

Generating solutions in conflict situations

Professional Skills

Theme:
Conflict handling skills

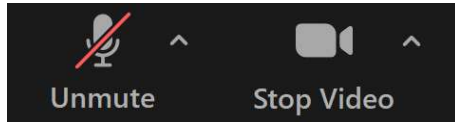
Before we start, please make sure...

- ✓ your name on Zoom is clear (use Latin letters)
- ✓ your camera is on and mic is off (unmute when needed)
- ✓ you are in a quiet area that helps you focus
- ✓ you have a notebook or a note app ready to take notes

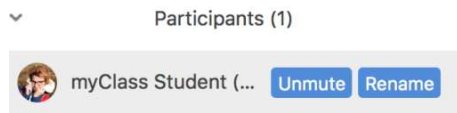


Zoom features

Check your audio and video settings

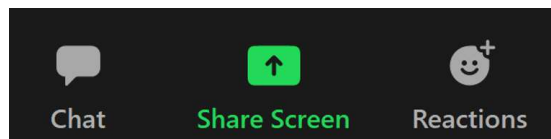


Use Latin letters for your name



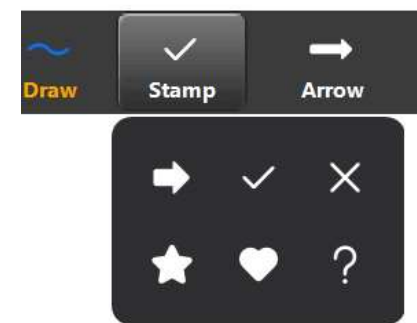
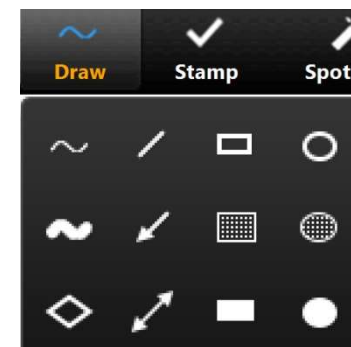
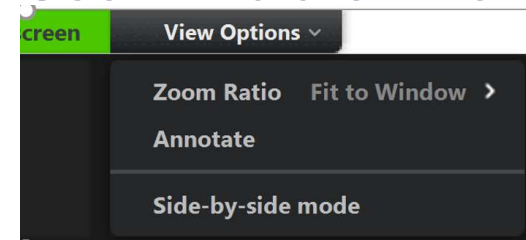
Ask questions in the Chat or use Reactions

Share Screen when the teacher asks



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Use Annotate when a screen is shared



Use Save to make screenshots

How does it work?

You need to complete all three parts to get the most out of your course.

Prepare
before class



Live class



Practise
after class

Pre-class activities



Your learning journey

As a result of this lesson, you should be better able to...

propose relevant and realistic solutions in conflict situations.

You will find out about...

- generating ideas to be used to conflict situations.
- evaluating generated ideas.
- selecting techniques to use in conflict situations.

You will practise...

identifying a relevant and realistic solution to a conflict situation.



Lead in

Think of a recent conflict situation that you have experienced or witnessed.

- Who was involved?
- What was it about?
- Was it resolved? If yes, how?
- If not, why not?

Share your stories.



Skills focus 1: A problem-solving process

Complete step two of the problem-solving process for your conflict situation

Step 1 Establish the conflict situation.	Step 2 List your and the other party's needs and wants.	Step 3 Brainstorm possible solutions.	Step 4 Evaluate the options.	Step 5 Select the best possible solution under the circumstances.
<p>Ensure both parties are clear on what the issue is that needs addressing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is involved?• What is happening? (Facts)• What is the type of conflict? (e.g., value, task, relationship)• What emotions are involved?• What behaviours are being seen?• What have we tried already?	<p>Establish these collaboratively where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What do you/they need and want from this situation?• Why do you/they need this resolved?• Why is this important to you/ them?• Which needs or wants would you/they be willing to compromise on?• Which ones are non-negotiable? <p>Use your answers to help you select your conflict handling approach (Competing, Avoiding, Accommodating, Compromising, Collaborating)</p>	<p>Brainstorm individually or collaboratively depending on your approach. There are no good or bad ideas at this stage.</p> <p>For a collaborative approach, ask speculative questions to suggest ideas and address both sets of needs and wants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What if we... ,?• How about... ,?• What might... ,?• Why not... ,?• Could we try... ,?	<p>Use relevant criteria to narrow down your options in relation to your approach and the situation. Discuss options with the other party where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the pros and cons?• To what extent do they meet the needs wants of you/ the other party?• Which ones are you comfortable/ not comfortable doing?• Which have the most mutually-acceptable benefits?• Which ones are non-negotiable for you/them?• How feasible are they to implement? (e.g time, resources)	<p>Ask closed questions to build agreement for the proposed solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Am I/Are we happy with what we've discussed?• Is this something I/we can commit to?• Would this realistically work?• Could a combination of solutions be used for a more viable outcome?

Skills focus 2: Techniques for generating solutions



Brainstorming

Use this well-known technique to **generate solution ideas** for your conflict situation in relation to your approach.



Forced association

Use this technique to **compare your conflict situation to an unrelated concept** and see what solution ideas emerge.



Forming agreements

Use this technique to **generate solution ideas** for mutually improving your conflict situation.

Skills focus 2: Techniques for generating solutions

Which technique below uses forced association and which uses forming agreements?

1. Select an object or concept to represent your conflict situation or relationship you want to improve.
2. Ask, 'How is this situation like... ?'
3. From your answers, generate ideas that can improve your situation.

For example:

Situation: *Disagreement with a colleague*

Concept: *Football pitch:*

- *Two sides:* we don't always recognise there are two 'sides' or perspectives to a situation
- *Goal posts:* We ultimately both want the same outcome
- *Net:* We have supported each other in the past
- *Grass:* Our relationship needs 'watering' to keep it growing
- *Green:* I sometimes feel jealous of their success

From these insights, generate ideas to improve each aspect of the situation

This technique is attributed to Alex Osborn, the US marketer and creative thinker who authored the original notion of brainstorming.

1. Each party works individually on a piece of paper/flipchart.
2. Use the IDEA acronym to generate solutions that could move the forward to a positive outcome.
Ask: "What behaviour, actions, policies, processes, systems, habits, thoughts or emotions could be..."
I: Introduced
D: Dropped
E: Extended
A: Adjusted
3. Once finished, come together to review commonalities which can to form mutually agreed solutions.

For example:

- *Introduce...* set some time in team meetings to... create opportunities
- *Drop...* stop using blaming language... don't interrupt when listening
- *Extend...* allow some flexibility when... continue to....
- *Adjust...* review policy on... ask for input on...

This technique is an example of 'restorative practice' which grew from the 'restorative justice' movement in the 1970's. The aim is to handle conflict and tensions through repairing harm and building relationships

Skills focus 2: Techniques for generating solutions

Forced association

Use this technique to compare your conflict situation to an unrelated concept and see what ideas emerge.

1. Select an object or concept to represent your conflict situation or relationship you want to improve.
2. Ask, 'How is this situation like... ?'
3. From your answers, generate ideas that can improve your situation.

For example:

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From these insights, generate ideas to improve each aspect of the situation

This technique is attributed to Alex Osborn, the US marketer and creative thinker who authored the original notion of brainstorming.

Forming agreements

Use this technique to generate ideas for mutually improving a current conflict situation.

1. Each party works individually on a piece of paper/flipchart.
2. Use the IDEA acronym to generate solutions that could move the situation forward to a positive outcome.
Ask: "What behaviour, actions, policies, processes, systems, habits, thoughts or emotions could be..."
I: Introduced
D: Dropped
E: Extended
A: Adjusted
3. Once finished, come together to review commonalities which can be used to form mutually agreed solutions.

For example:

- *Introduce...* set some time in team meetings to... create opportunities to...
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Task



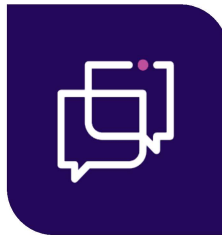
Task: Putting it all together



1. Summarise your conflict situation.
2. Generate ideas for each situation using both techniques (forced association and forming agreements).
3. Note down your ideas.



Task: Evaluating options



- Share your ideas with your partner.
- Using the questions on the next slide, evaluate each other's responses and choose the most appropriate solution.

Task: Questions to consider when evaluating options

- Help your partner evaluate their options.
- Use as many of the questions below as necessary to help evaluate the most relevant options.
- Consider their approach when evaluating.

Which needs/wants does it meet?
(their and the other party's)

Are they willing to do it?/ Will the
other party be willing to do it?

What are the main benefits?

Do they have the necessary
resources?

Is it a short term or long-term
option?

What are the main drawbacks?

Do they have the required time?

What emotions might it generate in
them or the other party?

Do the benefits outweigh the
drawbacks?

Based on your evaluation, which solution(s) do you propose for handling their conflict situation?

Task: feedback

- **How useful were the techniques for generating solutions?**
- **Would you make any changes?**
- **Did you find anything challenging when generating solutions to your conflict situation?**
- **What could help you overcome this?**

Your learning journey: assess your progress

Now you are better able to...

propose relevant and realistic solutions in conflict situations.

You have found out about...

- generating ideas to be used to conflict situations.
- evaluating generated ideas.
- selecting techniques to use in conflict situations.

You have practised...

identifying a relevant and realistic solution to a conflict situation.



What's next?

1. Don't forget to complete the post lesson activities
2. Read more about generating solutions to conflict:

<https://www.universalclass.com/articles/business/the-role-of-brainstorming-in-the-mediation-process.htm>

<https://www.mediate.com/seven-steps-for-effective-problem-solving-in-the-workplace/>

<https://restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-practice-workplace>

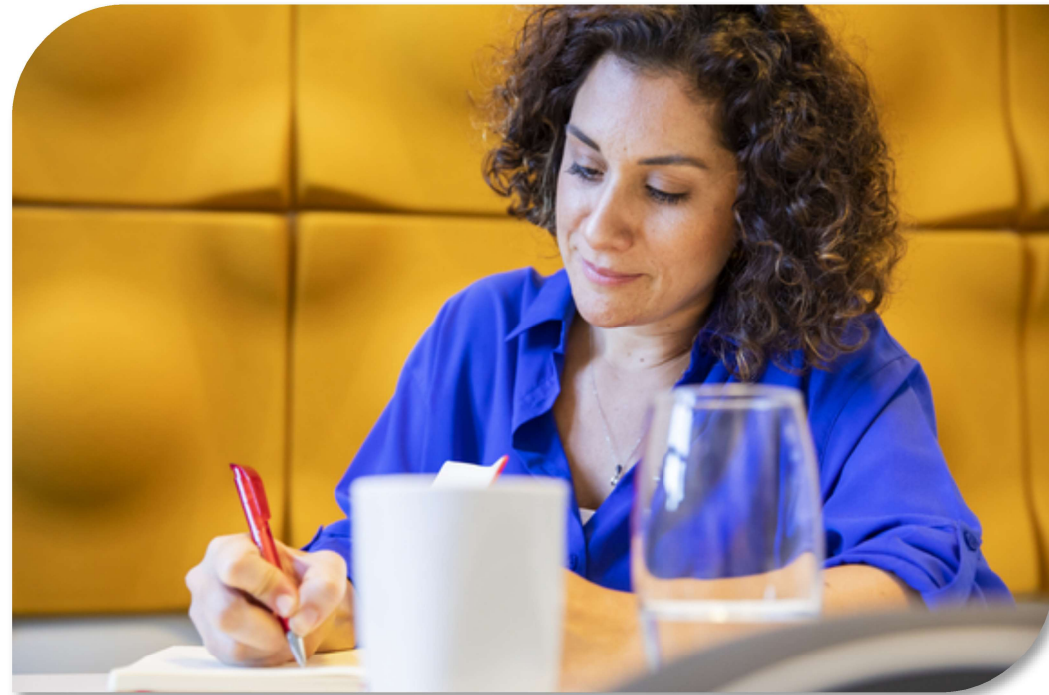


Generating creative solutions

Action planning

Set yourself some goals to improve your conflict-handling skills.

- How useful were the techniques for generating solutions? Would you make any changes?
- Did you find anything challenging when generating solutions to your conflict situation? What could help you overcome this?
- What support do you need to get commitment for your solution?



Materials

Make sure you have

- downloaded the materials shared by the teacher
- saved the Zoom Chat



What do you think?

Do you like our new Professional Skills themes?

What did you think of the online activities?

What further information do you need?

For more information, write to

support.englishonline@britishcouncil.org



Teacher's Notes

This slide deck was adapted by Reshmi Murali.

Notes

Share your thoughts about the lesson with the next teacher