



Teamwork and Conflict Resolution Journal

Teamwork and Conflict Resolution: Individuals can use their understanding of working cooperatively with others to complete work assignments and achieve mutual goals.

In this journal you will find tools and activities to help you understand what skills teamwork and conflict resolution entail. Through self-reflection, activities, examples, and questioning, you will develop a better sense of why being a good team worker and being able to resolve conflicts calmly and efficiently are necessary in the workplace and how you can demonstrate those qualities to the best of your ability. You will be able to see your own growth by completing a self-check at the beginning and end of the process.

Self-Check

A. Consider This....

A person who knows how to work in a team builds trust with others. They keep information confidential, being sure not to gossip. They follow through on tasks assigned to them. They ask for others' ideas and perspectives and thoughtfully consider all input before making a decision. They communicate with other team members when needed. They seek to resolve conflicts through constructive, creative, and positive behaviors. They reflect on their own behaviors in a problem situation and assume responsibility for their own actions and mistakes.

B. Self-Reflection Questions (consider your own experiences—classroom, work, or activities—and answer the following)

1. In your experience, what are three important aspects of teamwork?
2. How can you tell when a team is not working well together?
3. What are three things that would escalate a conflict?
4. What are three ways to resolve a conflict?
5. How is teamwork and conflict resolution an important part of the workplace?

Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview

Watch this recorded lesson for a quick overview on the importance of teamwork and conflict resolution in the workplace. Learn from an employer how to demonstrate the skill:

- Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview: <https://youtu.be/-XOII-aDKIc>

Case Study

Carefully read the Case Study, then answer the reflection questions based on what you read.

Teamwork and Conflict Resolution

Tehya works as a production engineer in a plant that makes parts for tractors. She is responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring manufacturing processes at the plant. She reports to the Senior Production Manager.

Tehya also heads up a cross functional team that is tasked with solving a problem that is occurring with one of the extrusion presses. The people on Tehya's team include herself, Meira, the floor supervisor, Ulani, the tool room representative, Emma, from quality control, and Rakesh, the machine operator. Rakesh is reporting that the normal set-up time should be about 15 minutes to change jobs on the press, but because of an unknown issue, the machine is out of service for as long as eight hours. This is causing delays in production and pushing deadlines back.

Tehya needs to get to the bottom of the issue. She knows each team member has a different perspective on the problem, but she needs to keep them focused and working together. Ulani is blaming Meira for lack of oversight and Rakesh for inexperience on the press, and Meira says the problem lies with the tool shop. The majority of the team is blaming Emma for inaccurate quality inspections. Emma says the stock coming from the press is out of spec. She claims she wrote that in a report, but no one can find it.

Tehya brings the whole team together to get to the root of the problem. Unfortunately, the meeting evolves into arguments and name calling. How can Tehya bring the team together in order to work towards a solution?

Reflection Questions

1. Identify the conflict and teamwork problems.
2. What is the first step Tehya should take?
3. How can Tehya de-escalate the situation?
4. What can the other team members do to find a solution to the problem?
5. What steps can Tehya and her team take to ensure that they work together better as a team?

Activity - Conflict Resolution

Watch at least three of the videos listed and complete the reflection questions below.

- How To Talk To Someone Who is Really Angry
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ErnGVaEuykc>
- Four Magic Phrases
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g5RknemM8Hw>
- How to Calm an Angry Person
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9usYVyNrd0>
- Three Things to Say
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJ9FbJoSjVo>
- Dealing with the Irate Customer
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQtAri5U5I4>
- How to Deal with A Difficult Co-Worker
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UiPatVDz_h0
- De-escalating an Argument
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR8Zzp6E8sI&list=RDCMUceYUHG6o0YguM-g23htdsSw&start_radio=1&t=22

Reflection Questions

1. What experiences have you had with dealing with an angry person?
2. Have you ever been angry and someone was able to calm you down? How did they do it?
3. Does all conflict manifest itself as anger?
4. What ideas do you have for helping to inform others about the ways to deescalate conflict?

Activity – Acting Out

View the Conflict Card Images below and answer these questions:

- Select one Conflict Card and write down what you think might be happening.
- Do you think this conflict happens in a workplace?
- How would you handle this situation?
- Select another Conflict Card.
- Write down what you think might be happening.
- How would you handle this situation?



Activity - Interview

Identify a friend, family member, or contact that has work experience. Ask them if they are available for a short, 10-minute interview about teamwork and conflict resolution skills on the job. Ask the following questions:

1. What do you think is the secret to successful teamwork?
2. Can you share a few examples of conflicts that you face on the job?
3. What do you do to resolve the conflict?
4. What have you put into place that helps stop conflicts from arising?
5. How do you think successful teamwork should be rewarded?

Reflection Questions

1. What was your biggest takeaway from the interviews?
2. How can you put some of these practices into place for yourself?
3. What other questions would you like to ask?

Video and Article Links

Watch at least two of the following videos and read at least two of the listed articles. Based on what you saw and read, answer the reflection questions listed at the end of this section.

Video Links

- Recorded Lesson and Employer Interview: <https://youtu.be/-XOI1-aDKIc>
- P-20 Network Virtual Trailhead video: Laura Rice (Microbiologist) discusses the importance of Teamwork <https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-laura-rice/>
- P-20 Network Virtual Trailhead video, Jim Daly. Jim emphasizes how exciting it is to innovate and create while also stating that, in his experience, leading people is more complex than solving problems with chemicals. <https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-jim-daly-floralife/>
- P-20 Network, Virtual Trailhead Video: Lisa Sharp, Architect. She describes the role of an architect as being like the conductor of a band as one works with other professionals across a broad range of job types from engineers to interior designer to construction workers. <https://p20network.niu.edu/career-pathways-virtual-trailheads-lisa-sharp-architect/>
- Evergreen, FS. Grain talk about the importance of teamwork, positivity, contributing, positive relationships, trust. <https://youtu.be/Plwqvz5Fn3s>
- What employers want: A positive attitude and persistence when things get tough. <https://youtu.be/4PManJnukWs>

Article Links

- Resources to build understanding and issues around conflict resolution <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>
- Magazine Resource from *Teaching Tolerance* Organization <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/archive>
- Article on Conflict Resolution Skills and Techniques in the Workplace <https://www.notredameonline.com/resources/negotiations/6-simple-workplace-conflict-resolution-techniques/>
- Four Common Types of Team Conflict and How to Resolve Them <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/types-of-team-conflict>
- Article on How to Resolve Workplace Conflicts <https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-magazine/pages/070815-conflict-management.aspx>

Reflection Questions

1. Please give an example from the resources that was particularly noteworthy to you as a positive example of teamwork.
2. Please give an example from the resources that was particularly noteworthy to you as an example of poor teamwork.
3. Have you ever found yourself in a situation that requires you to work as a team? How did you succeed?
4. After watching the videos and reading the articles what would you have done differently?
5. Have you ever had to use conflict resolution techniques? How successful were you?
6. After watching the videos and reading the articles what would you have done differently?
7. What are some ideas that you can apply to your own work experiences?

Career Development Activity

Over 50 different employers came together to develop GPEAK. They agreed that teamwork and conflict resolution skills are in the top 10 essential skills desired by employers. They identified certain behaviors on the job that indicate good teamwork and conflict resolution skills. Our GPEAK employers described these behaviors as:

- Establishes a high degree of trust, confidentiality, and credibility with others to develop shared purpose
- Encourages others' contribution of ideas, opinions, and perspectives through thoughtful and positive interactions
- Coordinates with others to achieve identified outcomes and objectives
- De-escalates difficult situations constructively and positively
- Is committed to solving problems/finding resolutions

Resume Bullets Activity

In this Career Development exercise, you will describe your past experiences where you demonstrated or developed the teamwork/conflict resolution skill. For many positions, it will be important to note these skills on your job application materials and resume.

Think back on some of your past experiences (classes, jobs, activities, sports, and volunteer positions). Are you proud of certain moments where you demonstrated or developed your teamwork and conflict resolution skills? If you were interviewing for a job tomorrow, which story would you tell to demonstrate that you have experience with this important workplace skill?

Focusing on your past experiences, write six bulleted statements about your teamwork and conflict resolution skills. A resume bullet should start with an action verb (past tense or present) and be concise. You will want to write the bullets without the use of personal pronouns (refrain from using me, my, or I in the statement). These bulleted statements can be used on a resume, application form, or for interview prep. Here are a few examples:

- Developed teamwork and conflict resolution skills for the workplace in a GPEAK training session
- Excelled in team projects that were assigned for science classes.
- Took part in team building exercises for high school athletics and clubs
- Selected as team leader of an annual event for a school club
- Handle conflicts on the job and utilize resolution skills to manage situations with customers
- Enjoy working as part of a team and respect members' input and contributions

Now it is your turn. Think about your experiences and write six bullets that highlight your teamwork and conflict resolution skills.

Post Self-Check

Now that you have a better understanding of what employers are looking for in teamwork and conflict resolution skills, answer the questions below:

1. What is something that you can do in 3 months, 6 months, and 1 year to further develop teamwork and conflict resolution skills?
2. What is your interest level in this competency (teamwork and conflict resolution)?
3. Are you drawn to projects or work that require this skill?
4. Would you say that you have natural abilities around this skill or is it something you have to work at?
5. In the future, would you apply to a job in your field that asked for a high level of teamwork and conflict resolution skill?