

ABC Conflict Resolution

Session 4: Tools for Traveling - Conducting a Session of Conflict

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- I. Prior to the meeting, you may want to meet with each individual separately.
 - A. Reflect with each person on the following questions:
 1. What do I want?
 2. Do I have any 'baggage' surrounding this desire that might have nothing to do with the other person?
 3. What tools do I want to use in order to get what I want?
 4. What does the other person (or entity) want?
 5. Can I empathize with his/her desires?
 - B. Pray with each person, and invite them to pray in these ways:
 1. Does my desire align with biblical wisdom and truth?
 2. Does the other person's desire align with biblical wisdom and truth?
 3. How can I express my desire while honoring the other person?
 4. Help me empathize with and show love toward the other person. Help me listen well.
 - C. Sometimes it's helpful to ask each person to write down what they want to say. This helps you stay out of the weeds and focus on the problem to be solved.
 - D. If it's not possible to meet with each of them, share these questions and ask them to think and pray through them. Plan for a longer meeting if there's no advance preparation.
- II. The Specifics of Preparation
 - A. Invite both people and offer options for how/when the meeting occurs.
 1. Neutral ground
 2. Possible supporters (if they want to have someone with them)
 3. Time and place that allows for maximum capacity
 - B. Review with both people what you will discuss. Remind them that they will need to try to stay 'out of the weeds.'
- III. Conducting the Meeting
 - A. Thank both people for their willingness to meet. If appropriate (and with permission), pray together.

- B. Share the reason you want to talk. (Colossians 3:12-14)
 - 1. The ultimate goal should be restoration and growth, not accusation and condemnation.
 - 2. Share that you want both people to speak but also to listen.
 - 3. Lay the ground rules.
 - a) Listening well means refraining from interrupting or talking over each other. (Psalm 141:3)
 - b) When speaking, use language that refers to how you experience the conflict, rather than accusing or maligning the other person.
 - c) You will step in if needed to redirect the conversation or help interpret statements that need clarification.
 - d) Remind everyone of the time constraint. Do your best to keep the meeting from extending beyond the time you allotted.

- C. Facilitate the conversation:
 - 1. Each person shares their desire and the ways in which their desire has been thwarted by the other person. Help them keep it focused on how they have experienced the situation, with a willingness to hear other perspectives.
 - 2. Each person listens to the other person's perspective and experience.
 - 3. Discuss what could have been done differently, and offer apology for sin committed.
 - 4. Discuss compromise and what it will mean to move forward. Discuss how they can restore trust.
 - 5. Offer to talk again about this topic if needed.

IV. Reflection

- A. We are often going quickly from one meeting to the next. Set aside time to reflect on what occurred and pray for both people.

- B. Reflect on your role in the meeting.
 - 1. Did you misstep?
 - 2. Did you feel confident, fearful, uncertain, etc.?
 - 3. Did you find your mind wandering to your own struggles?
 - 4. How can you continue to grow in facilitating these kinds of meetings?