



Handle Conflicts

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Welcome to This seminar in the field of Staff development in The Business Coaching Programme. My name is Torgny Veibäck

Peter and Jesus

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So they said to him: ... "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"
Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed. (John 18:25-27)

When Jesus looked at Peter he went away and wept bitterly.
(Luke 22:62)

Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said, "We will go with
you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught
nothing. (John 21:3)

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast" ... and took the bread
and gave it to them, and so with the fish. (John 21:12a-13)

Jesus said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love
me?" Peter ... answered, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I
love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep" ... And then he said to
him, "Follow me" (John 21:17, 19)

Jesus was taken to the high-priests palace. There Peter denied Jesus three times and felt bitterly ashamed. Strong emotions! Soon after Jesus was gone Peter went with the other disciples to Galilean lake. Frustrated and quarrelling they went back fishing as in old days. Jesus, certainly disappointed about the fiasco, went to meet them in their despair and aggression – not even able to fish properly. Jesus arranges a breakfast for them. Sharing bread and fish perhaps, even some wine, neutralising the stressed situation. Showing love and compassion. Reminded of the last supper and the feeding of the 5000, they get utterly happy and released. Imagen the feeling! In that situation Jesus takes Peter aside and speaks with him about what he expects from him: Love, loyalty and leadership! A real turning point in Peter's life.



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Conflict handling

10% Practical issues – reasonable
90% Emotions – not reasonable

1. Who decides what is right?
2. Wait to discuss that until you are calm!

Prerequisites: Regarded, respected, involved.

Imagene the situation at the Galilean sea! “No fish” starts a quarrel between the disciples. Who was doing wrong?

Conflicts start often in different opinion about practical issues. But that is seldom the only reason. There are almost always other emotions involved.

Who when decides what is right? How can you help to sort out the conflict? Even if **you yourself** aren’t directly involved, you also have opinions and emotions about what is right and wrong in the conflict or who is wrong. If you go and impose your opinion about the conflict you will probably make things worse, especially if you are upset. Wait until you have thought it over and is calm.

In normal conflicts it’s often good if someone not directly involved can help the parties to handle the conflict. But then you need first to listen and **regard** their opinions, **respect** them as persons and **involve** them in trying to understand the situation.

There is a technique for you as a third party to help out in this kind of conflicts.



1 Practical issues

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What is the problem?

Find the root causes together.

**Mutual
understanding**

**Possible
solution**

A practical issue – you might think it is easy to find a solution. But take care! Don't just serve the solution to them. Most likely there are other feelings behind the conflict. If they haven't been able to solve the problem already there are problems on a deeper level: Personal interests and frustrations. Stressed family situation, violated honour, money or being fooled, feelings of insult, or abuse, religious disagreements. These are often underlying causes of a conflict. Look for and bring up to the surface to create mutual understanding. Without understanding the underlying emotions there will not be any good solution either.

Hence: Start with talking with them one by one to understand the deep causes behind the conflicts. And then go on with talking all together to get an mutual understanding. Then you will be able to discuss possible solutions on the practical issues even if you cant solve the underlying problems.

But if I's not about practical issues? How to handle situations were the opinions are irreconcilable?



Example: Andrew is arguing with Peter about how to put out the nets to get fish. Peter get tired of the shouting all the time and through the nets even more careless reaching very far out from the boat to catch more fish. Isn't he the boss here? It's a bad atmosphere in the boat, worse and worse. They have different opinions about the right way to fish.

Also Andrew is fed up with Peter leaving him to repair the nets all the time. But, as you already have understood, behind the conflict there is also another root cause: The frustration about the long wanted job they just have missed as missionaries when there former master died. They had dreamed about a live of fishing men, now they are back fishing fish.

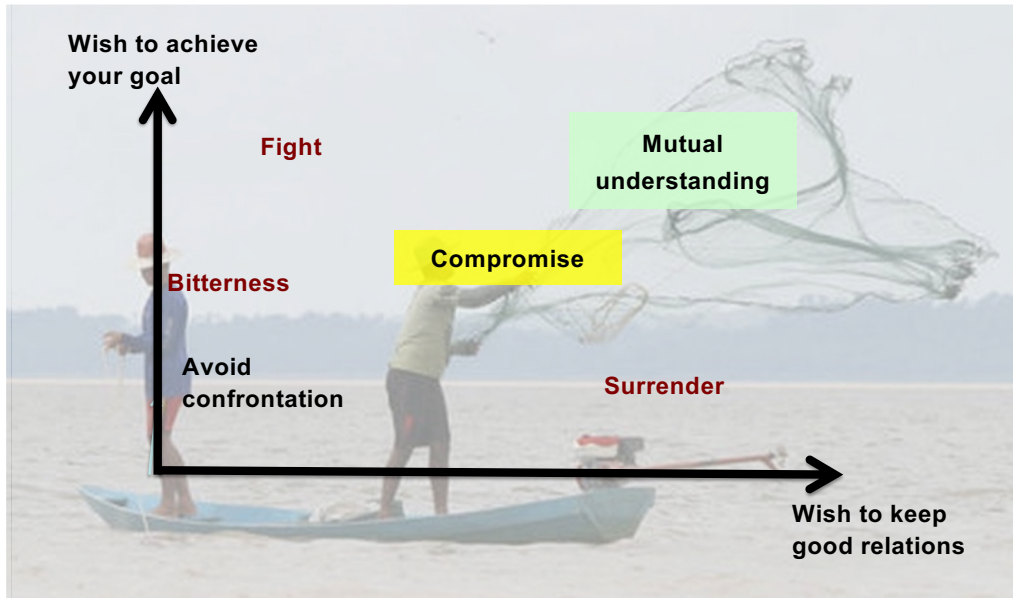
There are a **basic technique** to help them in such a conflict: Stop them from arguing about opinions of what is right and wrong – opinions. Try instead to talk about the mutual interest the have. Explore what is common interests on a higher or other level. In this case they want more than fish to survive. They want to find new job or possibilities for living, peace, companionship, a future together with their families. From that you go on helping them to find win-win solutions.

In a calm environment and showing great respect for the persons, you bring the situation up. Invite them for breakfast as Jesus did – one at a time or both – and talk about the situation and try to sort out the underlying causes. Use the Jesus method: Show love and compassion! That will in turn pass on to

Peter and Andrew.

You start to talk with Peter and Andrew about what is their common interests: **The both love Jesus and both need to find ways for their future lives.** They also both think it's silly to argue about the fishing as they want to **be friends** and have **good relations.** Andrew still think it is unfair workload. Peter haven't thought about that. He might be willing to find a compromise. Peter is still angry about that Andrew is telling what to do, he is the older brother. Andrew had not understood that it was such a sensitive issue. He is willing to try show more respect. Both do understand that they had both spit out their frustrations at each other. Both want to continue be friends and stop spitting at each other. They will help each other to make new business.

Conflict handling



The goal is to create a mutual understanding of the situation including the obvious problem, the underlying causes and possible solutions. You can't not always reach full agreement and solutions which make all parts satisfied. But if you have reached an understanding of the situation you will probably get an acceptable compromise. Most important is to stop people from continue to argue or fight. As important that they don't end up with one part surrendering and feel like a loser – victim. That will destroy all motivation of cooperation and development. To **avoid confrontation** might be vice sometimes if it is not important issues. But it might make the conflict growing and become **bitterness**, impossible to handle in the future.

To confront people in a conflict with respect, compassion and love is always fruitful and healthy.

Conflict handling

Good results

- Mutual understanding
- All parts satisfied
- Cooperation
- Development, new routines
- Methods of problem handling

Not so good results

- Some feel offended
- Bad atmosphere
- Parallel work
- Stagnation
- Distance between the parts
- Some leave the workplace

Don't wait too long when you notice a conflict which is escalating. Mutual understanding is always the way to reach satisfying solutions. Every time you do it you will improve both your and other parts skills in problem handling.

If someone or several people feel offended or as victims, the result will be a bad atmosphere and people avoiding to cooperate. This will lead to parallel work instead of team work and a loss in efficiency. Sooner or later some will leave the workplace. A bad solution.



Coaching questions

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- Describe the conflict you try to handle – which are the practical issues and what kind of emotions are involved?
- How can you arrange for a situation where it will be possible to reach an mutual understanding of the problems and different opinions?
- What kind of win-win solutions might there be?
- How could an action plan for finding solutions look like?

Some coaching questions to discuss with your coach or think over yourself.
Good Bless you in handling small and great conflicts.