Conflict Management Styles

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Overview

Everywhere there are humans, there is conflict. Everywhere there is meaningful change; conflict will be found as well. Human interaction and change is core to leadership so knowing about the dynamics of conflict will serve a leader well. The Kraybill Conflict Style Inventory® (KCSI) is used to explore each Leader's own conflict preferences, and helps to understand the responses of others.

Effective leadership uses differences to strengthen rather than weaken a group effort. Preparing for conflict (anticipating differences and establishing ground rules) and transforming conflict to resolution (sharing knowledge and finding common values and vision) are foundational.

All participants review their completed KCSI, and compare their responses in 'the calm' versus 'the storm'. Implications are highlighted in small and large group processes.

To advance understanding of how different conflict styles impacts communication and effectiveness in a real world scenario, participants are divided into small groups by MBTI profiles. The exercise asks each participant to deal with airline personnel under duress.

Objectives

After this presentation, participants will:
1. Identify their personal Kraybill Conflict Style profile.
2. Describe the impact of behavior changes in the "calm" versus "storm".
3. Reflect on small group activities and conflict management styles.

Important Teaching Points

- According KCSI, there are five styles of responding to conflict:
  - Directing
  - Cooperating
  - Avoiding
  - Harmonizing
  - Compromising
- How one reacts 'in the storm' may be different from how one manages conflict 'in the calm'.
- Understanding conflict profiles and preferences supports powerful teamwork and cohesion.
- In responding to conflict, know your style (strengths and weaknesses), appreciate others, support and be flexible, practice using different styles in different situations.
- Self-management is the most important and challenging part of conflict management.

Resources / References

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