



We've recently added a feature to our webinars that allows guests to chat with us and even directly with each other during the webinar. Here are some of the outstanding comments we received:

 **Manage emotions**

If you can't manage your emotions, your emotions might just end up managing you.

 **Actively listen**

Refrain from biased listening. That's when you go into the conversation guarded, based on what you think the other person is thinking.

Practice listening to understand, not just using that time to prepare your response.

 **Maintain a calm tone**

Help friends by sharing a signal when one of you is using a negative tone.

 **Focus on one problem**

Don't bring up conflicts or events from months or years ago. Stick to the issue at hand.

 **Identify expectations**

Conflict usually occurs when there are unfulfilled expectations. Identify each party's expectations before you work toward a solution.

 **Decide responsibilities**

Agree on standards, deadlines, and responsibilities for follow-up. If you don't do this step, no real progress has been made.

 **Follow-up**

Follow-up is key to reaching success. It also helps to strengthen and repair relationships after a conflict situation.

 **Questions & Answers**

One person asked how we know when conflict exists.

As a customer or an employee, you can feel tension in an organization if there is conflict. You can tell through body language, tone, and even avoidance of other team members.

Another question asked was what to do when you leave a face-to-face meeting thinking the conflict has been resolved, but then receive an email that summarizes the meeting differently from your understanding.

Most respondents agreed that the best practice in this situation is to pick up the phone to discuss this or to suggest another in-person meeting to clarify the outcome.

Our second webinar in the Conflict series focuses on *Conflict Basics*, where we take a closer look at the conflict resolution process and how we can transform it from a negative experience into a more positive activity and outcome.



Identify the Problem

The first step is identifying what triggered the conflict. Here are a few questions that will help you identify the cause:

- What triggered the conflict?
- Who are you angry with?
- Is what has been presented to you the complete problem or just a symptom?



Identify Feelings

Another aspect of preparation is to recognize your emotional response and how it might affect your view of the situation.

- How does the conflict make you feel?
- What feelings might the other person involved have?
- How could these feelings impact your handling of the situation?



Identify Impact

When conflict occurs, sometimes we think that the conflict only impacts the people involved. Your team, customers, or even outside individuals can be impacted by the issue as well.

- How does this impact each person individually?
- How does this impact the team?
- Are customers being impacted?
- Does this affect the team's productivity and/or success?



Meet With Parties & Define Issues:

Once you have decided to address the conflict, there are several steps involved in preparing for the conversation.

- Narrow the scope to the single issue that is to be addressed.
- Determine what everyone agrees upon as a positive outcome.
- Ask questions to determine the areas that all parties agree upon.



Set the Stage for a Positive Outcome

Setting the stage for a positive outcome will help build stronger, more productive relationships. Here are a few ideas to help set the stage:

- Set ground rules.
- Identify the conflict and potential solutions.
- Create the vision of what a positive outcome will look like.
- Keep a positive tone.
- Agree on standards and deadlines for follow-up.



Determine Resolution Style:

There are five styles to resolve conflict. Before you select which to use, consider the following:

- Determine which of the resolution styles could yield a positive outcome.
- Consider whether this situation is in your level of control or just an area of concern.
- Confirm your understanding of the level of authority you have in enacting a solution.