

# How Do We Manage Conflict?

## It's Time For Self-Reflection

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### Aims

1. To promote self-reflection to improve perceptions of conflict and increase staff capacity to positively manage conflict during the critical stages of team formation
2. To enhance team leader knowledge of their teams' conflict management styles to influence team functioning and to provide extended support in times of change

### Method

A survey was conducted of pharmacists, technicians and assistants to assess baseline understanding and perceptions of conflict and self-perceived capabilities to manage conflict. The Zubin Austin Conflict Management Scale<sup>1</sup> was completed by staff to identify their conflict management styles and was then discussed with their team leader in a reflective discussion. A final survey was conducted to assess any changes in baseline parameters.

scared  
negative  
anxious  
avoid  
fighting  
conflict  
uncomfortable  
uncertain  
nervous

Self-perceived confidence managing conflict increased from 41/100 to 61/100 on a scale of 1 (not confident) to 100 (confident)

75% of team leaders stated this activity gave them a greater understanding of their team members conflict management styles

Strategies available to staff to manage conflict increased from 43/100 to 63/100 on a scale of 1 (no strategies) to 100 (multiple strategies)

### Results

87% of participants stated upon reflection that they would positively adapt and broaden their conflict management strategies

Perception that conflict could be positive for the workplace increased from 76% to 100%

### Conclusion

Positive conflict management is vital during all stages of team-functioning but is particularly important during the initial stages of forming/storming. Self-evaluation/reflection is an essential skill to increase competence in this area and contribute to the functioning of high-performing teams.



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#### References:

1. Austin Z et al. A Conflict Management Scale for Pharmacy. Am J Pharm Educ. 2009: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2779634/>