



# Conflict 101: A Manager's Guide to Resolving Problems So Everyone Can Get Back to Work

By Susan H. Shearouse



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We all know conflict is unavoidable...especially in the workplace. Whether it's a fight over resources, a disagreement about how to get things done, or an argument stemming from perceived differences in identities or values, it's a manager's role to navigate relationships, and build compromises and collaborations. Conflict 101 gives readers the tools they need to ensure not only that employees get back on track, but that disagreements breed positive results. Readers will learn how to:

- Build trust
- Harness negative emotions
- Encourage apologies and forgiveness
- Use a solution-seeking approach
- Say what needs to be said

Incorporating anecdotes taken from the author's twenty years of experience as a conflict resolution professional, the book helps readers more deeply understand how conflict is created, how to respond to it, and how to manage it more effectively.

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- Sales Rank: #842870 in Books
- Published on: 2011-05-11
- Released on: 2011-05-11
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.90" h x .62" w x 5.90" l, .97 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

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Whenever human beings interact, it's inevitable that conflict—when what one person wants, needs, or expects interferes with what others want, need, or expect—will bubble up to the surface...and no more so than at the office. Whatever the cause, it's your job as a manager to ensure that these ripples of discord don't lead to a lack of productivity, increased employee turnover and absenteeism, and other natural consequences of workplace friction.

*Conflict 101* gives you the tools you need to navigate relationships, build compromises and collaborations, and not only get your people back on track, but channel the energy of disagreements into positive results. You'll discover practical, immediately usable ways to:

- build trust among coworkers
- harness negative emotions
- encourage apologies and forgiveness, and
- use a solution-seeking approach to resolving employee differences
- say what needs to be said in any situation involving interpersonal tension.

Whether it's a disagreement about processes, factionalism over where money and staff will come from, or the byproduct of complicated relationships or differences stemming from identities or values, it's imperative that you stem the tide of conflict and keep your people focused.

### **Advance Praise for *Conflict 101***

"Susan Shearouse's magnificent *Conflict 101* provides the essential tools for improving our working relationships. Her humor and wisdom make this book a powerful guide. A joy to read!" — **Robert Maurer, Ph.D., Faculty, UCLA and University of Washington Schools of Medicine; author of *One Small Step Can Change Your Life***

"Workplace conflict is pervasive and effective skills to intervene are too often limited. This is an especially valuable resource for employees and supervisors facing the challenges of managing conflict. It is engagingly written, grounded with real experiences in the field." — **Sandra I. Cheldelin, Vernon M. and Minnie I. Lynch Professor, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University**

SUSAN H. SHEAROUSE has a Masters Degree in Conflict Resolution and served as Executive Director of the National Conference on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution. Her clients have included Lockheed Martin, Philip Morris, the IRS, the US Environmental Protection Agency, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and many others.

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