

# Communicating Effectively

## Managing differences by using Mediation

*Conflict is often inevitable but it  
need not produce negative  
results.....*

*Sandra Mitchell and Morag Steven*

# Human Elements of Conflict

- ♦ A common source of interpersonal conflict is personal differences, because every person brings a unique (and often incompatible) set of values, perceptions and expectations to the table.

## Human Elements of Conflict

- ◆ Another source of interpersonal conflict is informational differences.
- ◆ Communications are not always received, may be misinterpreted or different conclusions may be drawn based on past experiences.

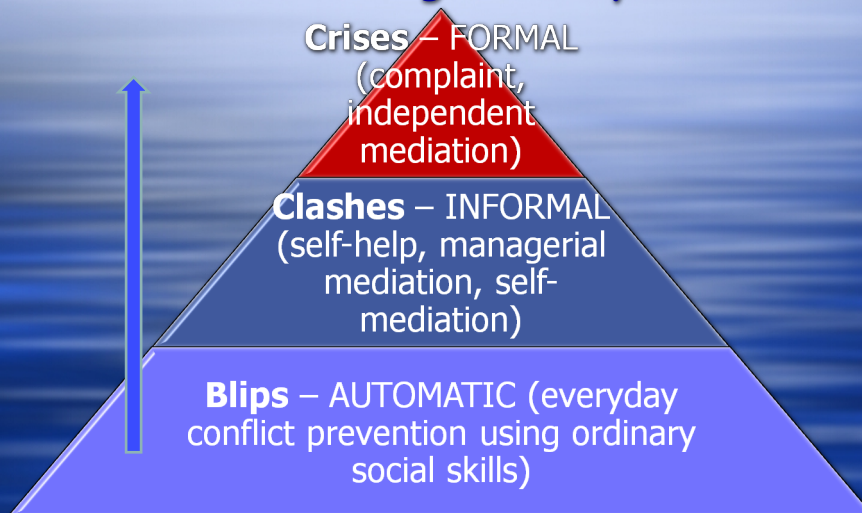
## Human Elements of Conflict

- ◆ Educational systems and processes can also be a source of interpersonal conflict.
- ◆ Uncertainty of future events and scarcity of resources, can lead to disputes among people who normally work well together.

## Destructive Conflict



## Conflict Management Pyramid



Adapted from Dana Mediation  
Institute, Inc

## *Guiding, not Deciding*

The mediator's job is to help persons at impasse return to effective communication and negotiation

## **Why Does Mediation Work?**

- ◆ Independent, impartial
- ◆ Allows people to tell their stories, to listen and to confirm understanding
- ◆ Repairs and re establishes relationships
- ◆ Encourages people to consider all options
- ◆ Planning and settings
- ◆ Emotionally cost effective

## Why Does Mediation Work?

- ◆ Respects confidentiality
- ◆ Positive more than negative
- ◆ Flexible more than rigid
- ◆ Moving issues ahead, more than stagnant
- ◆ Proactive more than reactive
- ◆ Balanced more than one-sided

## When can Mediation be Successful?

- ◆ When participants want a resolution
- ◆ When all the necessary people come to the table
- ◆ When people are open, honest and willing to communicate
- ◆ When the mediator is prepared and skilled
- ◆ When people are committed to finding a resolution and prepared to uphold any agreements and/or tasks

## ASN Mediation Approach



## Communication is the Key

- ♦ *Separate the people from the problem*, Work on relationship independent from problem.
- ♦ *Focus on interests not positions*, Positions are what you want, interests are why you want them.
- ♦ *Invent options for mutual gains*. Together be creative and flexible in the brainstorming of those options,
- ♦ *Always remember the child focus*. This takes the emphasis off the positions.
- ♦ *Know your other alternatives to a negotiated agreement*. The reason you negotiate is to produce better results. You need to know what else is available to you if you do not engage in negotiation.

## What Promotes Collaboration?

- ◆ Remembering our common purpose
- ◆ Giving everyone a voice
- ◆ Communicating openly with respect
- ◆ Assuming good reason and intention
- ◆ Exploring underlying interests
- ◆ Valuing everyone involved

## Any questions ??

