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CONFLICT RESOLUTION GAMES IN TEACHER TRAINING

Conflict challenges us to think harder, to be more creative, to develop greater understanding, and to search for alternative avenues that are more efficient, more effective, and more productive. Unresolved conflict, however, can result in the breakdown of a group. When unaddressed conflict occurs in the workplace, it can reduce morale, hamper performance, and increase absenteeism. It leads to increased stress among employees, decreased productivity, and at worst, aggression or violence.

The conflict resolution games are designed to allow team members to increase their ability to resolve conflict and ultimately transform conflict into collaboration. Games and activities create a safe environment for team members to experience real conflict – complete with emotions, assumptions, and communication challenges.

Games can reveal real conflict – along with emotions, personalities, misunderstandings, and reactions. Through games, the team experiences conflict in a safe environment. Competent facilitation is the key. As facilitator, you need to be aware of what's going on, take notes, encourage, redirect, and even stop activities for a mid-activity discussion if necessary. Engaging in conflict can be delicate territory for many on the team, so you need to provide support and encouragement as they practice the skills and get comfortable using them. You will notice many of these games recommend small teams – this is to keep all participants involved in the process.

Another way to maximize participation is to use "observers" who can provide excellent "big picture" feedback during the debriefing discussion. To maintain a high level of participation throughout the game and during the debriefing process, consider passing out the discussion questions found at the end

of the games to small teams for a self-debriefing prior to the large group discussion. This will ensure that everyone relates the experience to their situation and contributes to the discussion. Just as important as getting everyone involved in the game is getting everyone involved in the discussion, where the bulk of the learning takes place. When teams learn the benefits of conflict, they begin to lose some of the fear associated with conflict.

One of the most effective book is "The Big book of conflict resolution games" by Mary Scannell. The games and activities presented in this book are designed to resolve conflict and ultimately transform the energy of conflict into collaboration. Games facilitate learning and development of trust to help improve team performance, while injecting some fun in the process.

Team-building games are the perfect way for a team to experience such benefits. The debriefing discussion for many of the conflict-resolution games takes longer than the actual activity, because attendees are changing some core behaviors and beliefs regarding conflict. Make sure you allot plenty of time for the discussion, because cutting it short denies the team the necessary time it takes for some to make the shift. The games in this book will help the team become aware of and practice the characteristics and skills necessary to resolve—or transform – conflict. You will find games that build trust, improve EQ, enhance verbal and nonverbal communication, challenge assumptions, and appreciate diversity. Use these games to empower your teams to search for collaborative solutions in conflict situations.

The other very help full book is "Psychology for Language Teachers" by Marion Williams, Robert L. Burden. "Psychology for Language Teachers" examines the field of educational psychology and considers various ways in which a deeper understanding of this discipline can help language teachers.

The first part presents an overview of educational psychology, and discusses how different approaches to psychology have influenced language teaching methodology. Following this, four themes are identified: the learner, the teacher, the task and the learning context. Recent psychological developments in each of

these domains are discussed and implications are drawn for language teaching. Areas considered include approaches to learning, motivation, the role of the individual, attribution, mediation, the teaching of thinking, the cognitive demands of tasks and the learning environment.