

Measuring Up: Negotiating Committee Conflict



... How to Negotiate Committee Conflict

Conflict and disagreement can be part of any committee experience, and may also occur within your Measuring Up committee. Here are some tips for negotiating through disagreements in a way that will make your committee stronger and more successful in improving accessibility and inclusion for everyone in your community:

- Focus on maintaining your relationship despite the disagreement.
- Be empathetic; put yourself in other people's shoes.
- Don't assume you know what other people's perspectives are; always remember to ask "why" and "why not".
- Recognize your own emotions and background that you bring to the table, and try to acknowledge those of other people.
- Don't react to emotional outbursts.
- Speak about yourself, not about "them".
- Listen actively, and acknowledge what is being said.
- Create opportunities for all parties to discuss their perspectives without interruption or debate.
- Focus on realistic, tangible and flexible solutions.
- Don't assume there is only one answer.
- Invite outside facilitation or opinion when there is continued disagreement.
- Use neutral language where possible to express your points - avoid explosive terminology or statements.
- Structure your meeting agenda to allow ample time for discussion.

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- Where possible, provide objective reasons for decisions made; decisions based on clear standards make it easier for everyone to agree and preserve a good relationship.

These are just some of the many suggestions available to address conflict in your committee. Additional resources can be found at:

[Conflict Resolution Network Canada - www.crnetwork.ca](http://www.crnetwork.ca)

We're also here to help. Feel free to contact 2010 Legacies Now's Measuring Up team to talk about your experiences, share your own best practices or to communicate challenges. We look forward to hearing from you.

Measuring Up Team

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