

Conflict Resolution in Groups: Facilitation and Conflict Management

PAF 424/SOS 624

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Course Description

This intensive workshop focuses on how conflict emerges in groups and how facilitators maintain group effectiveness in the face of conflict. The course uses experiential exercises, cases, and readings to demonstrate both the theories and tools of individual and group conflict and facilitation. A special focus is on the facilitator as manager/leader versus external consultant.

Readings

Required

Schwarz, Roger M. *The Skilled Facilitator*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2002. (This is available at Follett's Orange Bookstore.)

Course Reader (to be distributed electronically)

Student Requirements

- Students are required to attend **all sessions**.
- Students should complete readings **before** the class where assigned.
- Students are expected to be prepared, to have completed and to actively participate in all exercises. (33% of grade)
- Students will prepare a daily analysis that applies the readings, skills/knowledge gained from classroom activity to a situation in the student's professional life. The paper should assess how the situation was handled and might have been handled differently based on the new knowledge and skills (33% of grade)

- After the course, students will submit a research paper (15 pages for graduate students/ 10 pages for undergraduates) that further explores a particular aspect of group conflict or facilitation through additional readings, analysis, and application. (34%)
- All papers are due June 2, 2008.

Topics and Readings

Day 1

Defining facilitation

Leader as facilitator

Sources of conflict

Reading: Schwarz; Chapters 1,2,3,15,16

Sources of individual differences

Strategies for assessing and managing differences

Reading: Schwarz; Chapters 4, 5; Schein

Day 2-3

Gilmore Fraleigh “Communication at Work” Instrument

Tool and techniques of facilitation

Group behaviors

Reading: Schwarz; Chapters 10,12,4,6,8,9; Rioch, *Rahim, Agazarian and Gant, Thomas, Gersick, Friedman et al.*

Day 4

Problem solving

Strategic planning and visioning processes

Reading: Schwarz; Chapter 10; Weisbord

Day 5

Getting organized:

Contracting

Designing the process

The first meeting

Reading: Schwarz; Chapter 11, 13

Evaluation, closure, and celebration

Application discussion

Reading: Schwarz; Chapter 11

Please note that the authors in italics are optional articles.

