Taking the Conflict out of Conflict Resolution

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Agenda

- **Why We Experience Conflict**
- **The Role of a PM During Conflict**
  - ○ **Leadership**
  - ○ **Recognizing Conflict**
- **Techniques for Conflict Resolution**
- **Session Takeaways**
- **Questions**

A Perspective on Conflict

Conflict Style

1. Competing (forcing, or dominating)
2. Avoiding (inaction)
3. Accommodating (yielding)
4. Collaborating
5. Compromising

Conflict Optionality

- Conflict is Negative
  - Stress
  - Resignation
  - Disagreements/Sabotage
  - Other

- Conflict is Neutral
- Conflict is Positive
  - Pressure
  - Divergent thoughts
  - Advanced ideals
  - Out of the box innovation
  - Other

Why We Experience Conflict

- **Different Ideas and Perspectives**
- **Poor Communication**
  - **Assumptions**
  - **Expectations**
- **Different Goals**
- **Competing Priorities**
- **Different Styles**
  - **Unique Personalities**
- **Emotions**
- **Processing Changes**
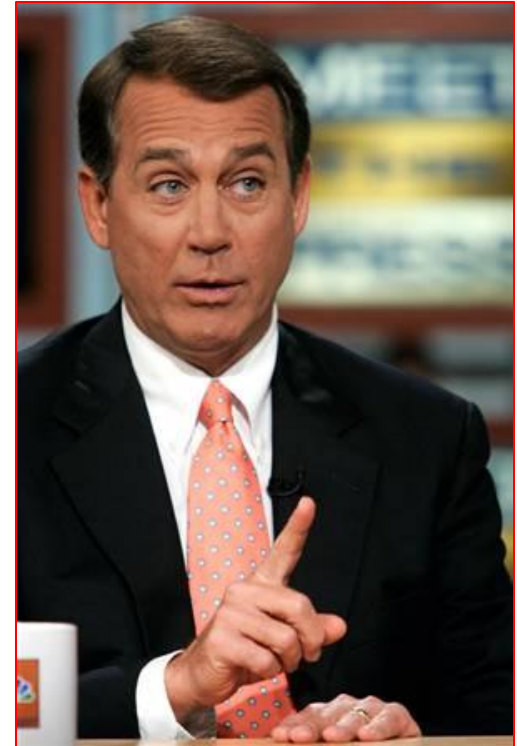- **Different opinions, thoughts, methodology, experiences**

We See the World Through Very Unique Lenses…

Do You Ever Feel Like You Are Surrounded By This?

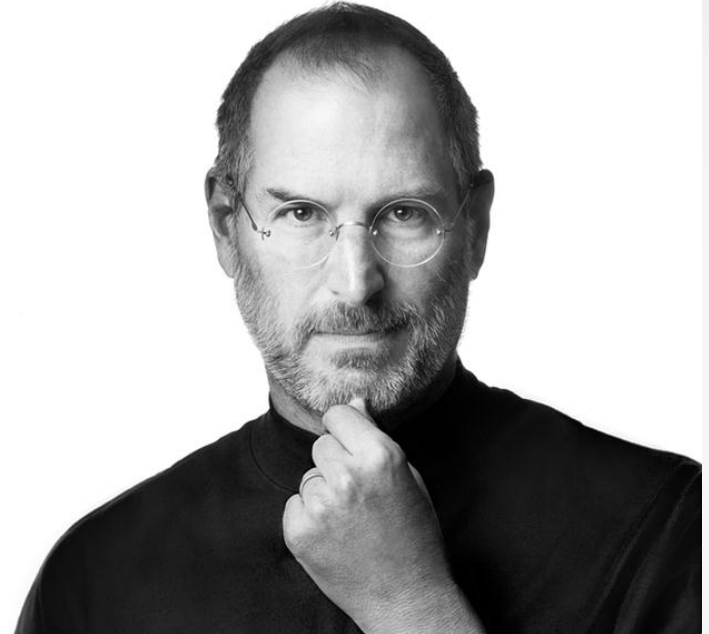# The Role of the PM During Conflict

What's the role of leadership during conflict?

FULL CONTACT SPORT

The Role of the PM During Conflict

- **Recognizing Conflict**
  - **Withdrawn**
  - **Silence**
  - **Sarcasm**
  - **Arguments**
  - **False Agreement**
- **Set the Environment**
- **Work the Process**

For Jobs, every project has a
Directly
Responsible
Individual

Principles of Conflict Resolution

- First Priority: Build, Repair, Maintain Relationships

- Separate People from the Problems

- Help People Move From Positions to Interests
  - Move From "what" to "why"

- Discover the "Facts" *with* the parties

- Collaboratively Explore Options

Don't Fear Conflict, Embrace It – It's Your Job

Conflict Resolution Cycle
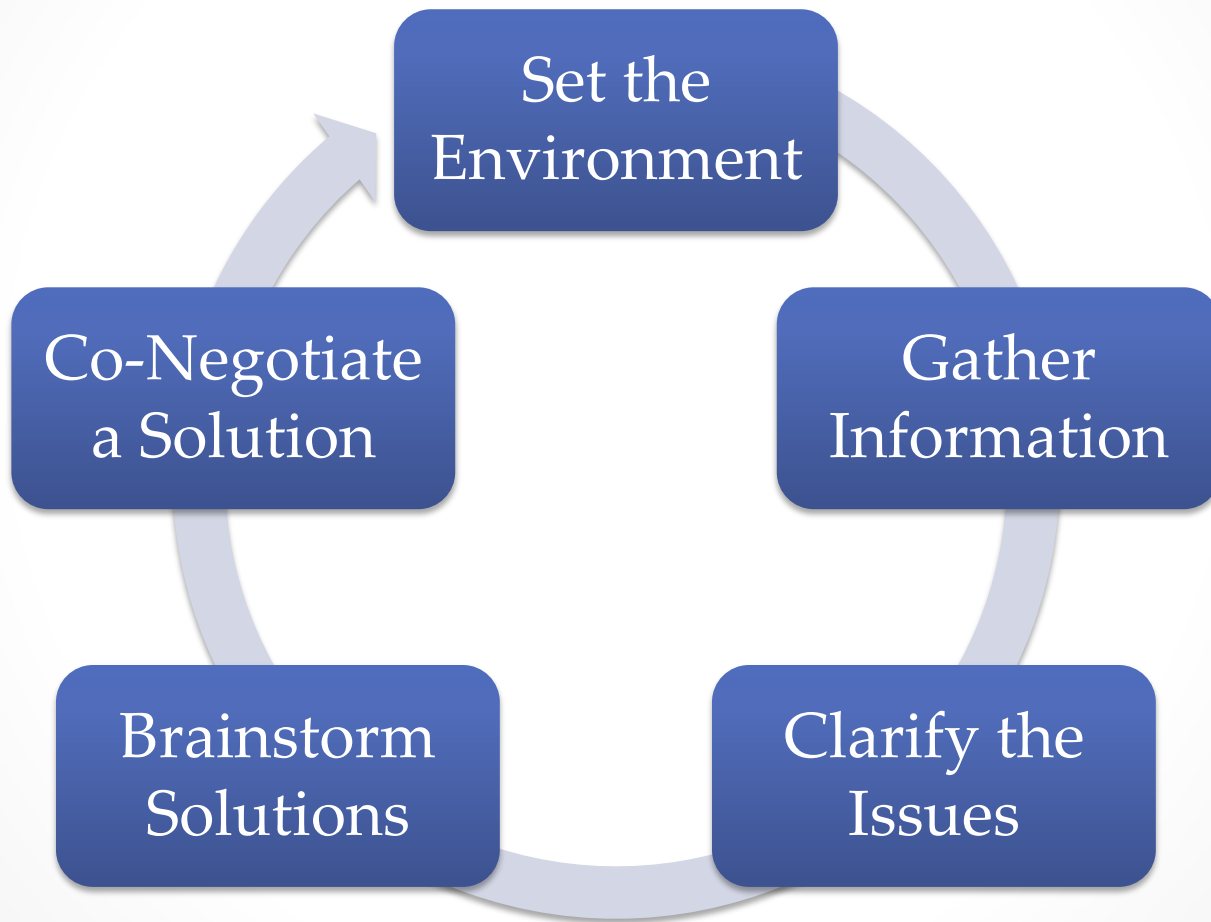
Technique for Conflict Resolution

Step One: Set the Environment

- Determine the best <u>context</u> to discuss the conflict

- Determine the best <u>method</u> to discuss the dispute

- Encourage honest and professional thought expression

- Remind the disputants about perceptions and perspectives

Technique for Conflict Resolution

Step Two: Gather Information

- ALL = **A**ctive **L**istening **L**everage

  - ➤ Move from Positions to Underlying Interests

  - ➤ Create Learning Conversations

Technique for Conflict Resolution

Step Three: Clarify the Issues

- Ensure people understand their own and others' needs

- When multiple issues emerge, discuss them one at a time

- You can't help find a mutually agreeable solution before the issues are identified and analyzed

Technique for Conflict Resolution

Step Four: Brainstorm Possible Solutions

- Everyone participates in generating solutions
  - GOAL: *Expand* the pie…

- Not all brainstorms are created equal
  - Set some basic guidelines:
    - Timing
    - Expand, Not Evaluate
    - Write Things Down
    - Build Off Others

# Technique for Conflict Resolution

Step Five: Co-Negotiate a Solution

- If new issues arise, revert back to the other steps
  - Set the environment
  - Gather information
  - Clarify issues
  - Brainstorm
- Help the parties find an objective set of criteria to evaluate their pool of potential solutions
- Write down mutually agreeable solutions
- Is it okay to escalate an issue? When? How?
- Conflict Case Study (Worksheet)

Technique for Conflict Resolution

Guiding Principles
- o **Be Calm**
- o **Be Patient**
- o **Be Persistent**
- o **Be Respectful**
- o **Set the Environment**
- o **Work the Technique**
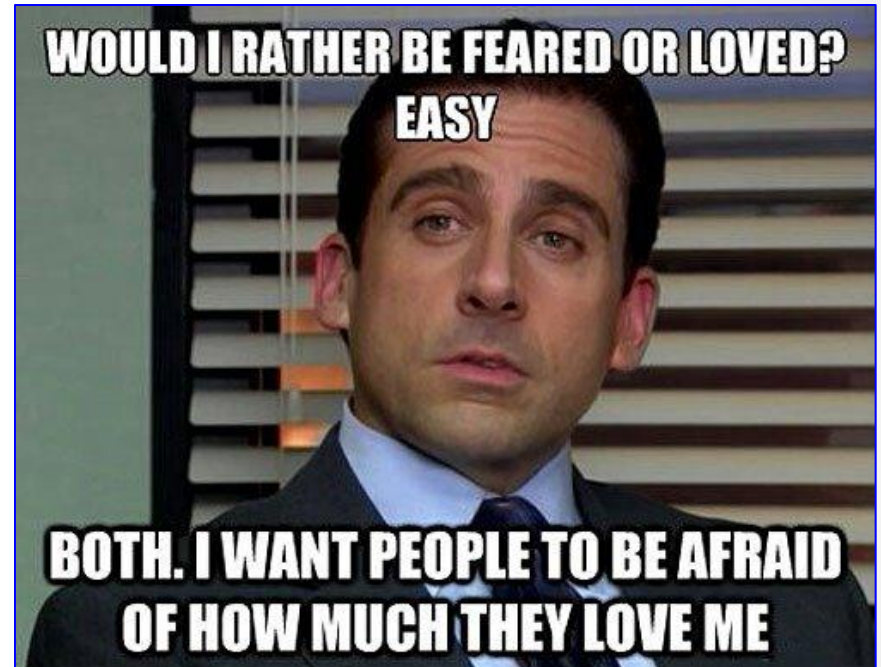
Avoid the **Michael Scott Effect**.
Don't Add to the Conflict!

Takeaways

- Conflict can be + or –
- Multiple Sources of Conflict
- Recognize Forms it Takes
- 5 Conflict Styles
  - Compete, Avoid, Accommodate
  - Collaborate, Compromise
- 5 Steps to Resolve
  - Set environment
  - Fact Gathering
  - Issue Clarification
  - Solution Seeking (Brainstorming)
  - Negotiation

THANK YOU