

## **WHAT IS CONFLICT RESOLUTION?**

**Conflict, arguments, and change are natural parts of our lives, as well as the lives of every agency, organization, and nation.**

**Conflict resolution is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement among them. The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional.**

**When a dispute arises, often the best course of action is negotiation to resolve the disagreement.**

**The goals of negotiation are:**

- **To produce a solution that all parties can agree to**
- **To work as quickly as possible to find this solution**
- **To improve, not hurt, the relationship between the groups in conflict**

**Conflict resolution through negotiation can be good for all parties involved. Often, each side will get more by participating in negotiations than they would by walking away, and it can be a way for your group to get resources that might otherwise be out of reach.**

## **WHY SHOULD YOU RESOLVE CONFLICT?**

**The main goal of negotiation with your opposition is to come to an agreement that benefits all parties.**

**Some other good reasons to negotiate are:**

- **To understand more about those whose ideas, beliefs, and backgrounds may be different from your own. In order to resolve a conflict, you'll need to look at the conflict from your opponent's point of view and learn more about this person or group's perspective and motivations.**
- **To ensure that your relationships with opponents continue and grow. If you make peace with your opponents, you increase your own allies in the community. Successful negotiations pave the way for smooth relationships in the future.**
- **To find peaceful solutions to difficult situations. Full-blown battles use up resources -- time, energy, good reputation, motivation. By negotiating, you avoid wasting these resources, and you may actually make new allies and find new resources!**

## **WHEN SHOULD YOU RESOLVE CONFLICT?**

**Conflict resolution is appropriate for almost any disagreement. Our daily lives offer plenty of opportunities for negotiation - between parents and children, co-workers, friends, etc., and**

as a result, you probably already have a variety of effective strategies for resolving minor conflicts. But for more serious conflicts, and conflicts between groups rather than individuals, you may need some additional skills. How, for example, should you structure a meeting between your group and your opponent? When should you settle, and when should you fight for more? How should you react if your opponent attacks you personally? Read on for more information on specific conflict resolution techniques.

### **HOW SHOULD YOU RESOLVE CONFLICT?**

There are seven steps to successfully negotiating the resolution of a conflict:

1. Understand the conflict
2. Communicate with the opposition
3. Brainstorm possible resolutions
4. Choose the best resolution
5. Use a third party mediator
6. Explore alternatives
7. Cope with stressful situations and pressure tactics