



# Conflict and Communication

At some point you will inevitable run into a conflict. In such situations it is most important to stay calm and don't panic. Try to find the source of your conflict and resolve it. Usually there is not a conflict of interest but just a miscommunication. If you need some inspiration, check out the concept of [Non-Violent Communication](#) by Marshall Rosenberg.

## What Is Conflict

Conflict can be described in many different words, for example clashing, quarreling or discord.

The English dictionary defines conflict as a situation in which people, groups, or countries are involved in a serious disagreement

As we continue in our journey at 42 Wolfsburg it is important to create an open discourse around this topic to better enable us to progress and not remain stagnant.

There are thousands of books that deal with the theories of conflict as it often impacts our lives not only in a professional capacity but in personal capacity.

So how do we deal with this? Sadly there is no one shoe fits all for this situation , but we hope that by reading this you start thinking about the conflicts in your own life and start using our simple steps guideline as a basis to do more research and arm yourself with the knowledge to better deal with conflict as it arises . We want you to feel empowered to take the steps required to resolve your own conflicts .

When we talk about the idea of conflict , we are focused on group conflict within the 42 Wolfsburg environment and the peer to peer learning model , as advised this is a complex topic and we offer this document as a simple start point.

Our 4 steps guideline is as follows :

1. Understand the Issue
2. Set a vision
3. Explore Alternatives
4. Agree on Action

## Understanding the issue

Conflict can arise as a result of many reasons . These can include but are not limited to a difference in ideological or spiritual outlook, difference in identity , frustrations , or a lack of knowledge, skills and experience for overcoming differences. It is therefore important to understand the possible cause to be able to effectively deal with conflict. It is also important to understand that the real reason for conflict can at times be hidden and therefore one should tread carefully when it comes to making any assumptions. Ultimately we have to be willing to listen to the other parties involved, to gain a **better understanding** of the issue at hand .

One key aspect of understanding conflict could be a review of the conflict triangle



The Conflict Triangle by J .Galtung

In The Conflict Triangle by J .Galtung , he argues that conflict arises as a result of these three aspects , our attitude , behaviour and contradictions. Therefore when faced with a conflict this can be a basic start point to understand the root of issue , allowing us to introspectively reflect before assessing the other person.

## **Envision a good Outcome / Goals**

It is important that once the issue has been discussed and understood , that those involved set out a objective moving forward, these could be to:

- Improve the relationship
- Resolve the team issue
- Become compliant with school policy
- Ensure better communication for further collaborations

We believe that working together to articulate a vision for the future will help create a positive mind frame allowing those involved to try to move past the conflict and look ahead.

## **Explore Alternatives**

At this stage, those involved must work together to decide how to move forward this can include asking the following questions:

- What can we do to avoid this situation?
- How can we help each other?
- Do we understand each other better now?

or there might be statements that will need to be made for example :

- I'll need a little time to process this before we talk some more...
- For future reference i sometimes need a bit of time to understand...
- For the next evaluation please be mindful that i have difficulty with...

## **Agree on Actions**

We are hopeful that if you have reached this stage, you have probably already come to a conclusion and agreed on what to do next. However in some cases the conflict has not been resolved, in which case we suggest that you agree to take some time

to think about the issue and this might even mean you need to escalate the conversation and notify the the student ombudsman.

In any case it is important to ensure that at the end there is a clarity about who is going to do what.

*We would like to remind you that although we want you to be empowered to deal with any conflict as this is a great training ground for learning to deal with conflict as conflict will certainly arise in your professional lives , we understand that in some situations there is a requirement for us to get involved and we encourage you to feel comfortable to contact a 42 Wolfsburg staff member in these cases .*