

Ten Top Tips



When resolving conflict

1. **Resolving conflict** requires that all parties are acting in good faith and agree to co-operate in trying to find a solution to the problem.
2. **Pick an appropriate time and place** to have your discussion. When you meet, ensure you are in a calm place not in front of others and that you will not be interrupted.
3. **Look at the conflict** as if it were a problem requiring a solution. Do not see it as an argument about “I am right, you are wrong” or, “I am being logical, you are being illogical”.
4. **When discussing the problem**, stick to issues and concerns. Separate the problem from the people involved. Don’t bring up the past. Don’t get personal or use put-downs. Don’t bring up other issues (set a separate time to deal with such issues).
5. **Concentrate on listening** to the other person and don’t think of your response while they are talking and don’t interrupt them. Try to understand the other person’s point of view and, if necessary, repeat to them what you understand they are conveying to you. Understanding the differences will help you reach a solution.
6. **Be creative in finding a solution**. There is usually more than one solution to any problem. Remember to also discuss what has been working well and to congratulate each other.
7. **Evaluate all options** for resolving the conflict slowly and calmly. Try to work out how well they meet the needs of everyone concerned. Then come to a joint decision as to which option you will choose. Choose another option as a back-up if your first option does not work out as planned.
8. **Be prepared to compromise**. This means you will not get everything you want, but you find a compromise with which everyone can live and work by. There is no point in trying to resolve a conflict if you want everything your own way.
9. **Be honest with yourself and others** involved in the conflict. Resolving conflict is more about how you want your relationship with others to be in the future rather than repairing the past, although an apology can go a long way.
10. **If the discussion gets too heated**, call for a “time out”. Decide to have a break to go and cool off and make a time to come back and give it another go. If you cannot find a solution and it is an important issue, be prepared to ask for the advice of a professional counsellor or mediator.

