Quick Tips

STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

1. Determine the nature of the conflict. Is it a philosophical issue (drinking at parties) or a difference in expectations (all members should determine each decision the group makes?)

2. State the real effect the conflict has on you. If all members get to vote on everything, it will take a long time to make decisions and other things may not get done.

3. Listen carefully to the other person. What is the real effect on him or her? What does he or she see as the real conflict?

4. Initiate the problem-solving process:
   - A. Clarify the issue: What is the problem at hand?
   - B. Discuss each person’s wants and needs.
   - C. Generate a list of all possible solutions — be creative!
   - D. Decide together on the solution most acceptable for all parties.
   - E. Discuss how the solution will be implemented.
   - F. Develop a process to evaluate the solution after a specified time.
   - G. Discuss how discrepancies or problems with the solution will be handled.

LEADER HINTS

Are available on the following topics:

- Conflict Resolution
- Constitution & Bylaws
  - Delegation
  - Difficult Member
- Event & Program Planning
  - Fundraising
  - Goal Setting
  - Icebreakers
- Meetings & Minutes
  - Motivation
  - Officer Transition
- Recruiting New Members
  - Retreats
  - Stress Management
- Team Building
- Time Management

For further assistance with all aspects of student event planning, scheduling and organizing please seek an appointment with the Student Activities Staff or the appropriate ASUN Executive Officer.

For more information, call 784-6589

Leader Hints is a publication of the University of Nevada, Reno Student Activities Department.
The Eight Essential Steps To Conflict Resolution
by Dudley Weeks, Ph.D.

Step 1 - Create an Effective Atmosphere
- Personal preparation -- brainstorm positive ways to approach issues honestly and openly.
- Timing -- choose a time that is best for all.
- Location -- It is best to pick a place where all parties can feel comfortable and at ease.
- Opening statements -- Good openings are ones that let others know you are ready and willing to approach conflict with a team-like attitude that focuses on positive ends. Ensure the trust and confidentiality of the parties involved.

Step 2 - Clarify Perceptions
A problem cannot be solved if you don't know what it is about.
1. Sort out the parts of the conflict - ask what it is about.
2. Avoid ghost conflicts -- get to the heart of the matter and avoid side issues.
3. Clarify what, if any, values are involved.
4. Recognize that the parties involved need each other to be most effective.
5. Avoid stereotyping.
7. Recognize the other's needs and values.
8. Empathize - ask why they feel the way they do.
9. Clear up misconceptions.

Step 3 - Focus on Individual and Shared Needs
Expand on shared needs. Realize that you need one another in order to successfully resolve conflicts. Be concerned about meeting others needs as well as your own.

Step 4 - Build Shared Positive Power
Power is made up of people's outlooks, ideas, convictions, and actions. A positive view of power enables people to be most effective. Positive power promotes building together and strengthening partnerships. When parties in conflict have this outlook, they can encourage each other to use shared positive power. Each person's positive energy is being drawn upon for a worthwhile solution.

Step 5 - Look to the Future, Learn from the Past
Don't dwell on negative past conflicts. Try to understand what happened in the past, and learn from them.

Step 6 - Generate Options
1. Beware of preconceived answers.
2. Look for common threads.
3. Make sure options are workable for all parties involved.
4. Set aside disagreements and focus on options that seem most workable.
In Generating Options:
1. Ask first for the conflict partner's options -- listen and learn.
2. Try free-flowing options:
   - brainstorm all ideas for discussion
   - wait to discuss them until they're all out on the table
   - predict possible outcomes
3. Identify Key Options, these will:
   - meet one or more of the shared needs
   - meet compatible needs
   - improve the relationship
   - be acceptable & preferably satisfying to all

Step 7 - Develop "Doables"
Doables are:
- the ideas that have the best chance at success
- steps that never promote unfair advantages
- founded on shared input and information
- trust builders - that add confidence in working together

Step 8 - Make Mutual Benefit Agreements which give you lasting solutions.
1. Instead of demands, focus on developing agreements and find shared goals and needs.
2. Build on "Doable" things.
3. Pay attention to the needs of the other person in addition to your own interests.
4. Recognize the "givens" - basic things that cannot be altered or compromised.
5. Clarify exactly what is expected of all.
6. Keep the conflict partnership process going by using and sharing these skills with others.

Two special issues to address during conflict resolution:

Dealing with “Non-Negotiators”
Some individuals will refuse to negotiate because they want to protect their interests. Here are a few pointers for dealing with them:
- Start to negotiate anyway
- Explain why it is in their best interest to negotiate
- Talk about how resolving the issue will help them
- Make the issue important to them

Dealing with the Non-Trusting
Some individuals simply can’t or won’t trust you. Do your best! Take these tips into consideration:
- Be trustworthy
- Acknowledge everyone’s feelings
- Find something that you both agree on
- Listen carefully to their issues and concerns
- Start small — don’t be discouraged if you can’t resolve all the issues at once.

Styles of Conflict Management

COMPETING (win-lose strategy): The individual pursues his or her interests at another’s expense. Competing people will stand up for their beliefs without listening to others or do anything to “win.”

ACCOMMODATING (lose-win): People neglect their own interests to satisfy the interests of others. These people obey others when they would rather not and easily yield to other’s points of view.

AVOIDING (lose-lose): These individuals do not deal with conflict. They sidestep issues, postpone discussions, or withdraw from tense situations.

COMPROMISING (partial win-partial win): These individuals seek to find expedient, mutually acceptable solutions which somewhat satisfy both parties’ needs. They “split the difference” or seek middle ground.

COLLABORATION (win-win): Individuals seek to find solutions that fully satisfy both parties. Collaboration is the style most recommended for student organizations because it allows both parties to be fully satisfied, allows for creativity in developing resolution, and gives participants a sense of accomplishment that they have together resolved the issue without losing anything.