



8 Step Conflict Resolution Model

1. “I respect you and I am for you” stance

- a. In the first 30 seconds we want to create safety and he feels our respect for him or her.
- b. You can’t approach the person with anger, frustration, impatience or disgust. You need to be calm and in control of your emotions.
- c. You have to speak to the judge in the person in the first 30 seconds.
- d. Examples:
 - i. Spouse: “I need to share some thoughts and feelings that might be hard to hear. But before I do I want you to hear how much I love you, I enjoy our relationship and there are so many good things in you that I respect and am glad I get to experience from you.”
 - ii. Friend: “I have some things that might be hard to hear, but we will get through it and I want you to know I am for you, I enjoy our relationship and I want us to grow closer.”
 - iii. Employee: You are a valuable part of our team. “I have some tough stuff to go over but we will get through it, I am excited on what you bring to the team.”
- e. **Scriptural Connection:** Ephesians 4:25-27,29 *“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ‘In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”*

2. State the conflict or situation that needs to be confronted

- a. Quickly (do not go on and on) and specifically state the concern (have 3 examples).
- b. Usually in performance, attitude or behavior
- c. Do your homework
- d. **Scriptural Connection:** Paul was very specific with Peter and he did it immediately. He didn’t beat around the bush. Same with Jesus and the Pharisees and disciples.

3. Own your contribution

- a. Here is the contribution I have made to the problem – for example: I haven’t addressed it sooner, I wasn’t clear, I didn’t resource you. Apologize, I am part of problem.
- b. Very few times 100% them
- c. This helps them feel that you aren’t there to beat them up. This levels the playing field.
- d. Another step in safety.

8 Step Conflict Resolution Model (*continued*)

- e. **Scriptural Connection:** Matthew 7:3-5: *“Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”*
- 4. **Hear them out**
 - a. Have to give them their day in court and hear them out. I want to understand your perspective.
 - b. You may get information that will change your conversation – examples: wife is sick, have to leave house because foreclosure.
 - c. Another way to create safety.
 - d. Some will start to divert. Give them 2 or 3 minutes. Don’t go on the rabbit trails, and defend or explain, just listen.
 - e. Five magic words. After 2 or 3 minutes you then say, “Let me get back to.”
 - f. It is your meeting and you can be in control in a good way that is warm and strong.
- 5. **Request Change within a Win/Win stance**
 - a. Owe it to them to specifically describe the change you desire.
 - i. Examples: reach out 5 times a week; sharing information with someone 3 or 4 times this week; you look down and not connect to others in the office so I need you to look up; I need you to listen to the other perspective entirely before you jump in; you need to meet 4 out of the next 5 deadlines
 - b. If it is an attitude it is harder to describe so you may need to do some homework
 - c. **Scriptural Connection:** Paul was not bashful to ask specifically for the change he wanted from Peter.
- 6. **Natural Consequences (if necessary)**
 - a. Some don’t need them if they respond well or depending on the area that you are confronting or how many times you have confronted them.
 - b. If it is a hard person or the person is not buying it, you may need to create some losses/consequences
 - i. Written reprimand
 - ii. When you start demeaning me I will leave the conversation.
 - iii. Warm distance
 - iv. When you lie, I will not cover for you.
- 7. **Return to “I am for you” stance**
 - a. One final step in creating safety.
 - b. All grace is poured in to counteract any internal judge that might be beating them up.
 - c. Examples:
 - i. “We just had a tough talk and I want to remind you that you contribute in important ways to our team and I want you to win.”

8 Step Conflict Resolution Model (*continued*)

- ii. “I want to check in right now on how you are doing with what just happened. Do you feel criticized, or feel I am going to fire you, or you don’t believe you have my respect?”

8. Check back in 24 hours

- a. “How has it been going since our talk?”
- b. One final infusion of grace and safety

Resources

Cloud, H. & Townsend, J.S. (2005). *How to Have That Difficult Conversation You've Been Avoiding: With Your Spouse, Adult Child, Boss, Coworker, Best Friend, Parent, or Someone You're Dating*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.