

December 2017 Issue

## Managing Personal/Family Conflict – “A Whole Different Ballgame”

Given the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, it's not unusual for conflicts to arise more frequently this time of year. Family conflicts often can be particularly difficult given your shared history, living arrangements, and other family members' involvement.



**Try these tips to increase your success at managing personal conflict with family during the holidays and throughout the year:**

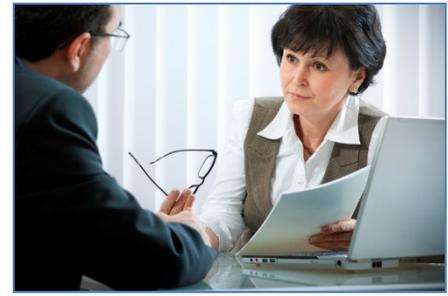
- **Take a break before a discussion.** Pause and take some time to decrease your anger or frustration by using coping strategies, such as walking, reading, or listening to music.
- **Be calm.** Conflict cannot be resolved unless participants are composed, ready to listen, and focused on the topic at hand.
- **Write down your thoughts.** Before initiating a conversation, first be sure to capture your thoughts. It is fine to read your written response during a discussion so that your message is clear.
- **Use “I” statements.** When speaking, focus on your feelings or beliefs rather than “you” statements, which shift blame to the other person.
- **Find common ground.** Discuss your history and previous successes.
- **Meet in a neutral location.** Find a place for your conversation that is close and comfortable for both of you.

**Below are suggestions of specific things to avoid in the midst of a conflict. If any of these occur, it is a signal to take a break and come back when you are less angry:**

- **Ordering:** “Clean up this place right now!”
- **Criticizing:** “That’s the stupidest idea I ever heard.”
- **Accusing:** “I know you are the one who didn’t clean up the dishes.”
- **Involving Others:** “And your mom agrees with me!”
- **Sarcasm:** “Oh, yeah, since you been so great at following through in the past.”
- **Bringing Up the Past:** “And three years ago, you never paid me back that money I loaned you.”
- **Name-Calling:** “If you weren’t such a slob, I wouldn’t have to spend so much time cleaning!”

Learning to manage conflict can significantly reduce stress. For further assistance, consider working with a couples or family therapist. You also may be able to access counseling if your employer offers an Employee Assistance Program, such as TriHealth EAP, or through your insurance carrier. Programs on conflict management also may be available through churches and other community organizations.

# Managing Conflict in the Workplace – Tips to Promote Positivity & Collaboration



Have you ever experienced conflict at work? For most of us, the answer most likely is “yes.” Interacting with others at work often goes hand-in-hand with disagreements, differences of opinion, and negative attitudes. Learning to manage conflict in the workplace can lead to improvement in working relationships, collaboration, and positivity in the environment.

**Try these tips to help to manage conflict with colleagues and others in your workplace:**

## 1. Take care of yourself.

Pause to think of an appropriate response, rather than responding immediately. Take a deep breath, walk down the hallway, or get a drink of water before replying.

## 2. Think about your approach to a situation.

What is your role in the conflict? How can you influence a positive outcome? Decide if the issue is due to you, the other person or perhaps both. Consider the worst that can happen if you take action or if you decide to do nothing.

## 3. Talk directly to the person.

Choose a quiet location with few distractions. Focus on the behavior and provide specific examples of your concerns.

## 4. Listen carefully.

Pay attention to the meaning behind the other person’s words. Remember that we all have the potential to be difficult. Make an effort to understand the other person’s viewpoint.

## 5. Assert your needs.

Recognize how you feel about the situation. Make a neutral, but honest, statement about how the person’s action made you feel. Use “I” statements. Acknowledge your role in the conflict.

## 6. Reach a solution together.

Build bridges by noting areas of agreement. Work out the problem together. Remember to compromise.

You always can become more skilled at managing conflict and improving your professional and personal relationships. TriHealth EAP offers training and workshops on conflict management to organizations which can assist in helping with teamwork and collaboration. If you need further assistance you can access counseling through your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider, such as TriHealth EAP or through your insurance carrier.

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## Reducing Conflict Risks on Social Media Channels

LinkedIn, a professional networking site for the business community, suggests following these simple recommendations to help avoid the escalation of conflict on social media sites:

- **Exercise Good Judgment:** Before posting, consider whether your comments might be considered inappropriate or reflect negatively on your organization, your clients, or yourself.
- **Be Fair and Respectful:** Never post malicious, misleading, or unfair content about your organization, colleagues, or competitors. Do not post comments that you would not say directly to another person.
- **Trust Your Instincts:** If you have to stop and ask yourself, “I wonder if I should post this?” the answer is no.