**Conflict Resolution Training for Managers and Professionals**

**Might your need to be more successful at conflict resolution  
be met by this management training course  
called *Skills with People*?**

**Yes if some of the following are true for you**

* Unresolved conflict gets in the way of us achieving our goals.
* I seem to have a lot of arguments.
* I'd like to improve my relationships at work and make them more harmonious and cooperative. But I hold back because I don't know how to go about it and I don't want to make matters worse.
* My job is to make things happen. When people resist I feel if I don't push hard nothing will happen, but sometimes this creates conflict even though that's not my intention.
* I'm in a position to help resolve conflicts between individuals or departments, but I'm not confident I know a professional way to go about it.

**What you'll take away from this conflict resolution training course for managers**

You'll have the understanding, skills and confidence to resolve conflict, manage difficulties and improve relationships at work. You'll be able to discuss difficult issues in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. In disputes you'll be able to reach win-win agreements.

**How to accept this offer**

Simply**contact us** for a preliminary chat and to arrange your free exploratory coaching session.

**What this session will do for you**

In this session we'll aim to give you something practical you can use right away that'll help you handle a difficult situation more successfully at work. All you need do to [**prepare for this session**](https://www.gouldtraining.co.uk/faqs/how-to-prepare) is think about the kinds of situations you want to be able to handle more successfully.

**FAQs**

You'll find answers to many of your questions about the content and method of this course under **FAQs** (in the main menu above).

**How the skills you'll practise on this course  
will make you more successful  
at conflict resolution**

Conflict resolution is not easy. It helps if you have a clear understanding of the difficulties and pitfalls. Here's a way of thinking about it.

**What goes wrong when there's conflict in a relationship at work?**

When we sense that a relationship at work is not going well and we want to try to resolve the conflict, how can we tell where to begin? A practical way of approaching this is to think about the three separate but linked dimensions that are always present in a relationship, and do a quick health check on each:-

* One is the dimension of *thinking*. How rational and creative is it? In other words, how effectively are we thinking about and tackling the goals and problems we face together?
* Another is the *emotional* dimension, the way we *feel*. How much do we trust one-another, respect one-another and enjoy working together?
* The third is the dimension of *connecting* – in other words, how successfully are we communicating, how well do we understand one-another?

The links between the three dimensions are very strong – a change in any one of them immediately affects the other two. This idea is central to what you'll learn on this conflict resolution training course.

**Spotting what aspect of the relationship needs our attention when our aim is conflict resolution**

We're suggesting that it's of practical value to assess our satisfaction with each of the three dimensions separately (we can assess our level of satisfaction on a 0-10 scale):-

* THINKING – how rational and creative are our decisions and problem-solving (0-10)?
* FEELINGS – how much trust and willingness to cooperate do we have (0-10)?
* CONNECTION – how well do we listen to and understand each other (0-10)?

Because they're so intimately connected it's very unlikely our assessment on the three scales will be far apart. For example, if we're very dissatisfied with the quality of *thinking* and the quality of the *connection*, it is unlikely that we'll be *feeling* very good about the relationship as a whole. If we're satisfied with the way we *think* together and with the way we *connect*, our *feeling* about the relationship is likely to be good, too.

**What happens under pressure when a relationship deteriorates and conflict develops?**

A downward spiral all too easily develops when the relationship comes under pressure in a conflict. Deterioration in any one of the three dimensions immediately drags the other two down, too. Here’s how bad it gets at the bottom of the downward spiral, as you probably know from your own experience:-

* **Thinking**   Our thinking is confused and defensive. We forget the goals we have in common. We get stuck in entrenched, embattled positions. Our minds play irrational tricks on us. Our perception of our ‘opponents’ is distorted. We see them as enemies attacking us, and we endow them with an enemy’s worst characteristics. The gulf between us seems to widen to the point where it becomes unbridgeable. It's not possible in this frame of mind to come together for rational thinking and problem solving. Conflict resolution is impossible when people are in this state of mind.
* **Feelings**   We have a mixture of emotions: fear, vulnerability, anger, resentment, hatred and contempt. We may also feel misunderstood, attacked, judged and guilty. The brain is flooded with chemicals putting us in a state of high alert. In this state it's no use being told to ‘calm down’; we can’t – not just like that. Again, this emotional state makes conflict resolution impossible.
* **Connecting**   We can't listen with empathy to one-another, and the way we speak to one-another becomes openly or secretly hostile. We misunderstand and are misunderstood by one-another. We'd rather have nothing to do with one-another because it's so stressful. Again, this kind of connection breakdown makes conflict resolution impossible.

**Practical implication - how can we reverse the vicious spiral and begin to improve the atmosphere so that conflict resolution becomes possible?**

The main practical implication is that reversing the spiral has to be done step by step. It’s no use expecting people to be able to think and work successfully together while they are still feeling bad and are failing to connect with one-another. They can’t. Premature peace negotiations are usually doomed to failure.

Work has to be done first on the quality of the connection and the emotional atmosphere. When and only when people feel better understood by each other, safer with each other, more respected and appreciated by each other, and can let off steam and calm down, can they come together for rational thinking and problem-solving.

**The skills you need for conflict resolution and improving relationships?**

There are two skills that are crucial for conflict resolution, and which make it possible to reverse the spiral and heal a fractured relationship. These are the two core skills this course will help you master. They are:-

* listening with empathy and
* speaking assertively.

When used in combination these two skills are very powerful and effective at creating an atmosphere of mutual respect, understanding and trust. It's very difficult to improve relationships without them. The underlying reason why they make this possible is that they give us a safe way of communicating about feelings. This enables us to connect better with one-another. This in turn enables us to think more rationally and work more successfully together.

**PRACTICAL GUIDELINES, STEPS YOU CAN TAKE IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The two basic skills, listening with empathy and speaking assertively, are crucial ingredients in this approach to conflict resolution. As well as following these steps when trying to resolve a conflict of your *own*, they can also be followed when you're helping *others* resolve *their* conflicts.

Do resist the temptation to rush in and knock people's heads together. No conflict can be resolved until people are ready. The steps below, by creating an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect, will help them be ready. Without this atmosphere it's unlikely the conflict can be resolved:-

1. **Look for common ground** - something that matters to you both that you can agree on, e.g., a goal or value you share - and agree to accept no solution unless you're BOTH satisfied your needs are being taken seriously.
2. **Listen with empathy**, *"What outcome or solution do YOU want? Right now my sole aim isn't to agree or disagree with you but to satisfy you I fully understand and respect where you're coming from."*
3. **Speak assertively**, *"Now it's YOUR turn to listen to ME. I'm not asking you to agree with me ... just to satisfy me you understand what I want and why."*
4. Finally **look for agreement** using a quid-pro-quo approach:- *"Now we understand and respect one-another, let's see if we can find a way to resolve the conflict."  "I'm prepared to concede this if you're prepared to concede that."  "Let's each take care neither of us feels we're being taken advantage of."*
5. If argument breaks out again be patient, go right back to the beginning, and try again.