

GNED 1118 - Conflict & Resolution - Week 1 Class Notes

Date: Jan 9th 2024

Professor: Dale Burt

Course name: "No More Drama"

Description: An overview of conflict and resolution skills that can be used in personal life. There are research and polls that support the idea that interpersonal communication skills are going down. More and more people lack the skills to resolve conflicts and meet them with grace. At the end of the course, you will have skills you can't "un-know" that are applicable for every aspect of your life. From work, to personal relationships, and all aspects of your life.

Prof background: Dale designed the course to be fun and practical. It's application, concepts, and theories that can actually be used.

We are not doormats. We will be taught skills that help us achieve a "win-win" outcome.

Prof has been in the world of conflict resolution for 28 years in the oil and gas industry. She had a consulting business helping people resolve conflicts. She would go into workplaces to help people resolve conflicts, from executives to management to employees. She also taught mediation, conflict analysis, and conflict-coaching (how to not get fired).

Everything learned in this course will be useful in mediation contexts.

People don't want to talk about conflict with HR or someone within the company. Having someone who is an outside 3rd party can help people to share their story and open up, because it is safer psychologically.

Professor Burt has a Master's degree in community psychology.

Course Intro

- 14 weeks
- If you want a high mark, stay engaged and come to class. If you want the high marks, Dale will let us know how to achieve that.
- This course is 3 hours a week, with 1 hour asynchronous (A for ANY TIME)
 - The Async part should be done **before** coming to class. Check the **weekly content folder** on DC Connect.
 - It's mostly watch something, jot something down, listening to something.
 - It's Dale's goal to load the content for next week within an hour of the last class ending. It will be loaded within 24 hours.

We will demonstrate what we learned from all of these things within our assignments. Every question on the assignment will have been asked and talked about already in class and in the readings. The number one recommendation is to have a pen and a notebook.

Pen-paper: because we learn and retain more when we take notes by hand vs. typing. It's not mandatory, but it is a highly encouraged suggestion.

Introduction regarding DC Connect

Under "[Welcome \(start here\)](#)" there is everything we need to know about the course in general. Within the weekly content folders, we will have an overview of what we need to do. Some of that will be repetitive (reminding us to complete the async learning, etc.) but will also include details and stories.

Note Don't ask the prof what you missed if you missed a class. Use other resources like classmates and DC connect. Get a buddy, ask to borrow their notes, etc. If you need help on an assignment, that is something the prof can and should have time to help you with.

The weekly overview will note anything that is due for **the week after the week in which it is posted**.

[Weekly at-a-glance](#) is worth printing. It is a rubric of all the assignments, due dates, etc.

It won't be easy to guess the answers to quizzes, but it will be completely do-able if you come to class and do the async learning.

Course outline: It's a contract that had to be created a year in advance. It is what the prof is required to deliver. There are no dates because it is applicable to other classes & cohorts. The weekly-at-a-glance file is where you go for the exact due dates for this specific class & cohort.

The Course Learning Outcomes from the course outline are a great resource for loading your resume with real actionable skills that you have learned.

Slide 6

- Recognize nature and scope of conflict, as well as root causes, to inform analysis.
- Distinguish conflict positions from interests for the purpose of generating viable resolution options
- recognize principled negotiation and mediation as interested based approaches to conflict resolution that can create enduring win-win outcomes.
- Differentiate five conflict res strats people use to handle interpersonal conflict, along the dimensions of assertiveness and cooperativeness.
- Identify essential conflict resolution communication behaviours that, when applied in principled negotiation and mediation, will increase understanding in a conflict and impact resolution.

Slide 7

- Critical reflections: 30%
- Open-notes quiz 1: 25%
- Conflict case analysis group assignment: 25%
- Open-notes quiz 2: 20%

When it comes to assessments, Dale does not think learning = memorizing. She wants us to know how to apply the knowledge. Employers want to know you can adopt different conflict resolution styles if the situation calls for it -- not whether you know all 5. Application and being resourceful in finding ways to **apply concepts to different scenarios**.

Dale doesn't think that we should be rushed to find the right answer. Sometimes we need time to think about something. There's no time limit on these assessments and assignments, so there's no added stress of memorizing or speed.

The quizzes will be done online with open-notes.

For group assignments, align with people who have the same academic goals and energy as you.

Don't tell Dale about your medical history, it's none of her business and she doesn't want to know. If you don't come to class, you don't have to tell her. Own your own education, decide for yourself whether you are coming to class.

Conduct Expectations

Together we will foster a learning environment of respectful curiosity, and seek to understand different points of view and lived experiences i.e respectful engagement within and across differences.

1. Allow space for transformative learning (including Unlearning) in yourself and others
2. Seek to understand. Listen with curiosity.
3. Do not share someone else's story without their expressed consent.

Let's not make assumptions, let's ask questions from a place of curiosity. We don't have to agree with the person we're in conflict with in order to resolve a conflict in a win-win situation. Listen more than speak.

Always behave professionally. If you don't like someone, they may never know, if you are behaving professional. Emotions are fine but how we interact with one another matters the most in interpersonal conflicts.

Dale prefers Q&A in class if it can be asked in class, otherwise she has to respond to 56+ emails. (56 people in class).

Dale is available and willing to meet with students, usually for 10 minutes at a time. Before and after class is preferred, but she can do a quick teams call.

Keep up on the weekly content. It's doable every week, but if you wait a few weeks and then catch up, it can be overwhelming. So do the small chunks every week -- Choose the path for yourself. Choose the path that will be the least struggle. If you get to pick a topic for an assignment, pick something that will be easy for you. Don't create your own struggles that put you in a bind. Don't create stress for yourself.

Taking notes to prepare for an assignment is less struggle, so choose to do that.

Tips for success

- Attend and engage in class.
- Take notes and be sure to jot down key takeaways from any activities we do in class.
- Use your notes for assignments and the two "open note" tests.

Week 1 Content Begins: Let's talk about conflict

- Most of us have a "negative" association with the word Conflict.
- Socialization, world-events and history

- Entertainment, media, etc.

Many of us are taught to avoid or to be afraid of conflict. It's not the conflict itself that is bad, but it's the behaviours associated with conflict can be bad. Humans should expect to be in conflict a lot, we all want different things. To be in conflict *is human*. What makes it difficult is when people don't listen, when people manipulate us, lie, bully, yell, interrupting, etc. All the "Drama" behaviours we associate with "Conflict".

Conflict is actually an opportunity to meet the needs of both people. In and of itself, it isn't bad. If we've been silenced, bullied, manipulated, threatened into conceding. If we try to raise a conflict and have been oppressed or dismissed or not believed, those are behaviours around conflict that make us fear it. That make it uncomfortable.

We're going to learn how to think about conflict and approach the resolution through a lens that will make you feel empowered. To make you feel that you and the other person can both win.

- Why do many people dislike trying to resolve conflict?
 - It's stressful to have to decide an outcome
 - Pride and ego
 - Winner / loser
 - Right / wrong
 - Looks bad to acknowledge the conflict
 - Don't know how to resolve it
 - Fear of the outcome
 - Saving face

In every case, there is fear involved. The mediator needs to tap in to relax the fear through seeking understanding and verbalizing the problem in a way that puts their fears at ease.

- What does conflict "drama" look like (observable behaviours)?
 - Don't interrupt me
 - Don't tell me what I'm feeling
 - Don't blame me for stuff I didn't do
 - Don't assume what I said means something other than what I said.

We can't control the other person in the conflict. We can hope that they will be better or different, but we can't control it.

Ways of thinking about conflict will help us move through conflicts in our life with a successful win-win outcome.

We will be learning **Interest-based conflict resolution**, which is an alternative to win/lose binary outcome.

Next Week Heads Up - Do this before you come to class.

- Asynchronous work for next week: Activity - A trip down memory lane.
 - A time when we resolved a conflict with another person.
 - Who was involved in the conflict
 - What was the gist of the conflict
 - How did you each act during your attempt at conflict resolution? (what actions or behaviours did you notice in yourself and in the other person?)

- What was the outcome?

Q&A

- Are we covering only interpersonal conflicts or are we covering any collective bargaining type.
- Q about asking Dale questions before / after class. Dale's request is that we be respectful of her time, and ask questions in class where possible.