Strategies to Mitigate Conflict

by Sophia Tutorial

☰ WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson will introduce strategies to mitigate conflict. Specifically, it will cover:

1. Communication
2. Effective Communication
3. Assertive Communication

1. Communication

Depending on the type of conflict encountered, there are several communication skills and negotiation techniques that can be used. Therefore, conflict management includes both formal and informal methods such as persuasion, facilitation, conciliation or negotiation.

2. Effective Communication

For effective communication, this strategy includes the ability to:

- Identify the recipient of the message and the context of the communication
- Identify the purpose of communication (is it educational, social, personal)
- Describe the intended message and response
- Consider the barriers that might be present and be ready to respond based on that finding
- Practice delivering a clear, concise and accurate message
- Build relationships based on trust and influence
- Be assertive, descriptive, focused, specific, concise, simple and responsive to listeners' needs
- Acknowledge what others are saying
- The opportunity to listen actively and center attention on the speaker and not on what is competing mentally in preparation to respond

3. Assertive Communication

This type of communication deals with conveying honest opinions, feelings, attitudes, and rights that do not

overstep boundaries affecting others. It is the center between passive and aggressive communication. Assertiveness is a skill set that can be developed.

For assertive communication to happen, three elements must be present.

Element of Assertive Communication	Description	Example
Empathy/Validation	One should empathize with the other party. This validates that you understand how he/she feels.	Let's take a situation that you need to address. You have a colleague that is habitually late. The entire unit knows that she always comes in late but no one addresses the issue, including the manager. It so happens that on a day that you need to give report on time so you can keep an appointment, this colleague was once again late. What do you do? How would you validate or empathize with her? Suppose you say, "I know that you have difficulty getting here on time." How does this sound? Are you empathizing with her? Absolutely. You are conveying that you do understand that there might be a situation that results in her being late. This is not excusing her for being tardy rather informing her that you understand that there is a reason for this tardiness.
Statement of the Problem	This element is your ability to explain your dissatisfaction/difficulty and telling your colleague your expectation for a change.	After validating your colleague's feelings, your next communication will be to state how the behavior affects you. Try saying "But when you are late, I cannot give my report on time and it delays me leaving on time." The statement demonstrates very clearly and specifically how the behavior affects you, the message sender. You might recognize the colleague's difficulties, but you have made it very clear that the expectation is that the colleague is on time. You have stated your problem concisely.
Statement of What You Want	Your request for a specific change in the other person's behavior.	It could sound like this: "From now on, I would appreciate it if you would be ready to give your report on time." This is an explicit request for a definite change in the other person's behavior.

Authored by Solimar Figueroa, PhD, MSN, MHA, BSN, RN, P-PCA

Support

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