

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Key concepts, stages, and practical tools for managing and resolving disputes

1. What Is Conflict Resolution?

Aspect	Description
Definition	The process of addressing a disagreement or clash of interests in a way that satisfies the parties involved and restores or improves relationships.
Goal	Reach a mutually acceptable solution while preserving (or strengthening) trust, communication, and collaboration.
Scope	Personal relationships, teams, organizations, communities, and international relations.

2. Types of Conflict

Type	Typical Setting	Core Trigger
Interpersonal	Two or more individuals	Miscommunication, value differences, personality clashes
Intragroup	Teams or work groups	Role ambiguity, competition for resources, differing goals
Intergroup	Departments, organizations, or nations	Structural power imbalances, cultural/ideological differences
Intrapersonal	Within a single person	Conflicting values, priorities, or emotions

3. The Conflict Resolution Process (Six-Step Model)

1. Preparation

- Identify the issue clearly.
- Gather relevant facts and evidence.
- Choose an appropriate time and neutral location.

Understanding Conflict Resolution

2. Opening the Dialogue

- Set a collaborative tone (“We need to find a solution together”).
- Agree on ground rules (e.g., no interruptions, respect for speaking time).

3. Information Sharing

- Each party states their perspective without blame.
- Use “I?statements” (e.g., “I feel... when... because...”).
- Listen actively; paraphrase to confirm understanding.

4. Identify Interests & Needs

- Distinguish *positions* (what each side wants) from *interests* (why they want it).
- Explore underlying needs, fears, and motivations.

5. Generate Options

- Brainstorm multiple solutions (quantity > quality at first).
- Encourage creativity; avoid premature judgment.
- Use techniques such as “**Yes, and...**” (building on ideas) or “**Worst?Case Scenario**” (testing feasibility).

6. Agree on a Solution & Follow?Up

- Select the option that best meets the core interests of all parties.
- Define concrete actions, responsibilities, timelines, and metrics for success.
- Schedule a check?in to evaluate implementation and adjust if needed.

4. Core Skills for Effective Resolution

Skill	How to Practice
Active Listening	Maintain eye contact, nod, summarize, ask clarifying questions.
Empathy	Imagine the other person’s feelings and viewpoint; validate emotions.
Emotional Regulation	Pause before reacting; use breathing or brief breaks to stay calm.

Understanding Conflict Resolution

Skill

How to Practice

Assertiveness	State your needs clearly and respectfully; avoid passive or aggressive extremes.
Problem Solving	Break complex issues into smaller parts; use logical frameworks (e.g., SWOT).
Negotiation	Focus on win-win outcomes; be ready to trade lower-priority items for higher-priority ones.

5. Common Barriers & How to Overcome Them

Barrier	Typical Manifestation	Counter Strategy
Assumptions & Misinterpretations	"You never listen to me."	Ask for clarification before reacting; restate what you heard.
Power Imbalance	One	