

Conflict Resolution: An Introduction

When we surf the internet, watch television, or read the newspaper, it becomes clear that conflict and violence are part of the human condition. In our own lives—at home, at work, at school—we face situations that are often annoying and sometimes infuriating, and we must find positive solutions for dealing with them.

Students often bring their conflicts to the teacher and ask for assistance. Although teachers are responsible for ensuring that conflicts are managed constructively, they do not need to mediate each one personally. Teachers do need to make sure that they have a process—and people—in place to manage the conflict.

This six-lesson course introduces teachers to the concept of conflict resolution, its value in a school environment, and the many ways to go about it. It will help teachers understand how they can—and why they should—emphasize conflict resolution in the classroom and, if feasible, in the school setting.

Course Objectives

After completing the course, you will be able to

Module 1

- Identify and define conflict.
- Determine responsibilities.
- Create a plan for next steps forward.

Module 2

- Determine destructive or constructive solutions to conflict.
- Analyze a resolved scenario.

Module 3

- Identify multiple strategies to resolve conflict.
- Apply conflict resolution strategies.

Module 4

- Describe the six-step negotiation process.
- Determine whether or not a situation can be negotiated.

Module 5

- Determine the role of the mediator.
- Reflect on the mediation process.

Module 6

- Analyze and implement the arbitration process for student conflicts.

Course Syllabus

<p>Module 1</p>	<p>Understanding Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Welcome • Conflict Defined • What Conflict Can Teach Us • Video 1: Conflict Between a Principal and a Teacher • Video 2: Negotiations • Knowledge Check • Application: Identifying Conflict • Post-Module Reflection
<p>Module 2</p>	<p>Creating a Conflict-Positive Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Welcome • Conflict-Positive Schools • Definitions • Think of an Example • Responding to Conflict • Knowledge Check • Application: Constructive or Destructive Conflict • Post-Module Reflection

<p>Module 3</p>	<p>Ways to Handle Conflict</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Welcome • Two Concerns About Conflict • Strategies for Managing Conflict • Problem-Solving Negotiations • Smoothing • Forcing or Win-Lose Negotiations • Compromising • Withdrawing • Knowledge Check • Application: Resolving Conflict • Post-Module Reflection
<p>Module 4</p>	<p>Learning to Negotiate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Welcome • Heads I Win, Tails You Lose • Winning Together • An Integrative Solution • Problem-Solving Negotiations • A Six-Step Process for Negotiation • Video 1: Conflict • Video 2: Resolution • Knowledge Check • Application: Is This Situation Negotiable? • Post-Module Reflection
<p>Module 5</p>	<p>The Mediator’s Job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Welcome • The Mediator’s Job • Ground Rules for Mediation • Reading: Four-Step Mediation Process • Knowledge Check • Application: Effective Mediation • Post-Module Reflection

Module 6	The Arbitration Process <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Module Welcome• Conventional Arbitration• Six Steps to Conventional Arbitration• That's My Final Offer• Video: Woodmont vs. Ashton• Knowledge Check• Application 1: Teachers as Arbitrators• Application 2: Negotiation, Mediation, or Arbitration• Post-Module Reflection
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References

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Crawford, D., & Bodine, R. (1996). *A guide to implementing programs in schools, youth-serving organizations, and community and juvenile justice settings*, published jointly by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education, 1996.

Holden, G. (1997, May). Changing the way kids settle conflicts, *Educational Leadership*, 54(8), 74–76.

Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (1995). *Reducing school violence through conflict resolution*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.