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**Conflict Resolution**

**Building Conflict Resolution Skills**

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**Discussion ~ Power**

♦ By way of discussing 'power' and how social workers are sometimes ambivalent about the word, do a quick word association.

*Ask:*

¿ When I say the word 'power' what is the first word that pops to mind?

¿ What images does the word bring to mind?

♦ Point out that social workers sometimes ally themselves with people who are powerless and think that power is bad or corrupt or all about ego.

♦ Emphasize that what we are talking about in this section is that we need power to make change, power to make the right things happen for people we care about, and this is power on behalf of the situations and people who are important to us.
Presentation ~ 7 Bases of Power

Display PPT 82-83

- Each individual in an organization has power. This power can be derived from many sources.
- As we all know, power can be abused. Abusing power undermines a Learning Organization.
- Collaborative tactics for building power elevates everyone in an organization.
- Coercive tactics for building power creates fear and animosity in an organization.
- The first three bases of power are formal. By virtue of your position you have been given power.
- The others are informal, and based on personality, character, coercive powers, representation, and relationship.

Activity ~ Increasing Your Power

1. Assign each table one of the seven bases of power.
2. Instruct each group to take 5 minutes to develop a skit to act out that power without using words.
3. As each group acts out their skit, the others will guess which power is being acted out.
Activity ~ Increasing Your Power

1. Refer participants to PG 4, _Seven Bases of Power_

2. Individually, instruct each participant to identify at least one area where he/she can increase the power available to them in their current work setting.

3. Choose a partner and share your idea.

4. As a group, review each of the seven powers again and give an example of each.

Discussion ~ Conflict

*Display PPT 84-86*

Tw;o sisters want an orange, but there is only one orange left. What can they do?

That's what they did. One sister went to the juicer with her half of the orange and started to squeeze herself a drink. The amount turned out to be too small to satisfy her so she threw out the rind. The other sister, with some difficulty, began to grate the rind of her half of the orange to flavor a cake. She then threw out the juicy pulp.

Each sister only got half an orange, when in effect, they could have each had the whole orange.

What could the sisters have done in order to satisfy both of their desires for the orange?

* Read the slide with the story about the orange and the two sisters. Pause and ask the participants what the sisters should do. After someone says “cut the orange in half”, present the next slides.
Ask:

? What could the sisters have done in order for them to each to get what they wanted from the orange?

Suggested responses:

⇒ Talked
⇒ Listened
⇒ Asked one another what the other one wanted

♦ To open the discussion on conflict:

Ask:

? Who in this room has ever had a conflict?

? Who would have liked to have handled at least some of the conflicts you've had differently?

♦ Conflict is a part of life. We can't choose not to have conflict in our lives.

♦ However, we can choose to handle conflict in productive ways rather than reactively or by avoiding it all together (which is NOT a good way to handle conflict!).

Ask:

? Think of a conflict that’s been handled in a destructive way. What were some of the outcomes?

♦ Draw out participant responses and list on a flip chart.

Possible responses:

Tension
Unresolved problems
Stress
Low productivity
Anxiety/Resentment

Ask:

? Think of a conflict that’s been handled in a constructive
way. What were some of the outcomes?

- Draw out participant responses and list on a flip chart.

Possible responses:
  - Relaxation
  - Openness
  - Trust built or confirmed
  - Empowerment
  - Sense of achievement

Presentation ~ Levels of Conflict

*Display PPT 87*

As you display each conflict level, ask the participants to describe the feelings (or behaviors) that go along with that level (e.g., Crisis = not speaking, yelling, violence).

- Conflict can occur with obvious and easily recognizable signs, or with very subtle cues.
- When you stop functioning because all you can think of is the conflict—it has become a crisis.
- If we stay alert for conflict in its early levels, it’s a lot easier to manage.
- **Discomfort level:** The initial feeling that things just aren’t right.
Incident level: Perhaps there’s been an incident that triggers the conflict.

Misunderstanding level: Are the details about the situation unclear? Has there been a misunderstanding?

Tension level: Has communication deteriorated to the point of a high level of tension in the relationship?

Look for clues to conflict at the discomfort or incident level. Dealing with conflict at the lower levels increases the chances of dealing with the situation constructively.

Stay alert! Our response to the initial discomfort or incident shouldn’t be to avoid it or wish it away. Our initial response should be to stay alert and choose an appropriate time to tackle the issue.

Activity ~ Identifying Conflict Levels

1. Refer participants to PG 6, *Levels of Conflict Exercise*

2. Divide class into groups of four.

3. Instruct participants to write down their responses to the questions. Allow 5 minutes.

Ask:

? Can you identify the levels of conflict in any of the situations you’ve listed on the handout?

? Can you trace the development of the conflict by identifying the earlier clues?

Debrief

It’s important to look for the early clues to conflict. Stay alert, be ready to act if and when appropriate.

Try to be positive about conflict and see it as an opportunity to
learn something new or improve a relationship.

- Identifying the level of conflict will help you choose an appropriate strategy.
- Refer participants to PG 7, *Levels of Conflict*. Review.

Discussion ~ Conflict Behaviors

*Display PPT 88-89*

![PPT Slide]

Activity ~ Yes, But...

1. Instruct the participants to determine their own orientation related to conflict.

2. Each participant should prepare a 1 minute or less statement to the class on why their orientation is useful to them.

3. The rest of the class should respond with “Yes, but…”

![Slide with Conflict Behaviors]
The conflict resolution skills we’ve been practicing are the skills used in negotiation, mediation and collaboration. These terms represent a slightly different framework for the same skills.

Negotiation is essential to strengths-based supervision in that a supervisor must be prepared to negotiate with an employee and teach those skills of negotiation to staff so that they may in turn use those skills with their clients (parallel process).

The seven steps we just practiced are the steps toward negotiation.

Strong communication, reinforcing the common goal, and identifying clear timeframes are essential in negotiation.

Sometimes negotiation isn’t affective and it requires a third party to intervene to assist in resolving the conflict. This is called mediation.

Mediation assumes that conflict is a natural occurrence and that everyone will not always see things the same.
In order for a supervisor to be an effective mediator, the supervisor must know his/her employees well enough to know how each handles conflict.

A supervisor can help an employee grow if the supervisor recognizes an employee’s style with conflict. A supervisor can encourage a conflict avoidant employee to assert himself/herself, or an overly aggressive employee (with a strong desire to ‘win’) to step back and try to see the other person’s perspective.

A mediator leads the two parties through the seven steps to a win/win and makes certain both sides are heard.

A supervisor who can demonstrate good mediation skills will help his/her staff by modeling the mediation skills that they can use with their clients (parallel process).

A supervisor might collaborate with an employee to investigate resources and interventions for a client.

Two team members might collaborate to share information about the same case when a case is reopened by a new team member.

Service provision is strengthened through collaboration.

The goal of collaboration is to strengthen service provision. The parallel process here is teaching the employee to collaborate with service providers to obtain services for his or her client. Or collaborating with colleagues to insure home visits are completed thoroughly and timely.

Collaboration recognizes the value of the employee and the employee can in turn recognize the value that he client or family brings to a collaboration.
Activity ~ Sales Pitch

1. Assign each table: Win/Win, Negotiation, Mediation, Collaboration.
2. Instruct participants to design a sales poster for their assigned means of dealing with conflict.
3. They can use flip chart paper, markers, and whatever other supplies are available.
4. The sales campaign should inform and convince (using the information in their handouts) including when to use this method.
5. Instruct participants to develop and deliver a 1 minute sales pitch to go with their poster.
6. Allow 20 minutes for preparation and 2 - 3 minutes each for presentation and discussions.

Summarize

♦ Conflict is part of human interaction. There’s no way to avoid conflict especially in this type of work.

♦ Acknowledging conflict and strengthening conflict resolution skills will allow you to work through conflict as use it as a productive force in your personal and work lives.

Transition

♦ Studies show that the greatest sense of satisfaction employees gain from their work is recognition. Even more than higher salaries, most people want to be acknowledged and recognized for their contributions in the work place.

♦ Let’s talk about how to reward and recognize employees.
# Effective Reward and Recognition Techniques

## Objectives - Display PPT 93
- Identify effective methods of reward and recognition.
- Create a plan to begin rewarding and recognizing your team.

## Activity ~ How Do You Like to be Recognized?
1. Refer participants to PG 11, *How Do You Like to be Recognized?* Ask participants to complete the survey individually.
2. Refer participants to the Score Sheet on PG 12 and ask each person to score their answers.
3. Present PPT 94 and explain the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

### Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation
- Extrinsic factors are forms of recognition that come from outside the person and appeal to their outer-directed self.
- Intrinsic motivators appeal to the inner self, as they focus on things that might only be important to the person.

- Explain that extrinsic factors are forms of recognition that come from outside the person and appeal to their outer-directed self. Intrinsic motivators appeal to the inner self, as they focus on things that might only be important to the person.
- They both have their place, and one is not better than the other.
- Rewards and recognition need to match the preferences of the receiver. Someone who appreciates extrinsic rewards may not be highly motivated by an intrinsic reward. On the other hand, someone who prefers intrinsic rewards may actually be embarrassed by...
extrinsic rewards and your efforts to reward may actually wind up
punishing the person!

4. Ask for volunteers to share their results and talk more specifically
about what motivates and what de-motivates them and why cer-
tain things would be especially appealing while others would be a
real turn-off.

5. Ask people to share some examples of recognition they have re-
ceived in the past and how they reacted to it.

Debrief

♦ What did you learn about yourself as a result of this activity?
♦ What did you learn about recognition? About motivation?
♦ How will this knowledge influence the way you reward and recog-
nize your team?

Presentation ~ Praising Your Staff

Compensation is a right; recognition is a gift.
—Rosabeth Moss Kanter, author and management consultant

Effective Praise Should Be...

♦ Spontaneous
♦ Specific
♦ Purposeful
♦ Private or Public
♦ In writing

♦ Spontaneous—Catch people doing something right and thank
them then and there. Leave voice-mail recognition messages
(takes less than a minute).

♦ Specific—Praise people for specific (rather than generic) accom-
plishments or efforts. “Good job” is less meaningful than “Your
presentation was right on the mark.”

♦ Purposeful—Make it clear that their performance caught your at-
tention. There needs to be a clear connection between the praise
or recognition and the employee’s performance.

- Private or public depending on what the employee prefers. Again, be careful giving public recognition to someone who prefers private. Public recognition to someone who prefers private could wind up feeling like punishment to the recipient.

- In writing—Send a letter, memo, or email. Possibly send a copy to other team members or higher management. Many people hold onto written praise for years. It’s very meaningful to them.

Activity ~ Ten Sentences

1. Refer participants to *PG 14, 10 Sentences That Will Help You Retain Your Best Employees*.

2. Instruct the participants to take a few minutes to think of specific employees that they can finish these sentences for. Tell them to finish as many as they can.

3. Ask for volunteers to share some of their completed sentences by telling who the praise is for and what the employee did that the supervisor wants to recognize them for.

4. Suggest that it would be a good idea to transfer these sentiments to a note or email to be given to the employee.

5. Open the discussion up to ask for volunteers to share other creative ways they’ve rewarded and recognized their employees.
Discussion ~ How Do You Recognize Your Staff?

1. Prepare a flip chart with the heading “Increase Job Satisfaction, Improve Retention”

2. List:
   - Challenging Job
   - Growth Opportunities
   - Flexibility
   - Great Co-Workers
   - Meaningful Work
   - Good Boss
   - Recognition

3. Ask participants to share ways they have recognized their staff.

4. Share these suggestions:
   - “Catch a Star” send a star to a co-worker with a recognition statement. Then publish it in the District newsletter.
   - Wall of Fame (bulletin board with letters of appreciation, etc.)
   - Use a token of recognition (plush toy “whale”) that gets passed on periodically based on job “whale done.”
   - Have employees accompany supervisor to meetings.
   - Schedule them for training.

5. Refer participants to two resources: “Love Em or Lose Em” by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordon-Evans and “Contented Cows” by Bill Catlette and Richard Hadden.

Summarize

- Rewards and recognition are inexpensive (most often free!) yet invaluable ways to raise employee morale and keep employees invested in doing good work.

- Remind everyone projects will be presented at next scheduled session. *(Trainer—Prepare a calendar scheduling when each person (s) will present).*