



ILPO55 Training Material - Instructor Guidelines

Adult Trainer

Unit 4

Professional Knowledge, Skills, Competencies for
the Social Responsibility Facilitator

Unit4: Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competenes for the Social Responsibility Facilitator

Unit Description

In order for the social responsibility facilitator to be effective in his/her role, certain knowledge, skills and competences are required. These can be considered to be a package that enables the social responsibility facilitator (SRF) to work concretely in the field of CSR. Effective communication, problem solving skills, conflict resolution, team-work and work ethics are few of the most important soft skills that enable the social responsibility facilitator to fulfil his duties.

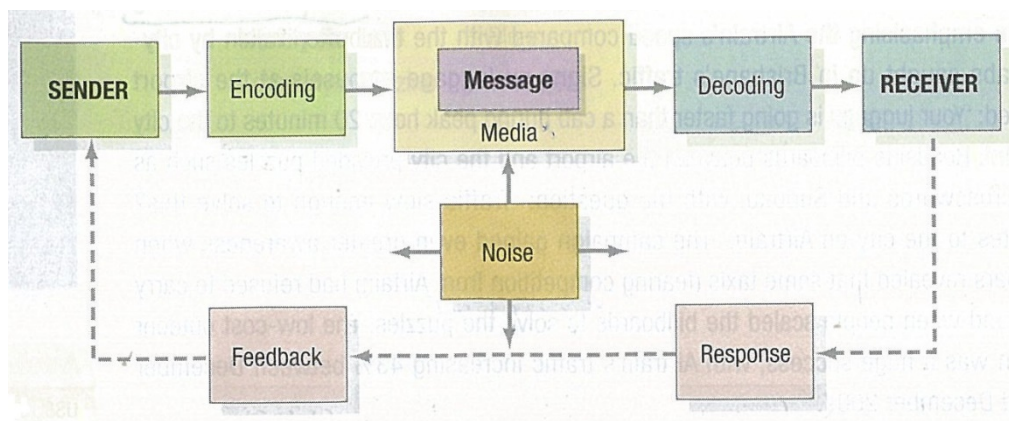
Moreover, the social responsibility facilitator needs to be sensitive to issues affecting society and the environment around his/her organisation. S/he needs to be able to think critically and creatively and suggest activities which the company can pursue in order to improve these challenges. This unit will therefore introduce learners to such topics.

1. Apply the techniques of effective communication

General Principles of Communication

Communication model has nine elements:

- **Sender and receiver:** representing the major parties in a communication
- **Message and media:** representing the major communication tools, and
- **Encoding; decoding; response and feedback:** representing the major communications functions; and
- **Noise:** representing random and competing messages that may interfere with intended communication



Source: Figure 1.1 Elements in the communication process (Kotler, 2009, p.512)

The tutor must proceed in explaining the key factors in effective communication, namely that:

- Senders must know who is the **target audience**. Indeed, they must encode their messages in a way that takes into consideration how the target audience generally decodes a message.

Target audience may receive a distorted message owing to

- Selective attention
 - Selective distortion
 - Selective recall.
- Senders must also develop feedback channels to monitor the response.
 - Having defined the desired audience response, the communicator must develop an effective message. The message should be grabbing; arouse desire and elicit action. This is referred to as the **AIDA framework (AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action)**. It describes a common list of events that occur when a customer sees an advertisement.
 - A - attention, awareness and the ability to attract the attention of customers
 - I - interest and points the ability to raise the interest of the customers by focusing on and demonstrating advantages and benefits
 - D - desire. The ad convinces the customers that they want the product and it will satisfy their needs
 - A - action which leads the customers to actually purchase the product.

This framework can easily be implemented to communicate CSR among stakeholders.

THE AIDA - MODEL



Source: <http://chri5d39.mmd.eal.dk/img/aida.jpg>

Verbal, Non Verbal and written Communication

Communication can be verbal or non-verbal, however the 7-38-55 rule of communication states that 55% of our total communication is delivered by body language, 38% by vocal signals and 7% is delivered by words. (Albert Merhabian's Research in 1967)

Verbal Communication

Verbal communication is the sharing of information between individuals using speech. It is the most effective form of communication that leads to the rapid interchange of information and feedback. There are fewer chances of misunderstanding as the communication between parties should be clear and coherent.

The communication can be done in two ways (i) Oral – like face-to-face communication, lectures, phone calls, seminars, etc. (ii) Written – Letters, E- mail, SMS, etc.

There are two types of communication, they are:

- **Formal Communication:** Also termed as the official communication, where the sender follows a pre-defined channel to transmit the information to the receiver.
- **Informal Communication:** Most commonly known as the grapevine, is where the sender does not follow any pre-defined channels to transmit the information.

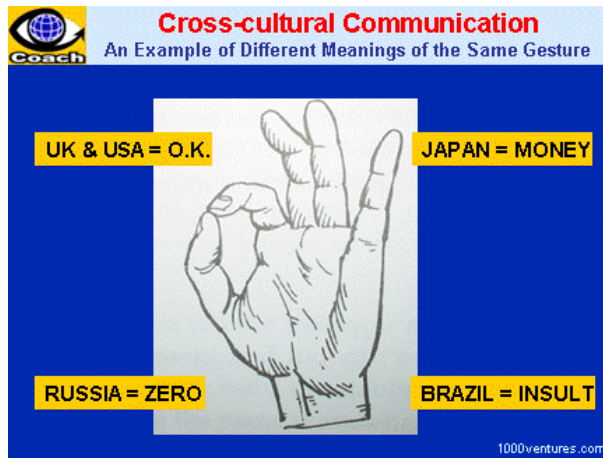
Non-verbal Communication

Non-verbal Communication is a type of communication between people through the use of visual cues such as body language, physical environments/appearance. It can also include chronemics (the use of time) and oculosics (eye contact and the actions of looking while talking and listening, frequency of glances, patterns of fixation, pupil dilation, and blink rate). Edward Hall coined the term 'distance zones' which signal the type of non-verbal communications namely:

- Intimate distance (begins with skin contact -18 inches) people are emotionally close. Allowing people in this zone is a sign of trust
- Personal distance (18 inch-4 feet). Most couples stand in public
- Social distance (4-12 feet). Business situations. More formal and impersonal situations
- Public distance (+ 12 feet)

Nonverbal communication involves the conscious and unconscious processes of encoding and decoding. Encoding is the act of generating information such as facial expressions, gestures, and postures. Decoding is the interpretation of information from received sensations from previous experiences.

Culture plays an important role in nonverbal communication, and it is one aspect that helps to influence how learning activities are organized...and where conflicts can arise....



Interpersonal Skills, active listening, questioning techniques, barriers to communication

The tutor should also address **the barriers to effective communication** which can be classified as follows:

1. Physical barriers
2. Perceptual barriers
3. Emotional barriers
4. Cultural barriers
5. Language barriers
6. Gender barriers and,
7. Interpersonal barriers.

Effective communication in writing - rules to follow

- Be concise
- Write clearly
- Be thorough
- Be accurate
- Be coherent
- Be consistent
- Check your writing
- Be polite

E- Book Link: <http://www.free-management-ebooks.com/dldebk-pdf/fme-effective-communication.pdf>

Giving effective feedback

As part of effective communication, the tutor needs to put into context the effective way of giving feedback, and also handling constructive feedback/criticism.

Effective feedback

Feedback to be helpful and constructive must be

- **goal-referenced:** Effective feedback requires that a person has a goal, takes action to achieve the goal, and receives goal-related information about his or her actions
- **tangible and transparent;** Any useful feedback system involves not only a clear goal, but also tangible results related to the goal.
- **actionable;** feedback must be in such a way that is concrete, specific, and useful .
- **user-friendly (specific and personalized);** Expert coaches uniformly avoid overloading performers with too much or too technical information. They tell the performers one important thing they noticed that, if changed, will likely yield immediate and noticeable improvement
- **timely; ongoing; and consistent.**

Constructive feedback/criticism

The tutor should refer students to article featured in Forbes Magazine in 2012

- Article: Taking Constructive Criticism like a Champ
- Link: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/dailymuse/2012/11/07/taking-constructive-criticism-like-a-champ/#73c286858b7b>

Active listening is also important for effective communication. What is active listening?

The University of Colorado, defines it as

‘...Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding. Often when people talk to each other, they don’t listen attentively. They are often distracted, half listening, half thinking about something else. When people are engaged in a conflict, they are often busy formulating a response to what is being said. They assume that they have heard what their opponent is saying many times before, so rather than paying attention; they focus on how they can respond to win the argument.

Active listening is a structured form of listening and responding that focuses the attention on the speaker. The listener must take care to attend to the speaker fully, and then repeats, in the listener’s

own words, what he or she thinks the speaker has said. The listener does not have to agree with the speaker--he or she must simply state what they think the speaker said. This enables the speaker to find out whether the listener really understood. If the listener did not, the speaker can explain some more.

(Benefits of active listening).... First, it forces people to listen attentively to others. Second, it avoids misunderstandings, as people have to confirm that they do really understand what another person has said. Third, it tends to open people up, to get them to say more. When people are in conflict, they often contradict each other, denying the opponent's description of a situation. This tends to make people defensive, and they will either lash out, or withdraw and say nothing more. However, if they feel that their opponent is really attuned to their concerns and wants to listen, they are likely to explain in detail what they feel and why. If both parties to a conflict do this, the chances of being able to develop a solution to their mutual problem becomes much greater. "

Sourced from <http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/peace/treatment/active1.htm>

Questioning Techniques

'Good learning starts with questions, not answers'. Guy Claxton, Professor in Education and Director of CLIO Development University of Bristol.

Tutor should show this video clip for the difference between open and close questions.

Video: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_88.htm

Ethical Communication and Netiquette

Videos:

- Netiquette Basics - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3iCuTOONTo>
- Web Works | Internet Safety | Grade 11 to 12 TLE - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6zsy3BfQmVQ>

2. Practice critical and creative thinking and emotional intelligence

Define Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify and manage your emotions and emotions of others. It includes these skills:

- 1) Emotional awareness, including the ability to identify your own emotions and those of others.
- 2) The ability to harness emotions and apply them to tasks like thinking and problem solving.
- 3) The ability to manage emotions including the ability to regulate your own emotions and the ability to cheer up or calm down another person.

Different Soft Skills: Communication, Decision Making, Problem Solving, Delegation, Adaptability, Teamwork and Collaboration

Hard skills are specific teachable activities and within the context of a financial services organisation include technical skills (e.g. credit evaluation skills, investment management skills, etc...)

Unlike hard skills, soft skills or people skills are broadly applicable across various jobs and industries. People having soft skills would probably have a high level of emotional intelligence.

Communication: Communication is the act of transferring information from one place to another, and can be verbal, non-verbal (e.g. body language, pitch of voice) and written.

Decision Making: The word decision comes from the Latin *decidere* which literally means “to cut off”. Decision making is one of the most sought after soft skills that are sought by employers and there a number of decision making modes one could adopt.

Problem Solving: Problem solving is the skill of identifying problems and implementing solutions for them. Once a problem is identified, it must be analysed and the relevant information collated. A number of possible solutions are identified using creative and critical thinking skills and once these options are evaluated, a decision is taken for the problem to be solved. Post decision, these results are evaluated and if not satisfactory, further actions may need to be taken.

Negotiation: Negotiation is a manner in which people settle differences and it is a process by which agreement is reached in order to avoid disputes or litigation. Whilst everyone would aim to negotiate for this own personal interests, key negotiating skills show that adopting fairness/mutual benefit is important at the negotiation table as otherwise there is a possibility that a relationship would be lost.

Adaptability: Adaptability changes now has become a constant in financial service and adaptability in terms of being flexible, agile and ability to exploit opportunities presented by changing circumstances have become a key skill.

Teamwork and Collaboration: Teamwork refers to a situation where a group of individuals work as a team and each of them does an assigned task. A team has a leader who controls and guides the work of the group. On the other hand in collaboration the group not only work together but also think together and the end products is the result of the collective effort of the individuals within the group.

Critical Observation is the ability to read through a situation and develop the position and/or notice the subtle details. This will place the employer or manager to make more meaningful decisions.

Conflict Resolution: Conflicts arise in financial services organisation all the time and the manner one responds to conflict depends on his style and skills. Conflict resolution skill is an important soft skill and can include a number of strategies such as giving in, standing your ground, compromising or collaborating.

Daniel Goldman – 5 Key Elements to Emotional Intelligence

Daniel Goldman, an American psychologist, identified 5 key elements to emotional intelligence as set out below:

- 1) Self-Awareness – The ability of knowing how you feel and how your actions and emotions can affect people around you.
- 2) Self-Regulation – The ability to regulate yourself and to refrain from verbally attacking others, making rushed emotional decisions, stereotyping people or compromising their values. In short, keeping in control.
- 3) Motivation – Working consistently towards achieving own goals and setting extremely high standards for the quality of work.
- 4) Empathy – The ability to put oneself in some else's situation.
- 5) Social Skills – Receptive to hearing good and bad news and excels at supporting the team, and reach team objectives. Good at managing changes and resolving conflicts.

Improving Own Emotional Intelligence

The following are six ways in which emotional intelligence can be improved:

- 1) Ability to reduce negative emotions – Ensure that you effectively manage your own negative emotions and that they do not cloud your judgement.
- 2) Ability to manage stress – Ability to manage your stress in the wake of adversity and the ability to get on top of things and overcome fear, depression, anxiety and discouragement.
- 3) Ability to be assertive and express difficult emotions – Take clear positions and assert your position and authority. Talk openly and honestly about things that are important to you and make clear boundaries and limits of what is tolerable and acceptable to you.
- 4) Priority to stay proactive and not reactive in the face of a difficult person – Avoid addressing the issue when you are angry as there is a possibility that you may later regret what you say. Empathise with the person and evaluate what it is like to be in their shoes.
- 5) Ability to bounce back from adversity – Ability to be resilient and to recover from despair, defeat, difficult situations and experience.
- 6) Ability to express emotions including personal relationships – Maintain emotions at an appropriate level in a close personal relationship.

Brainstorming and Lateral Thinking

“Alternatives Generations” is a technique used to discover different ways or methods of accomplishing the work of a project or solving an issue.

Brainstorming might be used to discover alternative ways of achieving objectives whilst the simplest definition of lateral thinking is “thinking outside the box”.

Lateral thinking involves a process of:

- Separating the components of a problem;

- Looking at them from a number of angles;
- Encouraging team members to come up with ways to solve problems;
- Some ways may not be conventional or obvious

Brainstorming was developed in 1961 by Alex Osborn. He was looking at developing rules to enable people to “Think Up” giving people the freedom of mind and action to come up and develop new ideas.

He described brainstorming as “a conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by assessing all the ideas spontaneously by its members.” The rules he came up with are set out below:

- No criticism of ideas
- Go for large quantities of ideas
- Build on each other’s ideas

In this manner a significant larger number of ideas are raised and the larger the amount of ideas, the more chances is raised for one of them to be suitable to address the issues or problem in hand.

Mind Mapping, Rich Pictures and Envisioning the Future

Rich pictures are a tool used very early in a process or project as it aims to unravel existing ideas and viewpoints and discover new possible solutions. Rich pictures are diagrammatic ways of your understanding of a given problem or situation and your thoughts about how this can be solved. Rich pictures are then used in a group to stimulate ideas and come up with alternative ways about how the problem can be solved, always presenting the proposed solution pictorially.

Mind mapping is used by the drawing of a visual diagram to organise information and show relations again in a pictorial manner. Typically, the core concept is drawn at the centre of a map, and ideas, etc are connected to the central concept. Whilst mind maps are used as a means of note taking, they can also be used to solve problems and aid discussions.

Envisioning the future is a scenario building methodology that seeks to obtain feedback, thoughts and ideas in relation to the future by say imagining the time in the future (three to six years).

Envisioning the future is typically used to:

- Think about the future
- Develop a vision of where you would like a Company to be
- Explore alternative solutions for the future
- As a motivational tool for team to share ideas and create cohesion
- For planning and team building sessions

Work Ethics – Ethical Behaviour; Ethical Rules on the Workplace, Harassment and Repercussions

Ethics is essentially a system of moral principles which inter alia effect how people live their lives, how they take decisions, how they make their moral choices. Moving on specifically to Work Ethics, this refers to how an employee feels about his job and the manner in which he

carries out his responsibilities – accordingly this involves attitude, behaviour, respect, communication, interaction and how one gets along with others.

Entrepreneur sets out seven elements of a good work ethic, namely:

- 1) Professionalism
- 2) Respectfulness
- 3) Dependability
- 4) Dedication
- 5) Determination
- 6) Accountability
- 7) Humanity

The above elements apply on a personal level but what can the organisation do to improve work ethic itself as an organisation. The website *Cleverism* sets out the basic work ethics for an organisation.

- Uniform rules and regulations
- Communication of the rules and regulations to employees
- Respect for Employees
- Allow a degree of freedom to employees without constant micro management
- Clear cut salary and promotion policy
- Clear and informed holiday schedule
- Effects of work ethics within an organisation
- How leadership ethics and employees ethics impact the organisation
- What are the core ethical elements that define ethics in the organisation

Harassment covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature and within a work place environment can include:

- Persistent offensive comments
- Threats or intimidation
- Physical assault
- Sabotaging the victim's work
- Making false accusations against the victim

Harassment at work can relate to:

- Sexual Harassment
- Racial Harassment
- National origin Harassment
- Religious Harassment
- Age Harassment
- Disability Harassment

The repercussions of harassment are wide-ranging and far reaching.

For the Victim:

- Anger
- Loss of self confidence
- Loss of sleep
- Loss of appetite
- Feeling demoralised
- Inability to concentrate
- Powerlessness
- Lack of well-being, illness and depression

For the Organisation:

- Reduced Productivity
- Increased absenteeism
- Increased staff turnover
- Litigation and union grievances
- Possible financial claims by victims

3. Use appropriate techniques to solve problems and deal with conflicts

Identifying source of conflict

Understanding and conceptually organising the sources of conflict can greatly help improve the chances of resolving the conflict. Understanding human behaviour can help reveal the motivations of individuals involved in the conflict. While interest analysis illuminates the motivations of individual conflict participants, the process of identifying the sources of conflict illuminates the features of the relationship among conflict participants that foster conflict. It is vital to know that there are usually multiple sources of any given conflict. Leaving one or more sources of conflict may aggravate conflict.

Main Sources of Conflict:

1. Resources
2. Data-type or about facts or laws
3. Preferences and nuisances
4. Differing attributions of causation
5. Communication problems
6. Differences in conflict orientation
7. Structural or interpersonal power
8. Identity
9. Values
10. Displaced and misattributed

Distinguish different types of conflict and Managing different Strategies and Skills for Dealing with Conflict

The five most common types of conflict in the workplace are:

1. Interdependency-based conflicts.

These types of conflict happen when a person relies on someone else's co-operation, output or input in order for them to get their job done. Interdependence conflicts can often be easily overcome by ensuring that people have a good handle on delegation skills; that people are well trained in how to have challenging conversations, that consequences (natural and imposed) are used and that all roles are well clarified while ensuring that each employee is held accountable to their tasks.

2. Differences in Style.

People's preferred way for getting a job done can differ. It is important to keep this in mind when training new employees and managing workload. For example, one person may just want to get the work done quickly (task oriented), while another is more concerned about making sure that everyone has a say in how the work gets done (people oriented). If you understand that people have different styles of working, then you can better manage employee conflicts as they arise.

3. Cultural-based Dissension.

Conflicts can arise between people because of differences in age, educational backgrounds, personal experiences, ethnic heritage, gender and political preferences. As Houston Chronicle writer Ruth Mayhew explains,

“Workplace diversity trainers often mention that there are more similarities among employees than there are differences; however, despite the many common attributes employees share, there still exist cultural differences. Culture is defined as a set of values, practices, traditions or beliefs a group shares, whether due to age, race or ethnicity, religion or gender.”

Source: <http://yfsmagazine.com/2014/02/06/5-common-workplace-conflicts-every-small-business-will-encounter/>

4. Personality Clashes

These types of conflict in the workplace are often fuelled by the differences noted about and end up being ignited by emotions and perceptions about somebody else's motives and character. When left unchecked, that employee (and others) may harbour resentment. The best way to tackle this type of situation is to understand each other's feelings and encourage team members to push their ego's aside.

5. Leadership Conflict

Leaders have different ways of leading their teams. Team members who have to deal with different leaders throughout a day, can become confused and irritated by these different ways of being led. The best way to tackle these differences is to focus on developing a synergistic company culture and core values that guide your team. These principles must be strong enough to offer consistency in decision making and people's overall involvement in the business.

Assertiveness Skills

Assertiveness is the ability to communicate opinions, thoughts, needs, and feelings in a direct, honest, and appropriate manner. Assertiveness involves standing up for your rights in a manner that

does not offend others or deny the rights of others. When you are assertive you have more control over your life. You also make it less likely that other people will take advantage of you. People who are assertive know they have rights but also remember that other people have rights as well.

Assertive people care about other people's feelings and therefore phrase their requests or complaints in a polite but firm manner. These people have a sense of 'give and take' and are co-operative at times of conflict. 4 Assertive people assess each situation and decide which action is most appropriate. They can bend and give in if necessary (for example, if the other person is being difficult because he or she is unwell) or they can stand up for their rights and be strong at other times. Assertive people try to choose the most appropriate behaviour for the situation. These people have control over their behaviour and have respect for themselves and others.

The Importance of Assertive Communication:

1. Allows you to set boundaries with aggressive people
2. Provides an avenue for speaking up confidently on your own behalf — this enhances your visibility and credibility.
3. Allows you to express your ideas and convey your value in your organization, which boosts your self-confidence. This behaviour allows you to establish and project the image of a poised and polished professional.

Assertive Communication is:

- Influencing others
- Setting your boundaries
- Respecting your own rights while still maintaining, whenever possible, a positive professional relationship with the other person
- A form of persuasive communication

How to defend yourself without letting your emotions get the better of you

The key is to defend your position without sounding defensive.

1. **The hit and run** — They dump on you then leave. Tell them you'd like to revisit that issue after you've finished the project you're working on. Give yourself time to think first.
2. **The hallway ambush** — They corner you as you're on your way to do something else and want a response now. Tell them you'll get back with them as soon as you've completed this deadline.
3. **The misplaced blame** — Not even your fault or responsibility. Say, "I can see where you would be frustrated by that. Why don't you talk with Ted about why he chose to handle the project like he did."
4. **The appropriately placed (but over the top) blame** — Your slip. Don't over-apologize, just acknowledge it, and move on.

The importance of dealing with conflict

When you appropriately manage conflict, positive consequences can result. It can lead to a more productive working relationship between you and your boss that:

Increases effort. In many ways, we need our differences to help us clarify our own positions and better understand others. The chaos and confusion that naturally surrounds a search for clarity can actually energize the efforts of all.

Airs feelings. Instead of allowing resentment to build, feelings are dealt with openly. Leads to better decision making. More information leads to better decisions, even if during a conflict situation each side hears information it doesn't want to hear.

Exposes Key Issues. Future conflict is avoided by raising important issues while there is time to address them.

Stimulates critical thinking. Consistently raising (and resolving) disagreements contributes to a thinking organization.

Creates open environments. Understanding and managing conflict robs the situation of its destructive power and builds an environment where ideas are vigorously exchanged.

Stimulates creativity and innovation. Creating an open forum for diverse ideas and perspectives creates space for new ideas and new ways of thinking.

On the contrary, if you mishandle a conflict, it can bring negative consequences. Poor interpersonal skills, such as an inability to manage conflict, aren't the only reason managers derail, but they were the reason cited most often in CCL's research. A mishandled or ignored conflict can have dramatic effects on personal and organizational performance that:

Decreases productivity. Disagreements and clashes rob an otherwise productive relationship of its energy.

Decreases communication. Unmanaged conflict breeds fear and resentment, which makes it more unlikely that people will voice their opinions, views, or ideas.

Increases negative feelings. Clashes create bruised feelings and torn relationships. At worst, the organization may lose valuable individuals who seek other employment.

Increases stress. Conflict takes an emotional and physical toll on the individuals involved.

Decreases cooperation. Organizational units, such as teams or workgroups, may split into factions and cliques, each lobbying its own viewpoint.

Encourages backstabbing. The work environment is poisoned with hidden agendas and back-channel manoeuvrings.

Source: Why Managing Conflict is Important - <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/pdf/publications/whymanageconflict.pdf>

Effects of Conflict

There are two types of conflicts; functional and dysfunctional. Functional conflict results in positive benefits to individuals, a group, or the organization. This type of good conflict can raise awareness of important issues so that they can be addressed. Good conflict carries the potential to be a win-win for your business.

Dysfunctional conflict, on the other hand, can damage group cohesion, promote hostilities among those involved, and create an overall negative environment for employees.

The impact of conflict, whether functional or dysfunctional, can be far-reaching. Functional conflict likely creates positive consequences. It seeks a mutually acceptable solution, creating trust among employees and within your place of business as a whole. It increases the involvement of those who view the subject of the conflict as important and stimulates new ideas and suggestions for your business. Employees can grow and learn from each experience with functional conflicts. You'll quickly see employees express their thoughts or opinions in a stress-free manner, critical for open and honest communication and a staple for any successful business.

Potential Positive Consequences of Functional Conflict

- Leads to new ideas
- Stimulates creativity
- Motivates change
- Promotes organizational vitality
- Helps individuals and groups establish identities
- Serves as a safety valve to indicate problems
- Leads to better communication and understanding of both sides

Dysfunctional conflict can result in negative outcomes. Often, an employee, the team, or the entire business can end up on the losing end of the outcome. Reduced morale, self-esteem, and motivation can lead to name calling, damaged reputations, and diverted attention from important business responsibilities. This type of conflict often wedges barriers between individuals or groups, hindering customer service and creating negative communication, and limiting business success.

Possible Negative Consequences of Dysfunctional Conflict

- Diverts energy from work
- Lowers morale
- Threatens psychological well-being
- Wastes resources
- Creates a negative climate
- Breaks down group cohesion
- Can increase hostility and aggressive behaviors

Problem solving Strategies

Resolving dysfunctional conflict requires attention to detail to move toward a resolution. One popular technique to resolve dysfunctional conflict adheres to six guidelines:

1. **Prepare**

You must establish a time and place to discuss and resolve the conflict. Be sure to choose a neutral location that's free from distractions. Include all relevant personnel in the meeting and provide involved parties the time to prepare for the meeting.

2. **Listen and Acknowledge Feelings**

Every side usually has something useful to say. Employees often need to feel they have been heard and understood before they have the capability to listen. Understand where they are coming from before you voice your opinion or thoughts.

3. **Find Common Ground**

Find areas that all parties can agree on, and move toward those areas. Make suggestions of compromises that both sides can make. Bring up points on how resolving the situation can benefit all involved. Create that win-win situation usually found in functional conflict.

4. **Facilitate Communication**

Make sure all parties have equal time to talk and express their views. You may need to act as a referee. Make sure everyone understands what is being said. You may want to ask questions to clarify unclear points.

5. **Decrease Defensiveness**

Use a relaxed, confident tone when speaking to a group that is in conflict. When trying to resolve conflict among your employees, you should not show them how you feel about the subject. Lay the groundwork on what needs to be decided and let them arrive at a conclusion.

6. **Reduce Stress**

When both sides feel strongly about an issue it can cause tension. Emotions can run high and some employees may not be able to think clearly. You can reduce tension by giving people time to cool down, injecting humor, or turning to less sensitive issues.

Source: <http://buildmybiz.com/material/conflict-resolution-importance/>

Problem Solving Methods

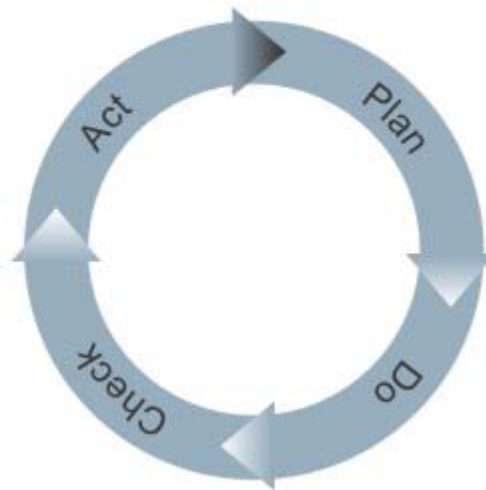
Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA)

The four phases in the Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle involve:

- **Plan:** Identifying and analyzing the problem.
- **Do:** Developing and testing a potential solution.
- **Check:** Measuring how effective the test solution was, and analyzing whether it could be improved in any way.
- **Act:** Implementing the improved solution fully.

There can be any number of iterations of the "Do" and "Check" phases, as the solution are refined, retested, re-refined and retested again.

Figure 1: The Plan-Do-Check-Act Cycle



Source: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newPPM_89.htm

PLAN:

The purpose of this phase is to investigate the current situation, fully understand the nature of any problem to be solved, and to develop potential solutions to the problem that will be tested.

1. Identify and prioritize quality improvement opportunities. Usually a team will find that there are several problems, or quality improvement opportunities, that arise when programs or processes are investigated. A prioritization matrix⁸ may help in determining which one to select. Once the quality improvement opportunity has been decided, articulate a problem statement. Revisit and, as appropriate, revise the problem statement as you move through the planning process.

2. Develop an AIM statement that answers the following questions:

- a. What are you seeking to accomplish?
- b. Who is the target population?
- c. What is the specific, numeric measure(s) you are seeking to achieve?
- d. The measurable improvement objective is a key component of the entire quality improvement process. It's critical to quantify the improvement you are seeking to achieve. Moreover, the entire aim statement also will need to be revisited and refined as you move through the planning phase.

3. Describe the current process surrounding the problem in order to understand the process and identify areas for improvements. Flow charts and value stream mapping are two examples of methods to accomplish this.

4. Collect data on the current process. Baseline data that describe the current state are critical to further understanding the process and establishing a foundation for measuring improvements. The data may address, for example, time, people, space, cost, number of steps, adverse events, and customer satisfaction. A host of tools are available to collect and interpret data on the process, such as Pareto charts, histograms, run charts, scatter plots and control charts. The data collected must be aligned with the measures listed in the aim statement.

5. Identify all possible causes of the problem and determine the root cause. While numerous causes will emerge when examining the quality improvement opportunity, it is critical to delve in and carefully identify the underlying, or root, cause of the problem, in order to ensure that an improvement or intervention with the greatest chance of success is selected. Brainstorming is a useful way to identify possible causes and a cause and effect/fishbone diagram and the 5 Whys are useful for determining the actual root cause.

6 Identify potential improvements to address the root cause, and agree on which one to test. Once the improvement has been determined, carefully consider any unintended consequences that may emerge as a result of the implementing improvement. This step provides an opportunity to alter the improvement and/or develop countermeasures as needed to address any potential unintended consequences. Revisiting the aim statement and revising the measurable improvement objectives are important steps at this point.

7. Develop an improvement theory. An improvement theory¹⁰ is a statement that articulates the effect that you expect the improvement to have on the problem. Writing an improvement theory crystallizes what you expect to achieve as a result of your intervention, and documents the connection between the improvement you plan to test and the measurable improvement objective.

8. Develop an action plan indicating what needs to be done, who is responsible, and when it should be completed. The details of this plan should include all aspects of the method to test the improvements – what data will be collected, how frequently data are collected, who collects the data, how they are documented, the timeline, and how results will be analyzed.

DO:

The purpose of this phase is to implement the action plan.

1. Implement the improvement.
2. Collect and document the data.
3. Document problems, unexpected observations, lessons learned and knowledge gained.

CHECK/STUDY: This phase involves analyzing the effect of the intervention. Compare the new data to the baseline data to determine whether an improvement was achieved, and whether the measures in the aim statement were met. Pareto charts, histograms, run charts, scatter plots, control charts and radar charts are all tools that can assist with this analysis.

1. Reflect on the analysis, and consider any additional information that emerged as well. Compare the results of your test against the measurable objective.
2. Document lessons learned, knowledge gained, and any surprising results that emerged

ACT: This phase marks the culmination of the planning, testing, and analysis regarding whether the desired improvement was achieved as articulated in the aim statement, and the purpose is to act upon what has been learned. Options include:

- 1. Adopt:** Standardize the improvement if the measurable objective in the aim statement has been met. This involves establishing a mechanism for those performing the new process to measure and

monitor benchmarks on a regular basis to ensure that improvements are maintained. Run charts or control charts are two examples of tools to monitor performance.

2. Adapt: The team may decide to repeat the test, gather different data, revise the intervention, or otherwise adjust the test methodology. This might occur, for example, if sufficient data weren't gathered, circumstances have changed (e.g., staffing, resources, policy, environment, etc.), or if the test results fell somewhat short of the measurable improvement goal. In this case, adapt the action plan as needed and repeat the "Do" phase.

3. Abandon: If the changes made to the process did not result in an improvement, consider lessons learned from the initial test, and return to the "Plan" phase. At this point the team might revisit potential solutions that were not initially selected, or delve back into a root cause analysis to see if additional underlying causes can be uncovered, or even reconsider the aim statement to see if it's realistic. Whatever the starting point, the team will then need to engage in the Plan cycle to develop a new action plan, and move through the remaining phases.

PDCA offers a data-based framework based on the scientific method. This simple yet powerful format drives continuous and ongoing efforts to achieve measurable improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness, performance, accountability, outcomes, and other indicators of quality in services or processes which achieve equity and improve the health of the community.

Source: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/portals/1/documents/1200/phs-qitrng6.pdf>