

Leadership Links and Learn

This is a monthly communication is dedicated to educating, equipping and engaging members to become better leaders within GFWC

1. **Acknowledge** that a conflict exists-this sounds like common sense but many times club members refuse to acknowledge the existence of a problem. Clubs decline when they refuse to recognize a problem within their club

2. **Communicate effectively**- failure to communicate creates misunderstandings and misperceptions. Verbal and non- verbal communication and the ability to actively listen allow for appropriate sharing of information which minimizes the escalation of a conflict. Active listening skills are the key to good communication. **Hearing** what someone is saying to you is not the same as listening to what someone is saying

3. **Take Responsibility**. Many times a conflict can only be resolved with a change in our behavior and or attitude. Yes, we can be the only person that resolves conflict in some situations because we are either at the heart of the conflict or we are being unreasonable and rigid or unrelenting about our position. Be realistic and remember there is no such thing as a one handed clap!

4. **Resolve to make conflict resolution a priority**. There are always going to be people who thrive on conflict. We must be determined to resolve conflict from the perspective from what is good for our club and our member relationships. Being "right "at all costs is detrimental to conflict resolution. Do not make the mistake of winning the battle only to lose the war

5. **Compromise and negotiate**-this is understanding the other person's position. It doesn't mean that you are in agreement. It means that you have listened and you understand that their position is based upon where they are coming from. Compromise and negotiation leaves all parties feeling heard and empowered. It is the most important part of conflict resolution because all members feel that they have gained something. However, you cannot reach this stage unless all of the above conflict resolution skills have been employed.



We all have to deal with conflict in our lives, our businesses, our families and yes even in our clubs. Due to our many differences conflict is inevitable. It is how we handle the conflicts that make the difference. The bottom line is that a conflict is usually rooted in power struggles....who are the ones making the decisions? Unresolved conflict can result in the breakdown of a club. When unaddressed conflict occurs it can reduce morale, hamper performance, and increase absenteeism. Members do not want to attend meetings that are stressful! Conflict doesn't always have to be negative. There can be many positive results from a conflict. A conflict can provide you with the opportunity to grow through adversity and to think harder and more creatively. It can help you develop a greater understanding and more meaningful relationships when you seek alternative solutions. It gives you the opportunity to build trust and trust is the foundation of success in all relationships.

Did you know.....GFWC offers a Mediators Program to help our clubs with conflict issues? For more information see page 24 of the Nov-Dec Clubwoman magazine

Happy St. Patrick's Day, Karen

PEACE
IS NOT THE ABSENCE
OF CONFLICT BUT
THE ABILITY TO
COPE WITH IT