Team Dynamics and Relationships

Conflict Resolution Principles

From Kelly O’Donnell, Doing Member Care Well

Have team members come up with a list of conflict resolution principles that work for them. Another approach is to go over the list below as a team and add to it. Periodically review the list and give each other feedback and constructive suggestions.

a. Differences are opportunities for growth.
b. Never assume you fully understand someone; vice versa.
c. Most people have good reasons for what they do.
d. You can seldom change anyone.
e. Emphasize understanding and areas of similarity.
f. Criticism must include constructive suggestions.
g. Be aware of how you use the words always and never.
h. Agree to disagree in an agreeable fashion.
i. Keep short accounts with others.
j. Uniformity is not necessary for unity.

For some excellent resources on conflict resolution, go to www.peacemaker.net. Look at "resources", then “Foundational Principles” for several articles you could copy for your team, and use for discussion.

Jesus’ advice for keeping peace in relationships:
1. Don't ignore conflict; address it
2. Don't exaggerate conflict; solve it with the least possible publicity and public scrutiny
3. Don't abandon conflict; pursue it to resolution
4. Don't fence yourself in by conflict; taking two or three witnesses requires that you are also open to reproof and correction
5. Don't recycle conflict; once resolved, let it go and get back to your life"
-- Bruce Barton in "Matthew" section of Life Application Bible Commentar
"Peacemaking is a divine work. For peace means reconciliation, and God is the author of peace and reconciliation...It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the particular blessing which attaches to peacemakers is that “they shall be called sons of God.” For they are seeking to do what their father has done, loving people with His love. It is the devil who is a troublemaker; it is God who loves reconciliation and who now through his children, as formerly through His only begotten Son, is bent on making peace.” John Stott, Christian Counter-Culture

Identify the source of conflict in each of the following passages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Source of Conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James 4:1-2</td>
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<td>Acts 15:22-29</td>
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<td>Genesis 37</td>
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<td>Genesis 13:1-12</td>
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<td>Phil. 2:3-4</td>
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<td>I Cor. 12:12-31</td>
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<td>I Cor. 3:1-3</td>
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<td>Joshua 22</td>
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What principles on peacemaking do you glean from each of the following passages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage</th>
<th>Peacemaking Principle</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romans 12:18</td>
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<td>John 17:20-23</td>
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<td>Eph. 4:1-3</td>
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<td>Matt. 5:9</td>
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<td>Prov. 12:16</td>
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<td>Prov. 19:11</td>
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<td>1 Peter 4:8</td>
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<td>Col. 3:13</td>
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Discuss the “4G’s of Peacemaking” (as outlined by Ken Sander, Peacemakers):

- Glorify God   
  
  I Cor. 10:31  
  How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?
- Get the log out of your eye 
  
  Matt. 7:5  
  How have I contributed to this conflict and what do I need to do to resolve it?
- Go and show your brother 
  
  Matt. 18:15  
  How can I help others understand how they have contributed to this conflict?
- Go and be reconciled 
  
  Matt 5:24  
  How can I demonstrate forgiveness and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?
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Conflict Management Checklist

This conflict management checklist from Ken Williams is a helpful list to think through when your team members are dealing with conflict. Copy the list for each person, and give them opportunity to work through it. Use it together with “Problem Solving Talk”, or other times you are working for solutions.

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Dr. Ken Williams

Pre-Conflict Check: When You Can Anticipate a Conflict Situation

1. Preparing My Heart
   _____ Have I honestly considered why I'm doing this?
   _____ Have I acknowledged my negative feelings and begun working on resolving them?
   _____ Have I surrendered any wrong attitudes and motivations to God?
   _____ Have I asked Him to prepare the other person's heart and help him to be willing to find a solution we can live with?
   _____ Is there anything else I need to talk over with God first?

2. Preparing What to Say (How to Begin)
   _____ Do I have the essential issue clearly in mind, and am I able to clearly state it?
   _____ Am I prepared to honestly and lovingly share my feelings in this matter?
   _____ Do I have a clear understanding of what I would like to see happen?

3. Preparing for the Context
   _____ Have I decided on the best time to bring up the issue?
   _____ Have I decided on the best location?

Post Conflict Check and Comments

_____ Did I clearly and specifically present the issue, in dialogue?
_____ Were we able to keep the conversation to one present issue?
_____ Did I appropriately control and express my feelings?
_____ Did I avoid attacks, mind reading, prophesying and counter attacks?
_____ Did I effectively present ideas for possible solutions?
_____ Did I listen well without interrupting, giving feedback and adequate opportunity to express feelings, perceptions and solutions?
_____ Did we find a mutually acceptable solution, resulting in a minimum of unresolved feelings and misunderstanding?
_____ If we couldn't agree, did I do everything possible to preserve our relationship?
_____ Have we set up a time for ongoing dialogue, if needed?