

TEAM BUILDING

Effective Communication

The group was a high performance team dedicated to continual team improvement. Team members set aside a part of each team meeting for education and training.

They usually read books and articles on leadership or team development, and had extensive discussion about how they could apply the concepts to the team.

Group members were introduced to The Conflict Lens™ and they decided to use it for team development. All members took the instrument using conflicts that were meaningful in their lives. Some of the chosen conflicts were professional, while some were personal.

“Conflict management is a skill and those who are highly skilled can often influence outcomes. When employees learn these skills they can often **move beyond the win-win paradigm** and achieve not only what is good for each party but also **outcomes that truly benefit the organization.**”

Over the next eight weeks each team member presented their results to the group.

The group discussed what seemed to work and what did not in each member’s effort toward conflict resolution.

As one member put it, “We reviewed our results, discussed situations, shared how we dealt with the problem, and how we felt. We had the team critique our behaviors and talked through the ‘gray’ in a genuine and sincere manner. Talking about the results was very powerful for each of us.”

Each team member gained knowledge of not only how to better handle conflict in their lives but also how to increase the trust level on the team, based on what they learned about each other.



WORK EFFECTS

Conflict Resolution

A team that had previously been high functioning was now having trouble getting the results they wanted.

They became unclear about their vision and what outcome the team would define as a measure of success.

After several weeks of disagreement, poor attendance at meetings, and significant frustration, the team leader contacted the internal training and development office for assistance.

An offsite team building session was offered, but the members felt that they were stuck to the point where this would only offer a short-term burst of energy at best.

The Conflict Lens™ was proposed as an alternate strategy. Each person was instructed to complete the instrument with an identified team conflict in mind.

They then received individual and group reports. The data were the basis for much discussion about both individual and team functionality. Team members were able to discuss who was dominant in meetings and who tended to avoid the conflict.

Members who were often absent discussed how it was not their disinterest in the team that led to missed meetings but rather their discomfort in dealing with conflict.

Meanwhile, some of the more vocal members were able to explore the disconnect between the intent of their behavior and the actual effects. Even though these members were genuinely seeking to resolve the issues, they realized they were actually alienating other members in the process.

The group report showed them what they really saw as the basis of their conflict (resource allocation) and they found they were in agreement about the real goals of the team. The team was also able to see how its dominant behaviors (Control and Blame) were interfering with their ability to resolve the issues.

Discussing the results of The Conflict Lens™ gave the team the foundation for productive dialogue and conflict resolution. The team then went on to have a team building offsite, which was very productive for them. The team leader remarked that until they found a way to better handle conflict, no changes would have been effective.



WORK EFFECTS