

## Stages of Team Development – Healthy Conflict

### Using RESPECT to work through conflict on your team

Many people believe that conflict is unhealthy. In reality, the opposite is true. Conflict is an integral part of the stages of team development. The main secret is that conflict must be directed toward the issues and not at individuals or their personalities. When conflict gets to the point of needing resolution, I like to use the acronym, RESPECT.

- **R – Review the situation** – Get everyone involved and review the situation to gain clarity of the problem.
- **E – Explore all possible solutions** – Everyone needs to be involved with the power of brainstorming. Remember that, when brainstorming, all ideas are on the table and no criticizing is allowed.
- **S – Solve the problem** – Here is where all parties agree on a potential solution.
- **P – Prepare a follow-up plan** – A problem isn't solved just because the problem is solved on paper. You will need a follow-up plan to ensure success.
- **E – Expect cooperation** – This is where bonding comes in. By telling each person what is expected of him/her and gaining commitment, you are getting a buy-in towards a more powerful solution.
- **C – Confirm agreement** – Get everyone to sign an agreement that they will abide by the solution. After all, our forefathers did just that with the Declaration of Independence.
- **T – Track progress** – Just because you have a solution and an agreement does not mean it will succeed. Tracking progress increases the likelihood that your potential solution will succeed and significant negative conflict will be avoided.

While it will not work on every conflict situation, this process works tremendously well in both individual and team conflict situations that seem to be getting out of hand.