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This slide has a purple background with a network of yellow dots and lines. A large red circle on the left contains the title "Conflict Resolution" and contact information for Bill Stanton. A smaller blue circle on the right is labeled "Resources".

**Conflict Resolution**

**Bill Stanton**  
Affiliates Manager

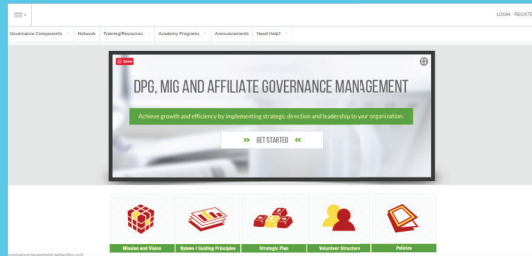
[wstanton@eatright.org](mailto:wstanton@eatright.org)  
312-899-4876

Resources

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2.

# Governance Management Site



<http://governancemanagement.webauthor.com/>

## Sections of Note:

- D. Committee and Volunteer Management
- K. Governance and Board Management

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## Why do Conflicts Arise?

- **Competing Interests**
- **Competing Perspectives**
- **People are Different**



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# Negative Approaches to Deal With Conflict

- **Conquest** – weaken others to “win”
  - Allows dominating personalities to overtake the group
- **Avoidance** – ignore the conflict and focus on the work
  - Postpones the inevitable – could make it worse
- **Bargaining** – haggling and/or compromising
  - Focuses on proposed solutions w/out opening to other options
- **Quick Fix** – putting a band aid on a dam leak
  - Seems fixed, so it’s ignored – underlying issue isn’t addressed
- **Role Player** – subscribing to our socially given roles
  - “Higher” volunteers dominate decisions while “lower” volunteers don’t speak up

Weeks, Dudley. The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution: Preserving Relationships at Work, at Home, and in the Community. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, 1994.

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## Leading Different Personalities

- Get to know your team
  - Social interactions and personality quizzes
- Play to their strengths
  - Place volunteers in positions they can succeed in
- Nurture a positive environment
  - Have a code of conduct for how volunteers treat each other
- Ask questions
  - Don’t make assumptions about actions/motives
- Frame differences positively
  - Differing perspectives as an asset to think outside the box
- Lead by example
  - Model the behavior you want to see in your volunteers

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## Goals of Conflict Resolution

### Use Positive Power to:

- Improve the relationship
- Empower each other
- Clarify perceptions
- Focus on needs and interests



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## Having Difficult Conversations

- Change your mindset to be more positive
  - The conversation is not going to be difficult; it's going to lead to a better working relationship
- Breathe
  - Center and calm yourself – it will affect others in the conversation
- Plan, but don't script
  - Be prepared for different perspectives and outcomes
  - Actively listen and address what is being said
- Acknowledge the other perspective
  - If you don't know what it is – ASK!

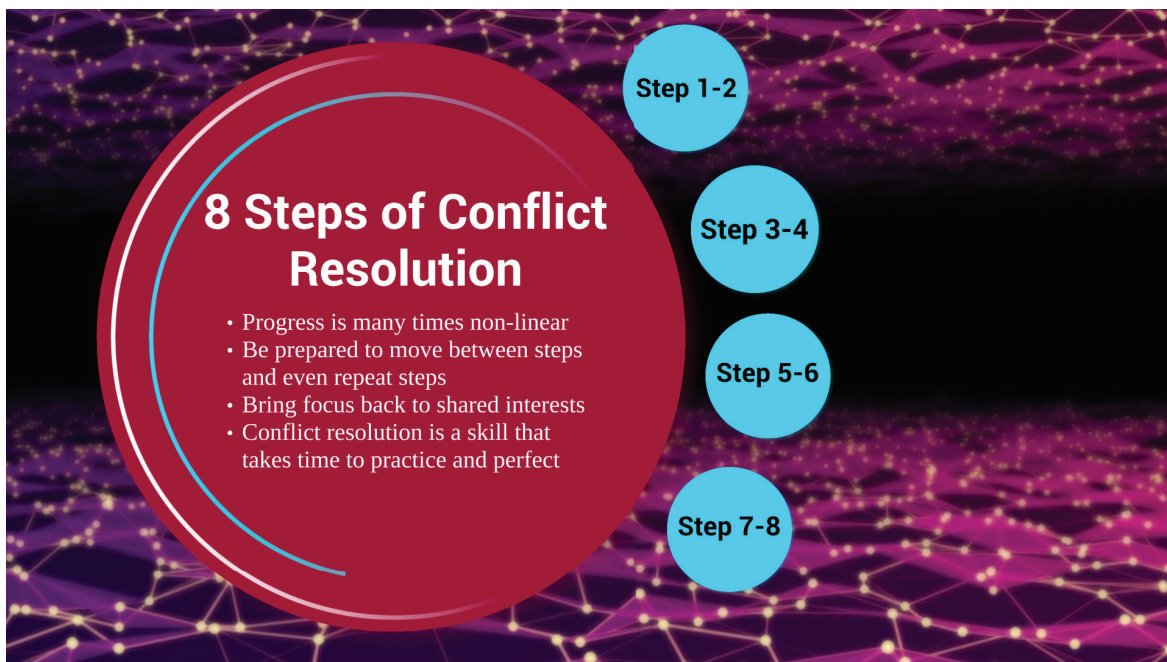
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## Step 1-2: Create an Effective Atmosphere and Clarify Perceptions

**Step 1:**

- Personal Preparation
- Timing

**Step 2:**

- Of the Conflict Itself
- Of You
- Of the Other Party

**Location:**

- Arrange in person if possible
- Minimize outside stimuli
- Maximize feeling of comfort

**Initial Comments:**

- Clarify the goals of the conversation
- Establish ground rules

- What is it about; what are the underlying causes?
- What have I done to cause/perpetuate the conflict?
- Avoid stereotyping

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## Step 3-4: Understand Needs/Interests and Build Shared Positive Power

**Step 3:**

- Don't confuse what you and the other parties each want as what you each need
- Use questions to understand the why behind the other parties' statements
- Help them understand everyone else's "why"

**Step 4**

- Promote the abilities of everyone involved
- Use active listening to understand what the other party is feeling
- Clarify any assumptions – what assumptions can we agree on



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**Step 5: Look to the future first – looking to the past can lead to:**

- Self-fulfilling prophecy, Blaming, Rigidity, Tradition, and Romanticizing the past

**Learn from the past:**

- Look at past elements and agree if you should persevere them
- Identify obstacles and how to overcome them

**Step 6: Think Outside the Box**

- Focus on the resolution – not on positions/ what each party wants
- Brainstorm – no evaluation ideas; just focus on as many as possible
- Measure the options you come up with against both parties' interests
- Focus on options that use mutual positive power and improve the relationship

**Step 5: Look to the Future First; Then Learn from the Past**

**Step 6: Generating Options**

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**Step 7:**

- A do-able is incremental steps that both parties can take that meet their needs or don't obstruct needs that lead to an ultimate resolution

**Step 8:**

- Satisfy all parties' needs and interests
- Is a combinations of do-ables
- Recognizes each party is responsible to the others
- Hold each other accountable to agreements that are made

**Step 7: Develop Do-ables**

**Step 8: Make Mutual Beneficial Agreements**

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## Group Discussion

**Topics for Discussion:**

- Discuss a positive conflict resolution and what led to the resolution.
- Discuss a conflict that did not have the desired outcome. What could have been done differently to achieve the desired outcome?

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