

Tug-of-War (Conflict)

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Duration: 10 minutes

Number of participants: Unlimited

Materials required: Strong-Smooth Rope, Masking or Duct Tape, Flip Chart and Markers

Description/Process: This exercise illustrates conflict and ways to resolve it. After the introductions ask the group to step out or over to a pre-staged area. Split them into two teams and have them engage in tug of war. After 2-3 minutes or after one team wins have them return to their seats for debriefing.

Discussion Activities and Questions

How did it feel to be in conflict with the other team?

What do you think your chances were of winning?

Do you think it's possible for both sides to win in tug-of-war or conflict?

What went well for your group or for you as an individual during the exercise?

What didn't go well?

Write the following on the flipchart:

"When you get into a tug of war, drop the rope."

-Bart Jarvis



GEP
BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

www.GEPCorp.com

Email: Gayla@GEPCorp.com

Facilitator Notes

Conflicts are usually over differences in opinions, facts, perceptions or values.

Conflict has the potential to occur whenever two or more people attempt to work together.

Generally conflict occurs when group members are not listening. Conflict also occurs when several group members are not sharing the same information.

Some of the symptoms of conflict are:

- ♦ Intense comments are made
- ♦ People are impatient
- ♦ Ideas are attacked before the person finishes talking
- ♦ People feeling that they are not being understood
- ♦ Repetition of opinions
- ♦ People taking sides
- ♦ Lots of talking, but little movement towards accomplishment
- ♦ Advice giving, finger pointing, use of the word *should*
- ♦ Sarcastic comments

Skills for Resolving Conflict

Attending – Focus your attention on the other person. Encourage others to share their ideas.

Valuing – Show that you respect their positions and them as people.

Paraphrasing – Repeat what you heard others say (in your own words) to show that you are trying to understand.

Questioning – Ask open-ended questions. Be willing to share *your* thoughts and admit to changing your position.

Look for the merit of the other person's thinking before attempting to express your point of view or share information.