# COLLABORATIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT TIPS

***Attitude is everything!***

Start with a positive attitude about conflict. Remind yourself that conflict can be an

opportunity---for growth, progress, improvement, greater understanding, and better services, programs or products.

***Talk with me, not about me***.

 Don’t rely on second-hand information---go to the “source.” Those who have the conflict are usually best able to resolve the conflict so deal directly with the others involved.

***Take a cue from Aretha –* R-E-S-P-E-C-Tis critical.**

Think about how to approach the other party respectfully. Remember that others are *people* first---with emotions, values, different backgrounds and viewpoints. Follow the ground rule of no name-calling or put-downs. Be careful with language.

***Own your stuff.***

Start by acknowledging your part of the problem. Use “I” statements, not “You” statements. A sincere apology often opens the door to constructive discussion.

***Create a “space” to work it out.***

* Find a place to meet that is neutral, safe, and private.
* Consider timing needs: time for cooling off; time to prepare; convenient for all.
* Choose ground rules together.

***See the problem clearly before trying to solve it.***

 The obvious issue is often not the most important issue, nor the only issue. Take time to uncover the underlying issues as they often are key to lasting conflict resolution.

***Listen Up!***

 Conflict resolution is 80% listening, 20% problem-solving. Be sure you *understand* what is being said *before* you compose your response.

***Don’t get stuck in positions.***

 **Positions** are **what** people say they want; **interests** are **why** they want it.

 Positions ⇒⇒⇒⇒ power struggle

Interests ⇒⇒⇒⇒ negotiation

***Everybody matters.***

 Include all parties in problem solving and look for solutions that everyone can live with.

***Conflict is a natural part of life so plan for it.***

Develop policies, procedures and systems for dealing with conflict.Include

stakeholders in the planning.

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