

# **Self help matters.**

Helping you to find your solutions

## **Managing Conflict**

# Managing Conflict

Conflict is a people-issue, involving a disagreement between individuals or teams. We all have different needs and wants, aspirations and motivations, objectives and ambitions. There is some inevitability that conflict will occur at times, as we battle our respective agendas. The causes of conflict are often associated with insufficient people-skills (management or communication), poor work environments (inadequate training, skill-sets or work opportunities) or can be due to harassment or bullying.

Conflict can emerge because something is important to you or matters. That's normal. But it's how you interpret, deal with and respond to differing views that have the potential to generate a negative conflict.

## Top Tips

**Privacy.** Have a quiet word with the person(s) involved in a private setting. You don't want to do anything in a public environment that compounds any negative sentiments. Be careful about the tone and content of emails.

**Listen.** Conflicts can emerge because people don't feel heard. If you spend time listening to those involved, you'll also build a better picture of what's going on.

**Acknowledge.** People need you to understand them or appreciate their situation. Whether you agree with them or not, reflect back how you hear their story or version of events.

**Feedback.** How you say something can have more weight than what you say.

**Authority.** How you portray your authority is crucial to the resolution potential. Are you treating the people involved as "adults" or in a more "parent-child" manner?

**Respect.** Treat the situation and those involved with respect and your decision will be more likely to be respected.

**Model.** You need to lead by example so others can learn from your actions or behaviour.

**Removal.** If tempers are being lost, de-escalate the situation by taking people (and yourself) out of the situation. Take a break or walk around the campus.

**Consequences.** What you do may have consequences for all those involved. Determine if a short-term solution might have longer-term negative consequences. Play to the long game.

**Formulate.** In a state of anxiety, it can be difficult to get the right words out. Plan and formulate your argument with reasoning, substance and correct information, even if this means practising with a script or a trusted colleague or friend.

**Emotions.** Understand your emotional repertoire or responses so you express the appropriate emotions.

**Protocols.** The University may have procedures that can or should be followed in certain circumstances involving conflict. Know what these are so you know when you need to adhere to them. Not only will this protect your position, but they're likely to offer you some "best practice" action.

**Assertiveness.** Understand when and how you need to assert yourself and avoid the temptation to act aggressively.

**Acceptance.** In some cases, you may simply have a passionate dislike for someone. You might not be able to change them, but you can change how you think, feel or behave towards them.

**Avoid games.** Beware of falling into tit-for-tat, game-playing behaviour. This usually results in a lose-lose situation.

## Resources

### MOODJUICE

How to deal with anger, with a printable self-help guide



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/mildmoderate/Anger.asp](http://www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk/mildmoderate/Anger.asp)

### LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



**Opening Hours:** Online

<https://littf.com/>

### TOGETHER ALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<https://togetherall.com/en-gb/>

### MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



[www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/support)

### MIND

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/](http://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/)

#### **If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following**

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - [www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling)