

## Conflict Resolution: An Introduction

When we surf the internet, watch television, or read the newspaper, it becomes clear that conflict and violence are part of the human condition. In our own lives—at home, at work, at school—we face situations that are often annoying and sometimes infuriating, and we have to deal with those situations in a positive way.

Students often bring their conflicts to the teacher and ask for assistance, write David W. Johnson and Roger T. Johnson in *Reducing School Violence Through Conflict Resolution* (1995).

Although teachers are responsible for ensuring that conflicts are managed constructively, they do not need to mediate each one personally, the authors note. Teachers do need to make sure that there is a process—and people—in place to deal with conflict in a positive way.

This six-lesson course introduces teachers to the concept of conflict resolution, its value in a school environment, and the many ways to handle it. It will help teachers understand how they can—and why they should—emphasize conflict resolution in the classroom and, if feasible, in the school setting.

### Course Objectives

After completing the course, you should be able to

- Define conflict.
- Examine constructive and destructive conflict.
- Explore ways to handle conflict.
- Learn the six-step negotiation process.
- Understand the role of the mediator and the ground rules for mediation.
- Review the arbitration process.

## Course Syllabus

<p><b>Module 1</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding Conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Conflict Defined</li> <li>• What Conflict Can Teach Us</li> <li>• Multimedia Activity: 1A</li> <li>• Question 1A</li> <li>• Multimedia Activity: 1B</li> <li>• Question 1B</li> <li>• Journal Entry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module 2</b></p>	<p><b>Creating a Conflict-Positive Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Conflict-Positive Schools</li> <li>• Destructive and Constructive Conflicts Game</li> <li>• Interactivity 2A</li> <li>• Interactivity 2B</li> <li>• Interactivity 2C</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module 3</b></p>	<p><b>Ways to Handle Conflict</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Strategies for Managing Conflict</li> <li>• Problem-Solving Negotiations</li> <li>• Smoothing</li> <li>• Forcing or Win-Lose Negotiations</li> <li>• Compromising</li> <li>• Withdrawing</li> <li>• Interactivity 3A</li> </ul>

<p><b>Module 4</b></p>	<p><b>Learning to Negotiate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Heads I Win, Tails You Lose</li> <li>• Winning Together</li> <li>• An Integrative Solution</li> <li>• Problem-Solving Negotiations</li> <li>• A Six-Step Process for Negotiation</li> <li>• Multimedia 4A</li> <li>• Question 4A</li> <li>• Multimedia 4B</li> <li>• Question 4B</li> <li>• Interactivity 4A</li> <li>• Interactivity 4B</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module 5</b></p>	<p><b>The Mediator’s Job</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• The Mediator’s Job</li> <li>• Ground Rules for Mediation</li> <li>• 4-Step Mediation Process</li> <li>• Step 2</li> <li>• Step 3</li> <li>• Step 4</li> <li>• Interactivity 5A</li> <li>• Interactivity 5B</li> </ul>
<p><b>Module 6</b></p>	<p><b>The Arbitration Process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction</li> <li>• Conventional Arbitration</li> <li>• That’s My Final Offer</li> <li>• Multimedia 6A</li> <li>• Question 6A</li> <li>• Interactivity 6A</li> <li>• Interactivity 6B</li> <li>• Interactivity 6C</li> </ul>

## References

- Checkley, J. (Producer). (2003). *Adult conflict resolution* [videotape]. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Crawford, D., & Bodine, R. (1996). *A guide to implementing programs in schools, youth-serving organizations, and community and juvenile justice settings*. Published jointly by the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Education.
- Holden, G. (1997, May). Changing the way kids settle conflicts, *Educational Leadership*, 54(8), 74–76.
- Johnson, D., & Johnson, R. (1995). *Reducing school violence through conflict resolution*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.