. Most people don’t like conflict—leaders included. We don’t even like to say the “c” word, let alone deal with it. Now a leader at the church myself, I’m as guilty as anyone of wanting to avoid it at all costs. But whether we say it, or see it, or not—conflict is normal, and at times necessary. In leadership, we just need to be ready for it.

Managing Conflict Well will help you do just that. Here you’ll find articles from authors who know what you’re dealing with and can help you overcome struggles related to conflict and conflict resolution. As you work through the packet, you’ll learn to see conflict as a tool that, when used skillfully, can promote growth, provide clear direction, and create strong relationships.

Remember, you’re not alone. A wise leader once wrote, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

I like to imagine he learned that the hard way, as most of us have. The important thing is that we learn, even if we don’t use the “c” word.

Blessings,

Janine Petry

*Contributing Editor, Gifted for Leadership
Christianity Today International*

Introduction



PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

The Conversation You Dread

A constructive approach for those difficult confrontations.

by Denise Van Eck

After a staff meeting, Sue whispered, “Can I speak to you?” We slipped into the next room, and she closed the door. “I have a problem with you I need to address. The ministry calendar came out yesterday, and you scheduled something on a night that I planned to do a training. I can’t believe you’d do this without talking to me. You always do this! You never ask me ...”

On she went, angry at being shut out of a decision she should have been a part of. I was dumbstruck. Another person was responsible for the colliding dates, someone that Sue was mad at a lot. I didn't want to add to the tension in their relationship. I also felt she had every right to be frustrated, so I decided to absorb her anger, apologize, and promise to make the appropriate correction.

That was the first in a series of bad decisions in that conversation. My attempt at an amiable apology was flattened by Sue’s need to make sure I “got it.” I got defensive; she talked faster and louder. It ignited a full blown argument. Out came every annoyance, every slight that had occurred in our year of working together. Both of us ended up crying and desperate to end this nightmare conversation.

Of course, most confrontations don’ end so dramatically. In fact, many



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are worse—both parties walk away having maintained their dignity, but seething. At least Sue and I could not hide from the fact that we had a problem. The disaster made me determined to improve the way I handled leadership's inevitable difficult confrontations. Here's what I learned.

Prepare, Prepare, Prepare!

One of the most dangerous inclinations in confrontation is to do it immediately—when you're agitated. Sometimes we're so angry we can't stop from venting. A better idea is to plan for the difficult conversation.

- 1. Clarify your intentions.** Is your goal to set him straight? Get your way? Make sure she knows you're in charge? For a confrontation to be effective, the purpose must be to find truth. Entering the conversation believing you already see the whole picture is to court disaster. Approaching a confrontation as a way for everyone to grow, instead of an opportunity to "fix" someone, paves the way for success.
- 2. Begin with empathy.** Empathy opens a pathway for learning to occur. When preparing for a difficult conversation, I ask myself: *Is there any way to show empathy here? Can I put myself in their shoes in some way?* That allows me to confront without the heat of anger. Confronting out of anger leads to reactive behavior and reduces the potential for a successful outcome.
- 3. Is this a matter of taste or truth?** Paul tells us to speak the truth in love, not force our preferences on someone else. *Am I upset because something is wrong or because I don't like it?* I was once all set to confront a small group leader when I asked myself this question. I finally had to admit that I was dealing with a matter of taste, not truth. The leader wasn't violating Scripture, just not doing something the way I would. And weeks later, it became evident that my way would have been the wrong way.

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- 4. Clarify the issue.** Try to narrow down the central issue to one word. Is it *trust*? *Confidence*? *Competence*? It's tempting to list all the things we're upset about. But narrow it down and keep it clear. "You've been late to the last four staff meetings. That behavior is communicating disrespect to the rest of the team." Identify what's at stake and communicate it truthfully and as objectively as possible. That keeps the conversation from dangerous rabbit trails.
- 5. Hold up the mirror.** Get real with yourself as you prepare. How have you contributed to this issue? Are you bringing any of your own issues into it? Is the person you are confronting exhibiting behavior that you struggle with yourself? Own up before you show up.
- 6. Project the consequences.** Look ahead a few weeks, months, or years. What will happen if the situation goes uncorrected? Who will be affected and how? What would a good result look like? How will the future be shaped by a positive outcome? It's important to identify what is at stake, and to be able to communicate it truthfully and as objectively as possible.
- 7. Trust the Holy Spirit to do his job.** It's tempting to feel that it's all up to me to get the issues solved. The truth is, we can't control what another person thinks, feels, or believes. We can bring truth and love, but it is the Spirit of God who brings change to a person's heart.
- 8. Initiate the conversation.** After going through these steps, it's time to take action. It's helpful to construct an opening "statement" that reflects your preparation. Write it down and read it through until it's clear in your mind.

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Getting It Right

Vicky was a popular and skilled small group leader. It was devastating when I got a call from someone who knew her well informing me of a moral issue that Vicky was hiding. If that was true, I would have to ask Vicky to step down from leadership. Not the easiest of conversations to have. The potential for disaster loomed large before me.

After working through the process, I had a conversation that began something like this: “Vicky, I have to speak with you about something that I’m sure will feel embarrassing and uncomfortable. I guess we’re both going to feel that way for the next few minutes. I received a phone call from someone who told me that you are struggling with _____. If this is true, you must be going through agony struggling with this and keeping it secret. If it’s true, it also means that I can’t allow you to lead a group until you’ve worked through it. I want to work through this thoroughly so you get every bit of help you need. How do you feel about this?”

Understandably, she was shocked and embarrassed, but she immediately confessed and told me her story. We talked and prayed for an hour. She stepped down from leadership and began her journey of facing this struggle. Today she again is a key leader. She later thanked me for our “beautiful conversation.” She said she had never been confronted in a way that made her feel loved and respected instead of accused. My preparation had paid off and the Holy Spirit had done his work. That horrible experience with Sue years before had led to a better way to handle those difficult confrontations.

Denise Van Eck is president of Endurance Leadership in Rockford, Michigan. This article first appeared in the Fall 2004 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

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Thought Provokers

- *In the section titled, “Prepare, Prepare, Prepare,” which of the eight steps comes most naturally to you as a woman? Which of the steps do you feel is the most difficult for you, and why?*
- *Think back to a difficult confrontation you’ve been through. How would using the author’s advice have helped in that situation?*
- *If you’re facing conflict right now, brainstorm a plan that incorporates the steps above to deal with it. How can you use these steps to break down barriers between you and the people you lead?*

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PRACTICALLY SPEAKING

The Emotions of Conflict

Handle the most dangerous aspects from the inside out.

by Richard Paul Minnich

I certainly see your point,” Pastor Brown said. He kept his voice carefully modulated. Only his clenched hands betrayed his agitation, and neither Elder Peters nor Elder Roberts noticed.

“I’m really glad you’re on our side, Pastor,” Peters said, getting up from the couch. “I was afraid that this foolish proposal to turn an entire room over to the youth was going to be passed. I’m glad we’ll avoid that mistake.”

The pastor hadn't actually said he would support efforts to block the room conversion. What he said was, “I’ll speak to the youth advisers and emphasize the need to keep the room flexible.”

Carl Brown’s mind flashed back to the conversation he’d had that morning with Tracy, who chaired the Christian education committee. The youth group had outgrown their small classroom. The committee planned for the teens to switch rooms with the dwindling adult Bible study and let the group decorate the much larger room to suit their tastes. The decision hadn’t yet been presented to the church board and already there was movement by a few longtime members to derail the change. Tracy made a strong case for the importance of youth ministry and the need to show the youth how much the church valued them.

“I can see your point,” Carl had told her.



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“I’m grateful for your encouragement and support, Carl. I knew that you were a progressive leader,” Tracy bubbled.

Carl didn’t know where all this would end, but he didn’t want to be around when these two forces collided.

Why We Shy Away

Church leaders will sometimes go to great lengths to avoid conflict. Some become quite adept at taking cover when they see storm clouds on the horizon. These weather watchers use several techniques: they refuse to get involved, they redirect the combatants, or sometimes they simply sit tight and wait for the storm to blow over. They’ve learned to listen to all sorts of terrible accusations, some quite personal, and reply, “Thank you for your opinion.”

This posture is built on several assumptions:

- **All conflict is negative.** Due to experience with destructive conflict, many people believe that the fault lies with the conflict itself.
- **People are always hurt by conflict.** If God doesn't want people to be hurt, then God must not like conflict. Leaders assume, therefore, that they must still the angry waves just as Jesus did on the Sea of Galilee.
- **People cannot be trusted to handle conflict.** Perhaps because of past experience, some leaders assume that conflict will get personal, so it is better kept out of the hands of amateurs.
- **Fear of conflict makes their perception a self-fulfilling prophecy.** If experience says conflict is always harmful, then the pattern is repeated, either by commission or avoidance. These mistakes create the very harm the pastor feared. People are hurt. The church is weakened.

But these assumptions are false. In reality, conflict is often necessary and can have positive results.

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Battling the Bear

Whenever a new idea is born and change occurs, there will be some level of conflict. Start a new Sunday school class and the old ones feel devalued. Change the worship service and someone complains they no longer feel the Spirit's presence.

Of course, never changing also produces conflict as members complain of boring programs and lack of leadership. Conflict is not the issue; it is how the conflict is handled that determines whether the outcome is constructive or destructive. The initial place where we must wrestle conflict is inside ourselves.

Handling conflict is a lot like dealing with bears. While vacationing once, I read a flyer that said, "If attacked by a bear, lie face down, fold your arms over your head, and spread your legs. Above all, stay calm." Stay calm? A bear swats me with its paw, trying to roll me over to see if I'm dead, and they expect me to stay calm?

Yes, the animal experts insist. If we're agitated, we increase the risk of an attack. It's the same with committees. We must stay calm in the midst of conflict to face it effectively.

If you've taken a swing at the bear recently, you may need to investigate how well you handle conflict. Ask those closest to you. Your spouse knows much about your character that you haven't been told yet. A close friend or associate can help. Ask how you handle conflict in your relationship. Ask if you waffle on issues that may be uncomfortable. Do you say difficult things in a constructive fashion?

If you detect serious problems handling conflict or avoiding it, consider professional counseling. I recently found myself exploring this in therapy. An incident had caused almost uncontrollable anger and I needed to discover the source. I found, buried in my childhood, an incident of injustice toward a weaker person that had stayed with me throughout my adult life. I was responding to an event from 30 years ago.

Knowing why I get ticked off may not change my initial response, but it makes me aware of an early warning system when I feel my anger rising. I feel better prepared for the next time Elders Roberts and Peters stop by.

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Simple Bear Necessities

These eruptions usually come with little warning. The greeting at the door is accompanied by “we need to talk.” You feel the air move next to your cheek as the bear’s claws barely miss your face. Now it's your turn to speak. There are several things you can do to improve your response.

- 1. Identify your conflict triggers.** Our bodies have helpful early-warning systems. Some people clench their jaws. Some get butterflies, others get headaches. These are signs that you feel you are approaching conflict and should take action. Listen to these body changes and learn what they mean for you. This will help you to act rather than react. Do not let impulse control your decision-making. By identifying the feelings and their source, you gain a certain amount of control.
- 2. Reframe your perspective.** The prompting to fight results from seeing the conflict as competition. Instead of a win-lose situation, view it as a problem-solving opportunity in which all parties are on the same side: God's side. Most of the time, they are.
- 3. Enlist others to help you.** Sit down with a trusted adviser and replay the situation for them. Do it early in the process before the conflict gets too deep. They can help you clarify the issues and identify your part in the conflict. They also can help you understand if, like Carl, you are giving mixed signals to two sides.
- 4. Seek out a spiritual adviser or mentor.** Go to this person on a regular basis to discuss your mental, emotional, and spiritual health. There doesn't need to be a present crisis. There only needs to be a commitment to improvement and growth on your part.
- 5. Create an internal reservoir of peace.** Many leaders fuel their ministries with adrenaline. This eventually results in burn out. In this condition, you are unable to deal with conflict constructively. Time with God will replenish your strength. Time with God gives us perspective to keep the big picture before us.

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Conflict cannot—and should not—be ignored. If left alone, it will not go away. It only grows. Leaders who handle conflict in a direct fashion will find that it can be used to the advantage of all they serve.

Richard Paul Minnich is pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Ogden, Utah. This article first appeared in the Fall 2000 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

Thought Provokers

- *Consider the reasons the author gives for why we shy away from conflict. Which of these do you most identify with? Do you think there are certain weaknesses that women in leadership are more prone to? What are they?*
- *Which of the five suggestions for handling conflict do you find most helpful? Which if the five suggestions do you think other women are most receptive to and why?*
- *How might spending time with God help you gain perspective when dealing with a conflict?*

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BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Healthy Conflict Resolution

Techniques for success, from the expert.

by *Louis McBurney*

Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

—PROVERBS 27:6

In trying to resolve conflict we usually take easy ways out.

First, we avoid it. Running from it, pouting about it, and pretending it's not really happening seem initially more inviting than actually facing the conflict.

If avoidance doesn't work we try intimidation. We threaten, cry, create power blocks, and quote Scripture.

Sometimes we can't successfully intimidate, so we manipulate. This involves enticement, bribery, and withholding everything from sex to personal influence.

Our final solution is usually deflection. Instead of focusing on the real issue, we deflect off it to issues that are safer, more urgent, and more comfortable.

But none of these work. Instead, try these wise ways to resolving conflict.



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- **Try to first establish a solid foundation for conflict resolution in each situation.** Ask these questions: “Why do we need to resolve this? Do our mutual best interests require that we resolve this? Is resolving this a part of our Christian commitment?”
- **Identify the real issues.** Are unfulfilled expectations causing the conflict? Is it a matter of who has the power or who’s going to have the last word? Is it a problem of trust?
- **Once you know the issue, identify feelings and share them.** “You know, I’ve really felt neglected. I’ve been feeling angry.” Because it’s difficult to share feelings, incorporate them with other experiences: “I feel like I did when..., and I got very upset.”
- **Listen attentively to the other person.** This requires practice because usually we’re busy preparing our defense instead of listening. If we’re not interested in hearing their side, we’re not interested in resolving the conflict; we merely want to prove we are right and they are wrong. We must learn to listen in a non-defensive way.
- **Be ready to concede.** The other person is hurt by you. Even though you didn't deliberately hurt him, you must accept that the person is experiencing pain that came from your side of the relationship. If you're really concerned, you'll be truly sorry. Whether the cause of the conflict is moral failure or simply insensitivity, face up to it, confess it, and ask forgiveness.
- **Be forgiving.** Often the reason we don't want to forgive is because by withholding forgiveness, we feel a sense of superiority. This is pride and self-righteousness, and it can be cut away by forgiving.
- **Finally, learn how to compromise.** By the time you've gone through the preceding steps, you should be ready to negotiate things that are important to you and the other person.

This article first appeared in the Spring 1980 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

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Healthy Conflict Resolution

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Thought Provokers

- *Which “easy ways” out of conflict appeal to you the most? Why?*
- *In what ways have you experienced the truth that the “easy ways” don’t work? Have you seen this to be true in the lives of other women in leadership you observe? How?*
- *Which of the conflict resolution steps do you most need to implement into your strategy today?*

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BRINGING IT HOME

Fight Right

Seven ways to make family conflict work for you.

by Harry R. Jackson, Jr.

As parents, our lives are filled with conflict. Emotional swords are drawn between spouses, parent and child, and child to child. Most of us detest arguments and all of the nasty side effects of poorly managed conflict resolution. But if it's done right, conflict can actually help family relationships grow.

The Bible says, “Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil” (Eph 4:26-27, NKJV). If we don't bring resolution to our problems, we play into the devil's hands. Our unwillingness to confront problems when they start can lead to heated blow-ups later on. Working through our conflicts in a healthy, open-minded manner will make our families stronger.

Here are seven tips that can help your family conflicts become more constructive:

- **Plan for healthy conflict.** Expect good things after the conflict. Instead of avoiding problems, accept that they are part of family life.



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- **Set rules of engagement.** Lay down some ground rules with your family members. Agree upon the duration of the discussion. If you find that your tone of voice is getting shrill or your heart is racing, then you've probably let things go too long. Give everyone permission to take a break when things get out of control. Pray for God's help in remaining calm.
- **Focus on solving the problem.** Be specific about each issue that comes up. Help the other person understand your viewpoint, while respecting their right to speak. Remember that you are speaking the "ruth" as you see it. Someone else might legitimately see things differently. The other person isn't the problem. The problem is the problem.
- **Compromise on solutions.** Be prepared to yield if you are wrong. Remember, it's not about you "winning" the argument. You have "won" when you have helped the relationship.
- **There's always tomorrow.** Think about the long-term consequences of your words and actions. Don't become so intent on making your point that you say something that will do damage to your family.
- **Get help with repetitive conflicts.** If you need a neutral third party, don't enlist your friends as counselors. Pick someone each party can trust to be objective.
- **Move on—together.** Everyone must choose to go forward. Avoid gloating if you "win" the argument. This may make the next conflict even more challenging.

*Harry R. Jackson, Jr. is a pastor and the author of the newly released book *Inlaws, Outlaws, and the Functional Family* (Regal). This article first appeared in the Winter 2002 issue of CHRISTIAN PARENTING TODAY magazine.*

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Thought Provokers

- *Which of the author's seven steps does your family most struggle with? When and how do you see this in action? As a woman, how do you contribute to this struggle?*
- *Which of the steps does your family do well? When and how have you seen this play out? As a woman, how do you contribute to this strength?*
- *Describe an incident when you witnessed conflict strengthening your relationships as a family. If you are facing a conflict right now, how might it strengthen your relationships after it is resolved properly? How can you specifically contribute to your family's needs during conflicts?*

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LEADERSHIP TOOLS

A Crash Course in Conflict

Three basic principles leaders need to know.

by Gary Fenton

We can't prepare church leaders for all types of conflict, so we give them three basic principles, which can be adapted to meet the specific situation.

1. **There is a difference between concerned disagreement and conflict.**

- Conflict is a disagreement that keeps decisions from being made or the group from moving forward after the decision has been made.
- Often leaders fear that any disagreement indicates conflict. A problem or difference of opinion, however, does not mean there is a conflict. There is conflict only when the group cannot make a decision or move forward.

For example: Two years ago in a committee meeting, two strong-willed



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members had a spirited discussion. The next morning, a concerned, young leader called and asked if he could meet with the two people to iron out their differences. We talked through what he had heard. I asked him, “Do you feel the group is ready to make a decision? Did the heated discussion block a decision?”

After some thought, he said it sounded more like *CrossFire* on CNN than a street fight. *CrossFire* is good theater, but it is not conflict. The participants don’t quit the show because the debate is spirited.

2. There is a difference between reconciliation and resolution.

- Resolution usually means finding the answer. Reconciliation means bringing the folks in conflict together. Some issues will never be resolved, but people can still be reconciled.
- Often in the process of seeking resolution, however, we compromise and seek middle ground. Many poorly designed church buildings are the result of trying to resolve the conflict between low costs and effectiveness; as a result, neither is accomplished.

For example: A church in East Texas resolved a conflict over stained-glass windows by placing cheap, plastic replicas in its sanctuary. The art crowd will tell you the windows look as if they were purchased at Wal-Mart, and perhaps they were. The pragmatists still resent the fact that because of the windows they had to install extra lighting.

In this instance, the leader tried to help the group make the best decision, then reconcile the people to each other. He had it in reverse. Reconciliation brings people to relational unity but not necessarily to agreement.

A mature gentleman, opposed to the actions of a committee he was on, recently spoke strongly and directly against the committee’s recommendation. After the meeting, the mature member sought out the committee’s young chairman. It was obvious that he had been stung by

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the intensity of the opposition. The older and wiser man, even though he disagreed with the committee, conveyed his confidence and trust in the chairman. Neither man has resolved with the other his different views on the matter, but they are reconciled.

3. There is a difference between being peaceful and being a peacemaker.

- As opposed to staying away from disputes, peacemakers are often in the middle of conflict, seeking to reconcile leaders.
- Peacemakers are often risk takers, willing to enter the fray with an expanded heart.

For example: One of our members observed a growing distance between two Sunday school teachers. Their classes attracted the same ages of people and thus competed for new members. The aggressive personalities of the teachers were generating sparks, though there were no brush fires yet.

This member, without waiting for either a full-scale conflict to break out or the permission of the church leadership, met with each leader about the matter. Because of his preventative strike, the conflict was avoided. It also allowed both Sunday school leaders to save their reputations.

Gary Fenton is pastor of Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. This article first appeared in the Fall 1996 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

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Thought Provokers

- *Have you ever confused a concerned disagreement with a conflict? In what way? What was the outcome? Do you think women have a difficult or easy time discerning between these two? Why?*
- *Do you value reconciliation over resolution, or vice versa? What about other women? What are the advantages or disadvantages of these views?*
- *What are the differences between being peaceful and being a peacemaker? Which would you consider yourself and why?*

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LEADERSHIP TOOLS

6 Rules for a Fair Fight

Use these guidelines to handle conflict with confidence.

by Edward G. Dobson, Speed B. Leas, and Marshall Shelley

Speed Leas, co-author of *Mastering Conflict and Controversy*, writes about a church that was mired in “dissension between the newcomers and long-time members.” At an all-day meeting, the congregation drew up these practical guidelines for how they would handle their conflicts.

Some of those guidelines follow. Consider talking through each of the steps, according to your training time. You may want to journal any responses or questions regarding each point, and discuss those as well.

- 1. Conflict can be healthy and useful. It is okay for people to differ with one another.**
- 2. Resolutions for the sake of quick agreement are often worse than agreements that are carefully worked out over time.**
- 3. Fair conflict management includes:**
 - dealing with one issue at a time;
 - if more than one issue is presented, agreeing on the order in which the issues will be addressed;



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6 Rules for a Fair Fight

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- if more than one issue is presented, agreeing on the order in which the issues will be addressed;
- exploring alternative solutions to the problem(s).

4. If any party is uncomfortable with the forum in which the conflict is raised, it is legitimate to request and discuss what the most appropriate forum might be.

5. Inappropriate behavior in conflict includes, but is not limited to:

- name calling;
- mind reading (attributing evil motives to others);
- inducing guilt (e.g., “Look how you've made me feel”);
- rejecting, deprecating, or discrediting another person;
- using information from confidential sources or indicating that such information exists.

6. Fair conflict always allows people who are charged with poor performance or inappropriate behavior to:

- know who their accusers are;
- learn what their accusers' concerns are;
- respond to those who accuse.

With these in place, you will be able to work through a variety of conflicts with confidence.

From Mastering Conflict and Controversy by Edward G. Dobson, Speed B. Leas, and Marshall Shelley (Multnomah/Christianity Today International, 1992); this article first appeared in the Spring 1998 issue of LEADERSHIP JOURNAL.

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Resources

More places for more help.

Mastering Conflict-Survival Guide, from **BuildingChurchLeaders.com**.

This downloadable resource will help you keep conflict healthy, learn from it, brace yourself for it, and grow spiritually not only in spite of it—but because of it.

Conflict and Healing—CaseStudy Pack, from

BuildingChurchLeaders.com. These downloadable discussion tools help you prepare for when conflict arises. Your team will learn how to stay positive, handle situations appropriately, and heal any wounds that are holding back the church.

Handling Conflict—Assessment Pack, from

BuildingChurchLeaders.com. This downloadable pack features 6 quality assessment tools from the Healthy Small Groups, Handling Conflict, and Confidentiality Training Themes.

Everybody Wins: The Chapman Guide to Solving Conflicts without

Arguing, by **Gary Chapman** (Tyndale House, 2007; 128 pages) Every couple has disagreements. Chapman shows you how to focus on resolving the conflict—not on winning the fight! Easy-to-read, effective advice!

Making Peace with Conflict, by **Carolyn Schrock-Shenk** (Herald Press, 1999; 200 pages). Here is a practical guide to understanding and transforming conflict based on biblical and Anabaptist principles. Over twenty noted authors shaped by many experiences and cultures tell of lessons taught by walking conflict's holy ground.



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Managing Conflict In The Church, by **David Kale** and **Melvin McCullough** (Beacon Hill Press, 2003; 150 pages). Learn to recognize warning signs, sharpen your communication skills, and mediate with confidence. From minor personality differences to no-holds-barred power struggles, Kale and McCullough help you handle disagreements—and strengthen your church in the process.

Peace: Overcoming Anxiety and Conflict, by **Jack Kuhatschek** (Zondervan, 2001; 64 pages). How can you experience the “peace which transcends all understanding”? How can you guard your heart and mind from the stress’s prescription for peace.

Resolving Conflict, by **Jill Briscoe** (Cook Communications, 2003; 64 pages). If you struggle with balancing family and ministry, dealing with unrelenting expectations, hectic schedules and the other challenges in life—and what woman today doesn’t—you will appreciate the encouragement in this booklet. It is packed with significant topics, practical tips, and biblical guidance to refresh your relationship with God and others.

Thriving Through Ministry Conflict: By Understanding Your Red and Blue Zones, by **James P. Osterhaus**, **Joseph M. Jurkowski**, **Todd A. Hahn** (Zondervan, 2005; 144 pages). Three authors help you identify the source of your own unresolved conflict; better see how you reinforce squabbles in others; and learn to respond in a healthy manner—over ideas and values, not self-esteem.

RESOURCES



Managing Conflict Well

Resources

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Do You Feel **Alone** as a Woman Leader?

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