



Take the Con out of Conflict Management

by Gabrielle Hamen, www.youhavethepower.biz

"I don't want to talk to her. She will bite my head off."

"What's the point of trying to work with him? He never listens."

"That is the fifth time this week she has dismissed my ideas."

"If I bring the issue up to them they will think less of me."

"Whenever I try to talk to my boss about a problem he blames me for it."

"Why bother bringing up the problem. It will blow over in time."

Sound familiar? When conflict shows up in the workplace we can feel like we are being conned out of a pleasant work environment. We begin giving multiple reasons why we won't address it let alone resolve it, which only aggravates the situation. Unresolved conflict leads to anger, resentments, health issues, lack of teamwork, and loss of productivity which hurts you and the bottom line.

Regardless of what size company you work for there will be conflict. Isn't that great news? It can be if you understand the two reasons why conflict occurs, the six ways to listen effectively, and the eight steps to resolving conflict.

There are two reasons why conflict occurs:

1. We have differences.

Is this new to anyone? I'm sure not, but there are so many areas of difference that we fail to step back and respect the differences. We become so focused on the deadlines that we trample over how our personalities, work roles, experiences, perspectives, knowledge, gender and culture create conflict.

Take for instance personalities. Using the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) an extravert will want to verbally process the situation and an introvert will want to internally process the situation. For an extravert, an introvert can slow down the conversation and for an introvert, an extravert can run over them. Both types have their purpose and yet can create conflict for each other. It's these subtle differences that erode our ability to work together.

2. We don't listen to hear, we listen to respond.

Each of us has filters that hinder our ability to truly hear what someone else is saying. Filters such as, stress, strong feelings, values, memories, beliefs, past experiences, interests, expectations, assumptions, prejudices, physical environment and attitudes. The more filters someone is using the less she or he will be able to hear.

THE POWER OF I: Empowering professional working women!

- BLOG
- Ezine
- Classes

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

- State Farm
- Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
- Strategic Financial

ABOUT THE CO- FOUNDERS

Women are our inspiration. Women have infinite influence, ingenuity and intelligence that can go untapped or unnoticed by others and ourselves. The producers of this conference are no exception. Colleen left a high powered marketing career to become a certified Business and Life Coach and Gabrielle left a successful software training career to become an Empowerment Speaker and Business Consultant. As women business owners and wives they know all about motivating and developing themselves in order to thrive in today's economy and still have time to enjoy life and nurture relationships.

Together they are infectious!

Read more about Colleen and Gabrielle

- Post comments to the BLOG

How often have you said the words "He/she doesn't listen?" It's probably because they are using one of the five defective listening habits; reassurer, advisor, analyzer, interrupter or deflector. Each habit will shut down the person speaking.

Reassurer: jumps into the conversation and assures "everything will be OK" or "it's not that bad"

Advisor: says "you should..." and tries to fix the problem with solutions and advise

Analyzer: gives you reasons why you have the conflict or are feeling the way you are

Interrupter: interrupts the conversation with a response of some sort

Deflector: takes the conversation off on a tangent, usually about themselves in an attempt to relate to the other person

Regardless of why the conflict arose, each person has their preferred style of resolving conflict. If you find yourself "locking horns" or becoming stuck while attempting to resolve the issue it may be due to the difference in your conflict resolution styles. The five styles are:

Competing: This style is aggressive and has low regard for relationships. They try to gain control so that the solution will meet their needs, not the needs of others or the group. Competing tends to increase the level of threat for the individual, not lessen it.

Accommodating: This style yields and submits to the needs of others. It is the opposite of Competing. They try to smooth things over despite their own needs thus preserving the relationship, which is most important to them.

Avoiding: This style has the perception that if they don't bring up the issue it will go away. They avoid in an attempt to not talk about the issue, their needs or feelings. Avoiding conflict is just like cancer. If you ignore it, it only gets worse.

Compromising: This style to resolving conflict requires a series of conciliations that may or may not result in satisfactory resolution. Each person's perspectives are intact, but they lack understanding about the other people involved. This can result in a lack of trust which is necessary in the workplace and in life.

Collaborating: This style collects everyone's needs and goals to achieve resolution. They cooperate and brainstorm to achieve a better solution than any one person could achieve alone. The ideas and energy create an exciting resolution that everyone involved can support.

By eliminating filters and bad listening habits and learning how to resolve conflict with collaboration, you too can have a healthy, happy and productive work environment!

To learn the 6 ways to listen effectively and the 8 steps to resolving conflict register for our upcoming teleseminar on May 10th.