Intended Audience

**This facilitation guide is designed for use by:**

* Senior staff in paraprofessional staff meetings
* Hall Council advisors in executive board meetings
* ILO advisors in executive board meetings
* Student leaders as part of a hall program

Learning Outcomes

**Through participation in this training session, students will be able to:**

* **Learning Outcome #1:** Identify common sources of conflict
* **Learning Outcome #2:** Develop strategies to recognize potential conflict
* **Learning Outcome #3:** Have a general understanding of appropriate steps to take to mediate conflict

Sharing Content

This leadership lesson plan includes notes that could be shared with a group or used individually. Presenter can create a power point if desired.

Exercises and Activities

Case Studies/Scenarios

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Facilitation Guide

***Section 1: Understanding and Recognizing Conflict                   (Time: 5-7 Minutes)***

* ***Begin the session by asking students:*** *What are factors that contribute to conflict between individuals or amongst group members?*
  + Lifestyle Differences
  + Cultural Differences
  + Violation of Privacy
  + Violation of an agreement
  + Disagreement of views
  + Lack of communication
  + Not completing responsibilities
* **Follow up by** **asking students to**: Identify what conflict looks like in the moment.
  + Arguing/fighting
  + Lack of communication
  + Heightened emotion
  + Inability to complete responsibilities
* **Acknowledge the overlap in some of the responses.**
  + Some things that may cause conflict may also be how people respond to conflict. The result is that our responses to conflict may actually worsen the situation.
  + Ask students to reflect on their experiences responding to conflict and whether it was a positive response or a negative response

***Section 2: Preparing for Conflict Mediation (Time: 5-7 Minutes)***

* **Explain to students:** Preparing for conflict mediation increases the likelihood of a positive outcome. By gathering information and preparing yourself, you’re more likely to have a well-reasoned, unbiased approach to the mediation. These are steps you can take to be prepared.
  + Identify the cause
    - What is the source of the conflict? (lack of communication, differences, disagreement).
  + Gain full understanding of the conflict
    - Meet with involved parties to hear all sides
      * May be individual or group meeting, depending on timing of incident, severity of incident, needs of involved parties, and comfort of facilitator
    - Revisit any rules/regulations/agreements/policy/contract that enhances your understanding
  + Consult any outside sources or witnesses
* **Explain to students:** Some situations don’t allow time for preparing and that sometimes you may have to mediate conflict in the moment. In these cases, it’s important to focus on what’s urgent and important in that moment. A full solution is not necessary at that time. It is important to go back still do these steps even if you’ve already started to address the situation.

***Section 3: Mediating (Time: 5-7 Minutes)***

* **Explain to students**: The goal of conflict mediation is not to solve all of the issues in that moment. Rather, the goal is to have a productive conversation that reestablish a working relationship to create a plan for preventing future conflict. These are steps you can take to mediate conflict
  + Set Ground Rules. Suggestions:
    - Use “I” statements
    - Refrain from harmful language
    - Listen to understand, not to respond
    - Ask for clarification if you don’t understand
    - Be present and attentive
  + Allow each party to discuss their version of the situation, how it impacted them, and what they need from the other party(ies) to move forward.
  + After each party has had a chance to discuss, allow the other party(ies) to ask any questions and affirm what they’ve heard.
  + Based on the conversation, work with all parties to develop a plan to meet desired outcomes. This can include:
    - A roommate agreement or written contract
    - A check list of actions to take
    - It may just be a simple handshake and a verbal agreement to do better
    - Agreeing to change or end the relationship
    - Sometimes a positive outcome cannot be reached.
  + **Explain to students:** After mediating conflict it is important to follow up and ensure that outcomes are being met. To do this, check in to see if involved parties are feeling better, have improved their relationship, or if other conflict has arisen. Not only does this ensure that everyone is adhering to their role in the solution, it also shows that your investment as a mediator was genuine
  + If applicable, report information to the appropriate person (supervisor, RA, Hall Director, Advisor, etc.). Sometimes, it is better to pass up the situation rather than trying to mediate it yourself.

***Section 5: Case Studies                                                     (Time:  20-25 minutes)***

* Using the following case studies, have students come up with a plan for conflict mediation. Depending on your group size, you can split up participants into multiple small groups or have them work through the cases as a large group. *You are welcome to alter these scenarios or add other scenarios to fit the needs of the your target audience*
* **Example Case Study 1:**
  + You are sharing a suite with 3 other students. One day, you overhear two of your suitemates complaining about the other suitemate’s living style. They mention that this suitemate does not clean the common space as much as everyone else, has a sleep schedule that doesn’t align with anyone else’s, and has given their room key to a “creepy” friend multiple times. They discuss wanting this suitemate to move out and live somewhere else. Although you agree with some of their points, you have developed a good friendship with this other suitemate. They are new to OSU, after spending their first year at a different institution, and you’ve been one of the people that have helped them get used to OSU’s campus. You don’t want them to move out, but you do recognize that their lifestyle has caused some problems.
* **Example Case Study 2:**
  + You are a member of a student organization exec board. During a meeting, you realize that an upcoming event is missing some major details and logistics that were supposed to have already been taken care of. When you bring this up to the board, no one takes responsibility. Everyone who had a task found a way to blame someone else on the board. When you try to get members to recommit to taking on tasks for this event, no one volunteers right away. You suggest canceling the event, but the group is also opposed because presenters have been confirmed.
* Have students share out their solutions and work together to reflect on best practices.

***Section 6: Final Thoughts                                                            (Time:  5 minutes)***

* Conclude by reminding students that:
  + Ever conflict will not be resolved right away, if at all
  + Conflict is unavoidable and can have positive benefits
  + Conflict exists in a variety forms and last for a variety of time periods.
  + The goal is to find common ground that leads to safety, communication, and moving forward.

Resources:

<https://web.stanford.edu/group/resed/resed/staffresources/RM/training/conflict.html>

<https://www.managementstudyguide.com/conflict-at-workplace.htm>