

# Course number: Title

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## Conflict Management

### Slide 1:

This slide presentation is on conflict management and resolution.

### Slide 2:

Nursing leaders manage, mediate and resolve conflicts in their everyday work. Conflict management and resolution skills are important to be an effective leader. Research and evidence tells us the skills can be learned, developed and improved over time and through our experience.

### Slide 3:

Why is conflict management and important skill? Effective conflict resolution promotes positive outcomes and helps us to reach our goals. Effective conflict resolution and management fosters connections and relationships between workers. Successful conflict resolution results in a healthier team. Finally, successful conflict resolution and management improves overall morale and enhances job satisfaction. Learning from conflict is critical. What would I do differently next time?

### Slide 4:

We turn now to the definition of conflict. It is “perceived incompatible differences resulting in some form of interference or opposition.” We see the two perceived or perception. In different individuals and groups involved in the conflict, all have their own perception of the conflict and what best would mediate or resolve the conflict.

“Opposing viewpoints, forces, issues and problems which confront individuals, groups, and institutions, having been generated from a variety of internal and external, personal and group forces.” This tells us that there are many sources of conflict, and it is important in each situation to determine the source of the conflict. Where is the conflict coming from? Where does it originate?

### Slide 5:

How conflict is perceived and managed is the essence of whether the process is productive or nonproductive.

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There are three types of conflict: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup or interorganizational.

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Intrapersonal occurs in the individual. It is in the cognitive and affective realm of the mind. The knowledge and the feelings of the individual may differ. What they know about the situation and what they feel about the situation may be in conflict. Intrapersonal conflict stems from lack of conformity or congruence between the individual's goals and what is expected in the situation. It can impact or create other types of conflict. If there is a personal battle or intrapersonal conflict for the individual, it may spill over and impact work performance.

### Slide 8:

Interpersonal is the most common type of conflict in the healthcare setting. It occurs between two or more individuals; typically nurse and physician, nurse-to-nurse or nurse and patient/family. Interpersonal conflict needs to be dealt with in an effective manner in order to prevent feelings that may interfere with future communication or impact the ability to get work done.

### Slide 9:

Intergroup or interorganizational conflict is conflict that arises between two or more groups. Common causes may include miscommunications or misunderstandings, a lack of alignment or agreement on key issues of mutual concern. Managed correctly, constructive aspects are emphasized and destructive or dysfunctional aspects are minimized. In constructive management, we try to learn from and benefit from the elements of conflict and in resolving it take it forward in a more productive way in terms of how we interact with each other.

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Other sources of conflict can be:

- Power (a desire for power in the form of personal gain, prestige, authority and battles over control.)
- Politics (differing views, opinions, values and beliefs about what is important or how things should be done.)
- Misinformation (different facts, a different view or definition of the problem and sometimes communication barriers with the wrong information correct information has been communicated or left out.)
- Competition for scarce resources (someone's perception that a resource should have been allotted to them or supported their work versus another individual or another group or department.)

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Now we turn to some strategies to manage or resolve conflict and there are four major areas:

- Avoidance.
- Defusion.
- Containment.
- Confrontation.

We will make some comments about each one of these areas.

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First, avoidance—this is when we keep the conflict from surfacing. We ignore the root or the etiology of the problem and we impose a solution. We dictate or determine what would be done. We impose the solution. If the above actions are appropriate, the conflict is temporary or it is an emergency situation (a quick action is needed) and avoidance may fit the situation at the time. Sometimes avoidance is used to delay dealing with a problem. In emergency situation or a temporary way, this may work okay, but in the long run if the root of the problem isn't addressed the conflict will resurface and we will have just delayed the time in which we have to deal with. Avoidance is often a temporary solution or an emergency measure.

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Next is defusion. Here we are looking for time or space to give us more room to de-escalate the conflict or deactivated. We want to cool off emotions associated with the conflict. We want to allow for the emotional burden of the conflict to dissipate a bit. We want to use time to study and develop logical approaches to conflict resolution. In the case of verbal interaction with defusion, sometimes a positive approach to use is, "Let me get back to you after I have some time to examine or study the issue and gather some facts and information." What is important in this approach is after initial defusion we must get back to the individual or the group. We cannot just allow for or by some time and then not respond and provide more information, facts and eventually a decision back to the individual or the group.

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Containment—this is purposely allowing only some of the conflict to surface. To break it into pieces or individual issues, some of the components of the conflict we carefully contain it by spelling out which issues are to be discussed or handled and how they are to be resolved. We have some structure framework to examine the problems. We may identify representatives from each point of view from each group or side to negotiate within a structure setting. We may also include an outside impartial person to help facilitate that negotiation.

#### Slide 15:

Confrontation—in this case we are talking about constructive confrontation. Here we identify concerns in a constructive manner using civility and respect for all individuals and groups in our communication. We proactively clarify assumptions and define any differences between the parties. We attempt to minimize or eliminate emotions, and we want to make every effort to find common ground. Our goal here is a common solution, and we want to work collaboratively towards this joint solution in a civil and respectful manner.

#### Slide 16:

Negotiation strategies—as we meet the stage, we may serve as the facilitator or we may need to have an outside person serve in the role of facilitator. We want to establish points of agreement initially, and in order to do that we need to vary proactively listen to each party, to each side, to each point of view. We want to define the problem fully. We want full disclosure of all aspects of the problem. We always want to employ mutual respect. We want to avoid blaming and coercing people into holding the feeling or expressing the point of view. It is very important to be respectful in our listening and communication. We want to fully analyze the problem. We want to gather and examine all relevant facts and information. We want to propose solutions that reflect common ground that lead us toward some alignment of the parties or the individuals of the groups that hold differing perspectives or points of view.

#### Slide 17:

In summary, we want to understand different forms and types of conflict. We want to be very cognizant of our own style and pattern of managing conflict. We always want to begin with the premise of nonnegotiable mutual respect. Each person is treated respectfully independent of their point of view independent of their differing perspective. We want to create a healthy work environment with civility and respect. We want to develop our own negotiation skills, and we want to use a facilitator or an expert in conflict resolution if we are in a situation that requires more than our own skill set.

#### Slide 18:

Our goal is always mutual respect, common ground in alignment to find solutions and to work constructively going forward. Thank you very much. This is the end of our slide presentation.

