



Council of Residential Specialists

The Proven Path To Success



2014 CRS LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Managing Conflict

December 7, 2014

10:30-11:45 a.m. CST

Presented by John Barnes, Barnes Association Consultants



Managing conflict

- Handling difficult conversations
- Process
- Skill





Difficult conversations: Process

- Plan
- Begin the conversation
- Listen
- Respond with clarifying questions
- Don't make assumptions
- Generate ideas and solutions
- Agree on future action





Difficult conversations: Process

- **Plan**
 - Identify what you would like and what you think the other party would like as a result
 - Identify your key points and what key points the other party might raise
 - Write down questions





Difficult conversations: Process

- **Begin the conversation**
 - Describe the issue in non-judgmental language
 - Explain that your goal is to discuss and reach a mutually satisfying agreement





Difficult conversations: Process

- Listen
 - Validate that you've heard their issue, concern, frustration
 - Proactively give individual opportunity to propose ideas





Difficult conversations: Process

- Respond with clarifying questions
 - What results would you like to achieve?
 - What are your concerns regarding this issue?
 - What is not being done?
 - What is another way to look at the situation?
 - What is the data?





Difficult conversations: Process

- **Don't make assumptions**
 - Puts people and situation in boxes
 - Limits options available during discussion





Difficult conversations: Process

- **Generate ideas and solutions that work for both parties**
 - **Include elements suggested by both parties**
 - **Refer back to their points as a way to make further suggestions**





Difficult conversations: Process

- Agree on future action
 - Clarify next steps
 - Agree to time period
 - Affirm commitment





Difficult conversations: Tips

- Practice key messages before conversation
- Bridge to key messages when asked a confrontational question
- Say “I don’t know”
- Don’t react; buy time to think
- Don’t empower confrontation by being confrontational
- Recognize when an issue can’t be resolved





Difficult conversations: 8 Mistakes

- Inadequate preparation
- Talking too much and listening too little
- Aiming for a “win” versus mutual resolution
- Arguing instead of influencing
- Use of intimidating behavior
- Ignoring conflict
- Impatience
- Focusing on the people and not the problem





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