

## **Conflict Resolution Techniques**

People working in close contact with each other will have misunderstandings, irritations, and complaints from time to time. Even minor problems can develop into major problems if not resolved in a satisfactory manner.

The majority of job-related problems can be resolved by the parties involved through open, honest communication.

The following process is outlined as a suggested means of discussing problems with your co-workers.

1. Schedule discussions at a time that is mutually convenient for all parties involved. This scheduling will ensure that there is sufficient time for focused and thorough discussion.
2. State the issue at hand before beginning the discussion.
3. Each party should state, without rationalization or justification, the results they desire from the discussion.
4. Each party should state briefly their perception of the issue(s) at hand and possible solutions.
5. All parties should then work together to reach all goals (or reasonable compromises) set forth in Step 3. During this step:
  - a. **NEVER** interrupt someone while he or she is speaking.
  - b. Keep your points brief (under 1 minute).
  - c. Use the goals set forth in Step 3 as starting points for discussion.
  - d. Don't focus on the problem or its causes. Keep the discussion focused on **solving** the problem.

The intent of this procedure is to establish and maintain open lines of communication. While this process certainly guarantees no particular result, it does present opportunities to explore a problem from all points of view in an open and productive manner.

If after making a good faith effort, you are not able to resolve conflicts yourself, then seek the assistance of your supervisor.