Conflict Resolution:

Turn Tension into Progress

Conflict at work can feel uncomfortable, but it's not always a bad thing. More often, it's a sign that expectations, priorities or communication need to be clarified. When teams address conflict early and stay focused on the issue instead of the person, difficult moments can become opportunities to build trust, strengthen communication and move forward with more clarity.

Conflict isn't a failure. It's a signal.

In the workplace, conflict usually doesn't come from bad intentions. It often comes from misaligned expectations, unclear roles or differing perspectives.

Handled well, conflict can:

Improve communication

Strengthen working relationships

Lead to better outcomes

The goal isn't to avoid conflict. It's to handle it in a way that moves things forward.

3 Coach–approved principles

1 **Start with alignment.**
Before reacting, pause and ask what expectations may need to be clarified.

2 **Address issues early.**
The longer something sits, the more complicated it becomes.

3 **Focus on the issue, not the person.**
Keep the conversation grounded in what's happening—not who's to blame.

How to start the conversation

You don't need perfect wording—just calm, clear and respectful language that keeps the focus on the issue.

Try saying...

I feel like we might be coming at this from different angles. Can we talk through what each of us expected and what needs to happen next for us to get on the same page?

A simple way to navigate through it

Share what you're noticing. "I noticed we're using two different timelines for this project."

Explain why it matters. "I'm worried that could cause confusion or slow us down."

Invite their perspective. "Can you walk me through how you're thinking about it?"

Agree on what happens next. "Let's decide what timeline we're using and who's owning each step."

What keeps the conversation constructive?

- ✓ Staying calm and respectful.
- ✓ Being open to another perspective.
- ✓ Focusing on solutions, not “winning”.
- ✓ Leaving with clear next steps.

What to watch for:

1. **Letting frustration build before speaking up**
2. **Making assumptions instead of asking questions**
3. **Turning it into a personal issue**
4. **Avoiding the conversation altogether**

You don’t need to win the conversation.

You just need to understand each other well enough to move forward.

Looking to build this skill further?

You don’t have to figure out every difficult conversation on the spot. Coaching gives you space to prepare, reflect and respond with more confidence.

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