

APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION TOOLS

1 Assessing Your Problem Solving Skills

'A problem is not really your problem. Your reaction to a problem makes it your problem'

Read the following statements to assess your approach and attitude to possible challenging situations.



Individual Activity

Complete the following questionnaire on your approach to problem solving

- 1 = no!
- 2 = no, seldom
- 3 = sometimes
- 4 = yes, often 5= yes!

1. When a difference occurs between expected and actual outcome, you know that you have a problem

1	2	3	4	5
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2. Problems do not occur spontaneously without any reason

1	2	3	4	5
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3. When a problem arises, I immediately have a solution ready

1	2	3	4	5
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4. I get other people's input when solving problems

1	2	3	4	5
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5. The quicker one solves a problem, the better

1	2	3	4	5
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6. Even if I know what the cause of a problem is, it is not a waste of valuable time to consider various other possible causes or options before deciding how to solve it

1	2	3	4	5
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7. The more information there is about a problem, the better the solution will be

1	2	3	4	5
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8. I like solving problems

1	2	3	4	5
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9. Decisions are the logical outcome of problem solving

1	2	3	4	5
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10. I prefer to have some time to think over a problem before I think of a solution

1	2	3	4	5
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11. I see a problem as a challenge and as an opportunity to grow

1	2	3	4	5
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12. I have to solve a lot of problems

1	2	3	4	5
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13. People around me often ask for my ideas when solving problems

1	2	3	4	5
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14. My solutions are unusual and often surprise others

1	2	3	4	5
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15. I think it is necessary to write my problem down on paper, carefully write down, and only then decide on a solution different options

1	2	3	4	5
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16. My solutions are accurate, and so the same or similar problems do not occur again

1	2	3	4	5
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17. Other people's problems are easier to solve than my own

1	2	3	4	5
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18. I am willing to try out new, untested ideas to solve my problems

1	2	3	4	5
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19. Any change comes with problems of its own

1	2	3	4	5
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2. Mediation, Negotiation and Problem Solving

Identifying Power Bases in Conflict Resolution

We all tend to use a 'Power base' that we find comfortable with. This often differs from one situation to the next and from dealing with one person to another.

The adjustment of your Power Base is as important as adjusting your Social Style to suit that of the individual.

There are various ways of categorising power. Seven power bases are listed here from the most immature to the most mature form of power.

Coercive power: the power to punish: therefore the power to induce compliance. This is the case where people fear punishment if they don't do as they are told. This is the most basic (or least mature) power base as issues like size and strength may play a role.

Connective power: the power of association with powerful forces. This induces compliance too e.g. you must do it or my brother, who is in the government, will....

Reward power: the opposite of the power to punish. This also induces compliance, but is a more effective power base because it is positive, while coercive power is negative. If one is seen as able to reward others for complying with one's wishes, the more others the rewards one can distribute, the greater the reward power.

Legitimate power: power held because one has the delegated authority to use it - the "right" to give orders or make demands. It is often called formal power as "it goes with the job". This type of power still induces compliance, but an element of influence many start to appear.

Referent power: this is based on personality. If a one is liked or admired, or if people identify with one, they will behave as one asks. This type of power results in imitation. "Being like him/her" becomes a basic motivation for actions.

Information power: where one has information and access to sources of information, others see this as a source of power. Supporting such a person offers the opportunity to be "in the know" and "on the inside". This power base induces people to support on the basis of acceptance.

Expert power: this power is based on expertise. Others see the knowledge and ability of the person, and respect for those qualities inclines them to accept the person's directives or support his/her position. Anyone can wield expert power – it does not have to go with legitimate power.

Look at a conflict which you have seen or been involved in. Rate the power of the opposing sides on each power base, on a scale of 1 (no power) to 10 (high power)

	Side One	Side Two
1. Coercive power	_____ /10	_____ /10
2. Connective power	_____ /10	_____ /10
3. Reward power	_____ /10	_____ /10
4. Legitimate power	_____ /10	_____ /10
5. Referent power	_____ /10	_____ /10
6. Information power	_____ /10	_____ /10
7. Expert power	_____ /10	_____ /10

3. Setting Objectives for Conflict Outcomes



Case Study

You are 17 years old, and in Matric. You are going to university next year and you come from a family which is quite comfortably off. You have a bank account with money from gifts over the years and some holiday jobs you have done. You are turning 18 next month, on 12 August.

At school, your two best friends, Charles and Bergen, both have motor bikes. Your friend Greg has a VW Golf. You arrive at school with your mother or your father and you have to take the bus home in the afternoon.

Your friends tell you to stop being a wimp. You need transport... if you had it you could come and go at your convenience, join in school evening activities and go out more with your friends. Bergen has taught you to drive his bike and it is exhilarating. You decide that you are a pretty good motorcyclist already.

At home, you live with your mother, father, and two much younger sisters. Your father's older widowed sister also lives with you and has a lot of influence over your father. This is a problem because her only son was killed in a motorbike accident. She goes off the deep end if you mention a bike.

Your father is not really against bikes – he had one once, and he thinks lots of guys ride motorcycles without having accidents. Your mother, however, tends to agree with your aunt. She has often said that if one of her children died as your cousin died, she would die herself of a broken heart.

One thing which is partly a problem, and partly a factor in your favour, is the school lift in the morning. If your father takes you, he is slightly late for work. If your mother takes you, your sisters are a bit late for their convent school and the nuns get angry with them. Your parents often discuss the problem. You could go on the bus, but then you have to get up a lot earlier. Whenever you have tried this there have been fights and shouting while you hunt for things and panic that you will miss your bus while you wait for your lunch to be ready or your sisters to get out of the bathroom.

You have looked at motorcycles in shops and in the paper and you have reached a conclusion. You don't have enough money to buy a new one and run it, and you don't want a second hand one in case it is unreliable and you cannot afford the repairs. It will be a while before you can earn enough to make up the gap so at the moment your father is the only possible source of capital you can think of.

Plan what you are going to do to solve your problem and get your motorcycle.

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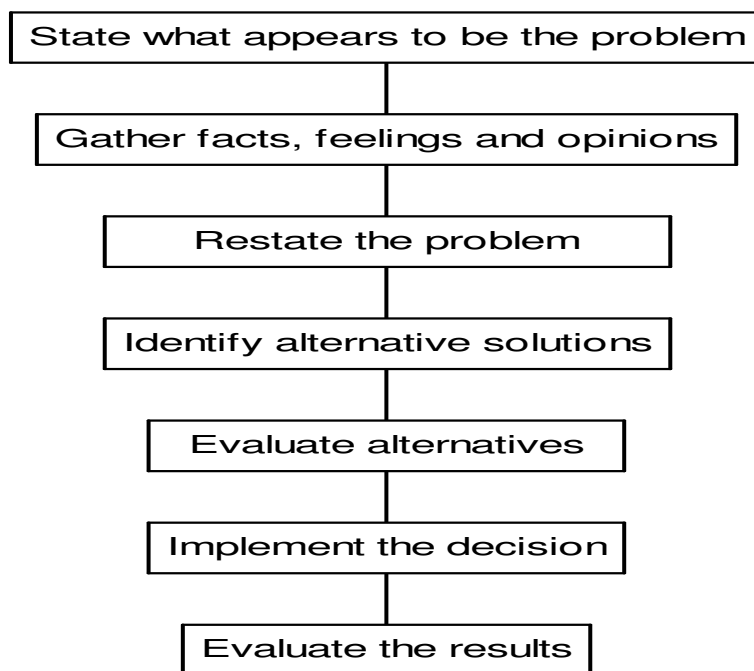
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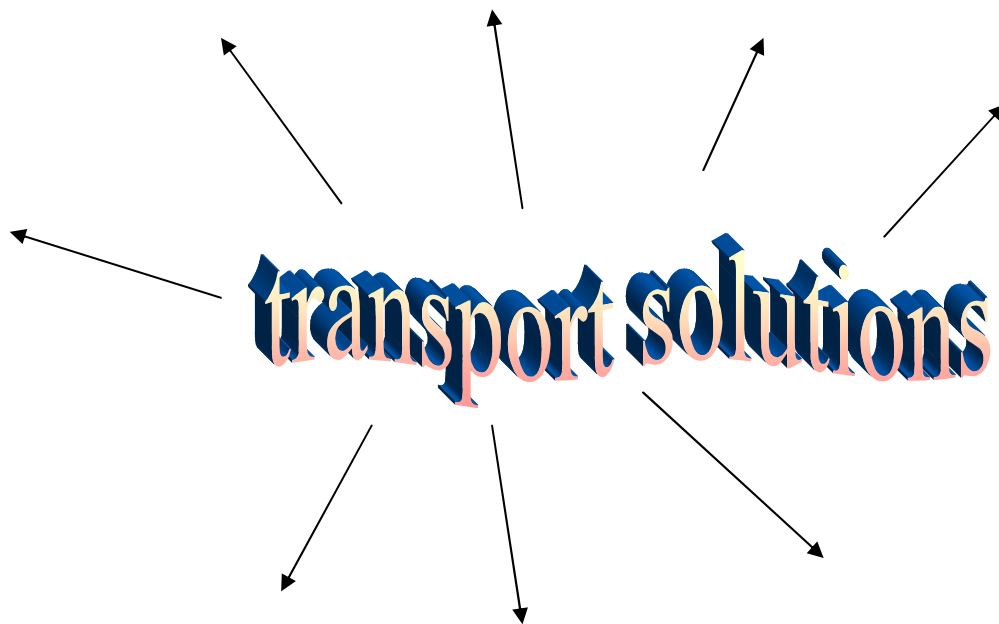
Don't forget to ask

- What is the overall objective here?
- What are the needs of the various parties?
- Who is your real opposition?
- Is your opposition a team or a person?
- If it is a team, can you change the composition to suit you?
- What are the issues involved?
- What is their position?
- What is your position?
- What sort of climate do you want to create here?
- When and where should you work at resolving the conflict?
- What arguments could you use in a negotiation?
- What counter arguments will you run into and what can you do about them?
- What are the non-negotiable and what can be conceded?

Did you apply: Thinking skills, logical analysis and problem solving skills?



Generate as many solutions to your transport problem as you can:



Conclusion

By now it should be clear that the key objective is your need for transport, and that the best solution to your problem is to share the costs of a small car with your parents (and even your aunt) on the occasion on your 18th birthday.

Note however that if you had failed to analyse your core objectives, or to use logic and creativity to evaluate your problem, you would probably have ended up in a serious and long term conflict situation.

4. Resolving Conflict in Teams

4.1 Exploring a team conflict problem

List one conflict which arises in your work team or which arose in the past.

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4.2 Measure trust and communication in the team

A key requirement in teams is trust.

The cost of team work is good communication (time consuming and takes effort and commitment)

Rate the levels of trust in your team _____/10

Trust is based on two core issues: competency and character

We distrust those people whom we perceive to be incompetent, or whom we perceive to lack consistently-lived values (character).

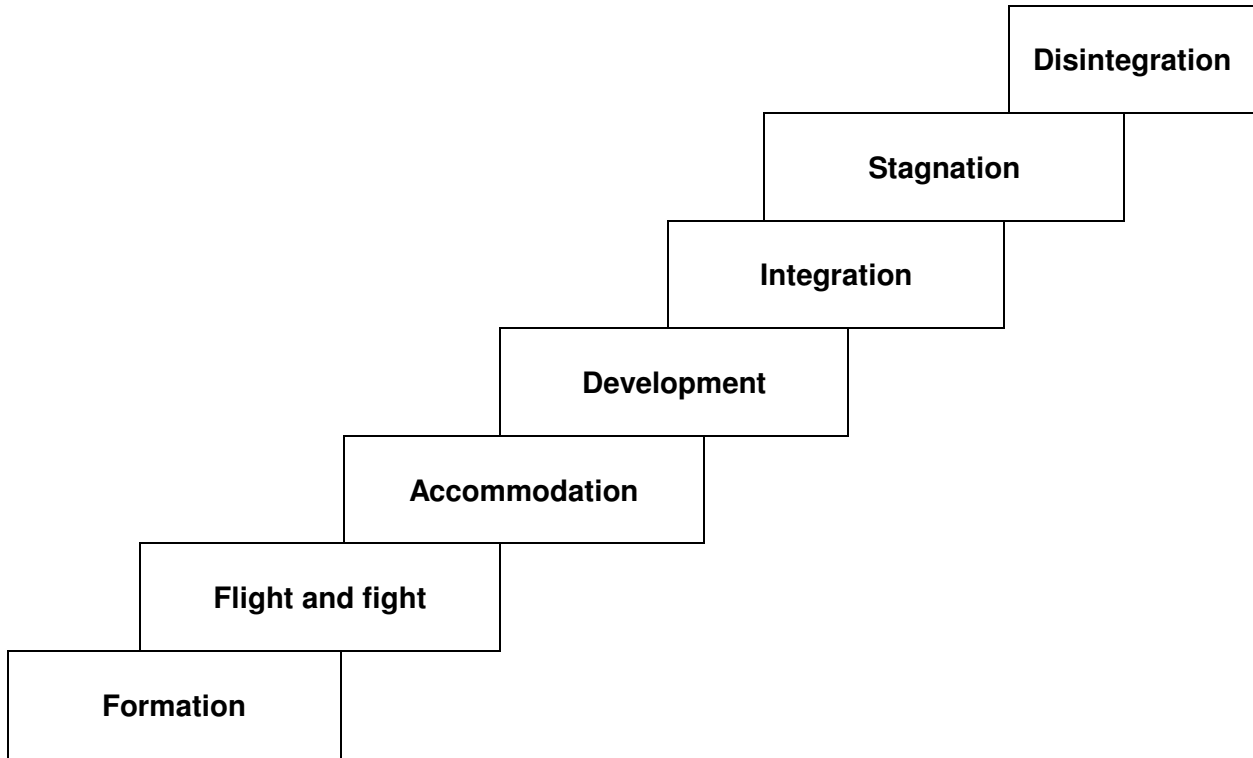
Rate the communication in your team _____/10

4.3 Identify Team Synergy Levels

Teams do not last forever, but go through a series of stages: these are not cast in stone but there are patterns. Teams do often reach peak performance (the integration stage) and maintain synergy for long periods. Synergy shows when a kind of magic happens between team members, so that they take ownership of their tasks as a group, and perform in a way in which the whole is somehow more than the individual members who make up the team.

Conflicts and problems of stagnation can arise when a team becomes disillusioned, bored, frustrated or demotivated.

Many managers fail to recognise the beginnings of problems, and react to the stagnation of a valuable team with apathy, lack of resources etc. The cost of failing to reorganise and support an effective team may be huge.



This process is also sometimes called forming, storming, norming and performing - and the stagnation phase is then called “dorming”



Individual Activity

Identify where your team is on this progression.

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4.4 List Key Team Strengths

When resolving conflicts, your team needs to build on its strengths more than it needs to improve its weaknesses. List the key strengths your team can rely on:

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4.5 List Team Weaknesses and Solutions or Work-Arounds for Them

- These may include differences in perceiving motive, words, actions and situations
- Differing expectations of team outcomes
- Differences in needs, objectives, values etc
- Unwillingness, or skill deficits, to work through issues and to collaborate or compromise

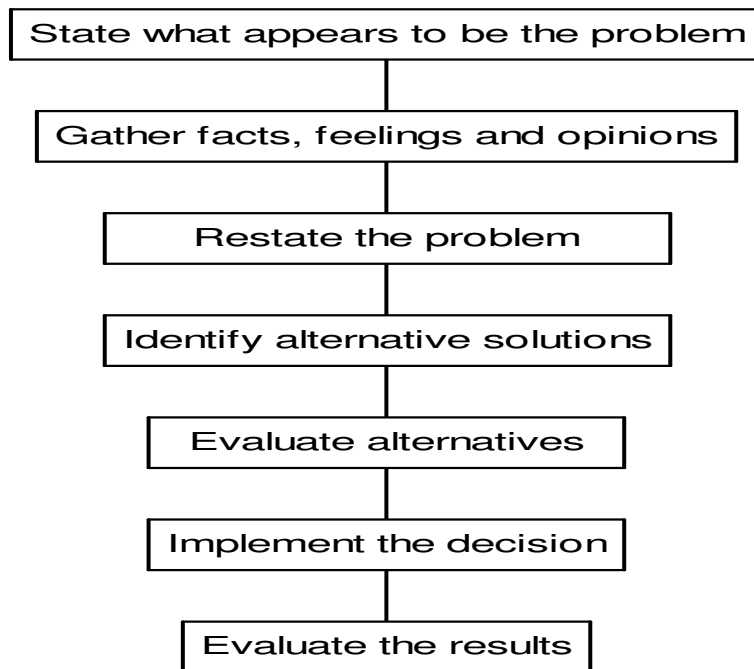
List your team's key weaknesses:

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4.6 Apply Your Problem Solving Model to the Conflict



Generate as many solutions to your team conflict problem as you can:



Plan how to implement the solution

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5. Consolidation

At the end of this module, delegates will be able to

- Outline a course of action which they intend to take in one personal or business conflict situation in their own lives

Choose one current or impending conflict situation (at work or in any other life context). Make notes on:

- 1) What ideas you now have to tackle this
- 2) What conflict resolution strategies you are going to use
- 3) What skills you are going to apply as you do this.

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