**14 - Resolving Conflict**

It is important to acknowledge that conflict is a naturally occurring growth process among human beings. This process offers just one way to address conflict WHEN (not “if”) it arises.

When two or more people are experiencing conflict on the team (let’s call them the “dyad”), this process can offer great support in resolving those differences, in a way that ***respects*** differences.

Periodically, the entire team will recognize that disagreements arise between (usually) two members. It was the practice of the original Prosperiteam to first ask those members to address the issue with each of their sponsors, and through their Step work (e.g., Steps 4 - 9). Also - the team might ask both members to speak to each other outside of the team, to see if the matter can be resolved.

If the team, or the dyad itself, does NOT notice a change in the communications, then the team might ask those members to engage in the Resolving Conflict process. Each member is asked to agree to participate. At that point, a meeting time and location (phone? video call? in-person?) is established, to preclude interruptions. In some cases, the team agrees to devote the **05 - Weekly Team Meeting Format** or the **06 - Team Business Meeting Format** time to this process.

At the beginning of the meeting, a timekeeper and a facilitator from the team, neither of whom are the proponents in the disagreement / conflict, should be chosen.

**1. Ground Rules**

* All team members need to agree to be present for the entire process
* No interruptions! Each person is allowed to complete a thought before another person speaks
* Respect each other. (No name-calling or angry outbursts)
* Time limits are agreed upon - e.g., 2 - 4 minutes, per share.

**2. Describe the Conflict**

* Ask each person in the dyad to write a brief paragraph that describes their disagreement with each other. (Take 5 minutes for this). The paragraph should describe:
* What are the bothersome/undesirable behaviors (be specific)?
* How are those behaviors impacting you?
* What’s the meaning you place on these behaviors?
* What or who does this situation remind you of?
* Where do your character defects show up during this exchange

The facilitator will closely guide this process, insuring that each person speaks without interruption. One dyad member reads his/her paragraph aloud. The other dyad member is asked to repeat what they believe they heard. The first dyad member agrees or corrects what the second person heard. Then the roles are reversed, with the second dyad member reading his/her paragraph. The objective is to ensure that each member understands the position of the other member. When understanding is achieved, they are then asked to work together to write a paragraph that describes the joint disagreement.  No interruptions- each person deserves to be heard completely.  The facilitator is responsible for continually asking if the paraphrases are accurate.

* Each of the other members of the team can share their reflections on the situation / conflict. Feedback shares are timed.
* The facilitator can offer reflection on how this incident is helping the team to advance, e.g., helping to deepen trust, address differences both on and off the team.
Diversity makes the world go round!

**3. Describe Desired Outcome**

* Each dyad member takes an opportunity to write the answer to questions: “What is your ideal resolution regarding this conflict? What are the behaviors that you would most prefer? What are *you* willing to offer?” Each dyad member reads his/her answer.
* The facilitator ensures that both dyad members understand each other by having each repeat what the other member has stated.
* The facilitator asks for feedback / reflection from all other team members, if they have something to share. (2 minutes shares each)

**4. Form a Solution:** After each dyad member has expressed his/her ideas about the conflict and the resolution, each person commits to several clarifying conditions / statements.

* For this to work, I am willing to commit to \_\_\_\_\_.
* For this to be attainable, I / you / team members must commit to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* If this doesn’t work, I / we will try \_\_\_\_\_\_ .
* At this point, my main concerns are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. If these concerns arise, I am committed to \_\_\_\_\_.
* The facilitator should ensure that if concerns are still present, earlier steps are repeated to bring resolution to all emergent issues for the dyad as well as other team members.

**5. Close the meeting with appreciations and gratitude.** The facilitator acknowledges each dyad member, and all members of the team, leading a “go around.” Each person gets to acknowledge the dyad, and all other members for his/her contributions. (1 min each).

**6. Follow up and de-brief.** At the next business meeting (**06 - Team Business Meeting Format)**, the team MAY decide to conduct a de-brief of the **Resolving Conflict** process. The de-brief is intentionally conducted at a future date. It is important to end the **Resolving Conflict** session on a high, heart-felt tone. The intensity of emotion at that time is important for the success of the effort to solidify the input and commitments made during that session.

During the next business meeting, the facilitator asks for process de-brief:

* How has the Resolving Conflict exercise impacted the team?
* Has the atmosphere during meetings improved?
* Has there been an improvement in the team’s ability to do work?
* Is there more to learn/gain from the process?