

# CONFLICT SOLUTIONS

## Fixing Workplace Conflict

### Expert Advice to Resolve Workplace Discord

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### Ask and They Shall Answer

Let's say it was an eight out of ten on the Richter scale. Two of your key employees blew up at each other during a routine meeting over which you preside. Now, they are both trying to pretend it didn't happen.

Not you. You are an effective leader and you want to help them understand why things went so awry. You have decided to lead a discussion about their issues.

As you facilitate this conflict resolution effort, your job is not to provide "the answer." Instead, they will be well served if you lead an introspective dialogue to unlock opportunities, create space for listening, and lead to mutual understanding.

Your key to success will be asking great questions, rather than making pronouncements or issuing edicts.



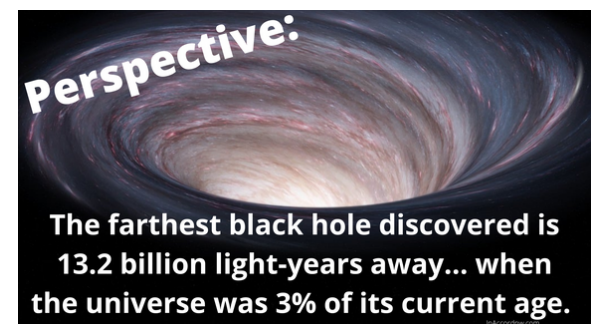
*On pages two and three of this newsletter, you will find a go-to list of questions to help you help them help themselves out of their entanglement. (For a downloadable copy of this list, click the link on the Free Resources page.)*



While you can pick a few favorites from this list to have on hand, you don't have to memorize or rehearse them. Simply adopting the spirit of these questions will point you in the right direction.

The formula, if there is any, is something like, "Ask questions, allow space for the answer, and make sure they're listening to each other's responses."

Of course, if the interpersonal quake that hit your organization is too severe, we can help you rebuild from the rubble.





### Lead Dialogue:



- What's your theory about why it escalated?
- What past resolution efforts have you made and how did they work?
- What's your perception about the other person's point of view?
- What are your core concerns or needs?
- What are your ideas on how to work this out?
- What do you need from the other person to resolve this to your satisfaction?
- From your point of view, what is negotiable or nonnegotiable?
- What proposal do you have to resolve this? How would you modify it so you think they will agree to it?
- How receptive are you to their point of view?
- What do you think the other person might say about you and this situation?
- Despite this conflict, what do you like or appreciate about them?
- In what ways are you curious about their perspective?
- What do you, personally, hope to learn from this experience?
- To what extent, if any, have you contributed to the problem?
- What might you be willing to do differently to improve the situation?
- Would you say a little more about \_\_\_\_?
- What was that experience like for you? How did it affect you?



### Lead Dialogue:



- From what you said, it sounds like you feel \_\_\_\_\_. Is that accurate?
- Can you explain what you just heard her say?
- Is there something you want them to understand that you think they don't?
- Did you hear anything new in this conversation?
- Is there something you need to hear from him? Ask for that now.
- What impact did \_\_\_\_\_ have on you?
- What do you think she doesn't understand about your point of view?
- What, specifically, do you want him to do differently?
- What are you willing to offer or change in your behavior?
- Do you regret anything you have said or done to them?
- You said the last few weeks have been better. What made this period different?
- What does [respect/professionalism/etc.] look like to you in practice?
- If you had that conversation to do over again, what would you do differently this time?
- How are you feeling about this dialogue so far?
- Is there anything you haven't said yet that you will regret not saying after this meeting is over?
- Is there anything you haven't heard from the other person that you were hoping to hear today?