

Conflict Resolution: Handling Conflict Constructively

Summary

This four-module course is designed for people who want to develop their ability to handle conflict more effectively. It uses specific techniques to engage with people in disagreement to discover the causes of the current conflict and ways to resolve it.

This course is based on our successful Mediation Skills course delivered to housing associations, local authorities, public and private organisations throughout Scotland for over twenty-four years.

What will be expected of me?

We aim to provide a safe and enjoyable atmosphere for learning. Our style is highly interactive, and we use a lot of small group work, group discussion and role-play. There will be opportunities to bring your own experience to discussions about when and how to use the skills, and time to practise exercises in pairs and small groups. The course covers the causes of conflict, responses to conflict and ways to reduce conflict. This course is not assessed. A specific requirement is that you attend and participate fully for all four modules.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course you can expect the following:

- to increase your awareness of what is happening in a conflict situation
- to share your experience and build on your existing conflict handling skills
- to practise skills in a relaxed atmosphere and get feedback on what worked
- gain confidence in your ability to handle conflict in a constructive way.

The Programme

Module 1 - Welcome, introductions and overview
 - Good and bad at handling conflict
 - Conflict - what is it and where does it come from?
 - Effects of conflict
 - Real and non-real conflict
 - Sources of conflict

Module 2 - Responding to Conflict
 - Conflict management styles
 - Active listening
 - Effective questioning and summarising

Module 3 - Instant guessing
 - Defence mechanisms
 - Positions and interests

Module 4 - Formal and informal responses to conflict
 - When to get involved?
 - Mediation or restorative approach
 - Review of knowledge learnt in modules 1-4

“Gained valuable knowledge in dealing with conflict/helping to diffuse situations.” [learner, July 2025]

Course structure

Modules 1 - 4 form the foundation part of the ten-module Mediation Skills course and can be taken as a stand-alone course. The trainers are there to help you and the course is designed to produce opportunities for you to learn from:

- written information: pre-course information and handbooks
- discussion: in pair work, small groups and large group discussions
- practical exercises taking you through some of the tools that help in resolving conflict
- role-play: taking on the role of client, observer and mediator allows you to appreciate the input of all the parties.

Cost

Cost per place: £250. Group discount available. For organisations interested in commissioning this training, please contact us to discuss course fees.