Communicating in Difficult Situations

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Video Case-study

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5BVlg6MuJE
Introduction

• Generic, not specific
• Confidentiality
• Your needs, and those of others
Presentation Overview

• Introduction
• Your Recent Conflicts
• Office of Human Rights and Conflict Management
• The Respectful Work and Learning Environment
• Understanding Conflict
  – Conflict Styles
  – Pinches and Crunches
• Resolving Conflict
  – Intent/Action/Effect
  – Positions vs. Interests
• Practice:
  – The perspective check
Group Exercise

• *Recent Conflicts*?
  – Your feelings
  – Your response
The Cycle of Conflict*

Human Rights and Conflict Management

- Our office
- The Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy (RWLE)
Three Conflict Styles

Student A  
avoidant

Student B  
direct

Student C  
indirect

Student D

Clipart adapted from: http://www.clipartpanda.com/clipart_images/computer-studying-school-bus-6878701
Three Conflict Styles

• Your group’s style:
  – When is it least effective?
  – When is it most effective?
Understanding Conflict*

• Conflict is OK.
• Conflict has common and predictable patterns.
• Past experiences affect how people deal with present conflicts.
• People have choices for how to resolve conflict.
• People have the ability to solve many of their own conflicts.
• Conflict can result in win-win outcomes.

Conflict Resolution Continuum

- Conversation
- Conflict Coaching
- Mediation
- Conciliation
- Arbitration
- Ajudication

More Formal

Less Formal

More Voluntary

Less Voluntary
Begin Relationship

Gather Information

Make a Commitment

Stability and Productivity

Planned Exit

Perspective Check

CRUNCH (public)

Disrupted Expectations

PINCH (private)

Stormy Exit

Lower Expectations

Silent Exit
Perspective Check: YOU’VE BEEN PINCHED*

• Get grounded.
• Check in with the person who pinched you.
• Name the **ACTION** (with no evaluation).
• Ask about the person’s **INTENT**.
• If appropriate, describe the **EFFECT** on you.

Perspective Check: THEY’VE BEEN PINCHED*

• Get grounded.
• Check in with the person who pinched you.
• Name the ACTION (with no evaluation).
• Ask about the EFFECT on the other person.
• Acknowledge and apologize for the EFFECT.
• Describe your INTENT.

Remember

• Use “I” statements.
• Paraphrase back to the person what you heard.
• Change judgment to curiosity.
• In the face of unresolved disagreement, focus on problem-solving.
• Seek help when needed.
• Have an exit strategy.
Case Scenario

Professor Kay is lecturing on a contentious topic. During the discussion, Jason, a male student, gets very loud and insists his opinion makes the most sense. Many other students begin to talk over each other at once. Xiaoming, a female student sitting next to Jason puts up her hand. Jason quickly and without looking at her, says NO! and physically puts Xiaoming’s hand down. The class continues to argue, and Xiaoming quietly walks out of the room.
Group Role-play

• Xiaoming approaches Jason
• Xiaoming approaches Professor Kay
• Jason approaches Xiaoming
Finding Help

- **HRAS** is one support among many
  - Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP)
  - Security Services
  - Collective Bargaining Units (e.g.: AESES)
  - U of M Staff Relations Officers
  - Learning and Organizational Development
EXPLORER INNOVATOR ADV
REBEL ADVENTURER TRAILBLAZER
INNOVATOR CHALLENGER REBEL VISIONARY
REBEL PIONEER CREATOR EXPLORER TRAILBLAZER INNOVATOR
ADVENTURER EXPLORER ADVENTURER TRAILBLAZER REBEL PIONEER CREATOR EXPLORER REBEL PIONEER
CREATOR EXPLORER DEFENDER TRAILBLAZER REBEL PIONEER EXPLORER ADVENTURER TRAILBLAZER REBEL EXPLORER PIONEER DEFENDER TRAILBLAZER CREATOR

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