

COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION

FMCS Commissioners Sue Putman



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FMCS Structure

- **The National Agency**
 - Director appointed by the President
 - Headquartered in Washington, D.C.
 - 2 Regions; 76 Field stations; 170 + Mediators
- **Eastern Region – Cleveland Ohio**
 - Nearly all states east of the Mississippi River
- **The Orlando Field Office**
 - 2 Commissioners
 - Director Mediation Services (Southern Region)

Role of FMCS

- **Statutorily created by Taft-Hartley in 1947**
- **Prevent/minimize interruptions of interstate commerce resulting from labor disputes through mediation & conciliation**
- **Provide ADR assistance to Federal, State and Local government agencies**

Your “WORKING STYLE”

can be a major source of conflict
between you and your fellow
employees



Working Style Characteristics

<p><u>A - ANALYTIC</u></p> <p>Does the job correctly Likes facts and figures Focuses on steps and objectives Seeks logical explanations</p> <p><i>A</i></p>	<p><u>B - DRIVER</u></p> <p>Gets the job done Likes results Focuses on results Seeks most efficient way</p> <p><i>B</i></p>
<p><u>AMIABLE</u></p> <p>Works cooperatively Likes people and fairness Focuses on process Seeks informality</p> <p><i>C</i></p>	<p><u>EXPRESSIVE</u></p> <p>Works enthusiastically Has “vision” Focuses on hunches Seeks stimulation</p> <p><i>D</i></p>

Communication

LISTENING AND CLARIFYING

Definition-

- Listening is the capacity to hear effectively.
- Clarifying is asking questions to verify the information received by listening.

Communication v. Information

- **Communication** is *dialogue*.
- **Communication** is *getting through*.
- **Communication** demands a *response*.
- **Communication** explains “*Why*”.
- **Communication** is *leadership* from point of “*Inclusion*”.
- **Information** is *monologue*,
- **Information** is *giving out*.
- **Information** demands *attention*.
- **Information** explains “*What*”.
- **Information** is *leadership* from a point of “*Instruction*”.

Types of *Listening*

Active Listening

- Listening to learn
- Listening to more appropriately and constructively respond
- Listening to understand another's concerns or interests

Defensive Listening

- Listening for the "*Reload.*"
- Listening to gain information which reloads your mental gun with new verbal bullets
- Listening to better defend your position

Benefits

Listening & Clarifying help to:

1. Uncover meaning
2. Encourage sharing
3. Learn what is important to people & why
4. Reveal mutual interests
5. Create an environment of openness
6. Develop an accurate understanding

WHAT TO AVOID

- Interrupting
- Exaggerated or mocking paraphrasing
- Sarcasm
- Evaluating or judging what is said
- Facial Expressions
- Negative postures

Ask Clarifying Questions

- **Open ended** -- expand, find out more
- **Close ended** -- confirm or narrow discussion
- **Non-threatening tone of voice**

Paraphrase

- Restate in your own words
- Describe without judging
- Include *substance* and *emotions*
- Shows speaker was heard & understood
- Helps focus

Investigatory Method

- **1. Use for “who”, “where”, “when” questions**
- **2. Purpose is to reveal facts**
- **3. Final solution is to apply corrective action**

Interest Based Method

- **1. Use for “how might we” questions (focus on future)**
- **2. Purpose is identify mutual interests**
- **3. Solution is a mutual gain**

ACTIVE LISTENING

- **Body Language**
- **Ask Questions**
- **Paraphrase**
- **Summarize Key Points**

What is PERCEPTION?

Definition according to *Websters* :

1. A mental image
2. Physical sensation interpreted through the light of experience
3. Quick, acute, and intuitive cognition
4. A capacity for comprehension

What you expect depends on your **PERCEPTIONS!**

Perceptions are comprised of...

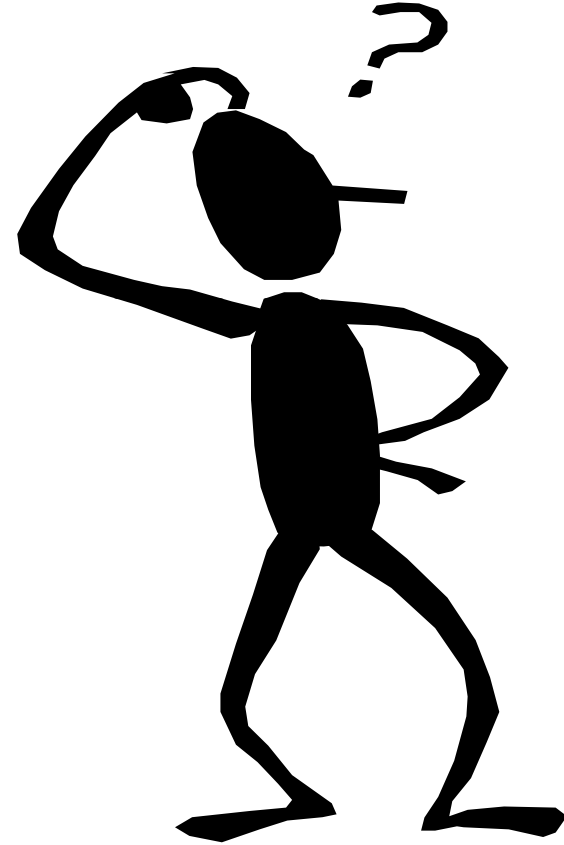
1. **Recognition** (*Based upon what is seen, heard, felt, tasted or smelled – the senses*)
2. **Interpretation** (*Based upon experiences and circumstances –the meaning or value applied*)
3. **Expectations** (*Based upon mental and behavioral patterns*)

...and they constitute the way you see things!

What is Cultural Diversity ?

Differences between:

- gender
- age
- religions
- lifestyles
- beliefs
- physical capabilities
- cultures



Generational Timeline

Four Generations, One Workplace To Share

Generational Timeline			
1922-1945	1946-1963	1964-1980	1981-2005
Traditionalist	Boomers	Gen X'ers	Millennials
Age: 62-83 Yrs	Age: 45-61 Yrs	Age: 25-44 Yrs	Age: 5-24 Yrs

Understanding diversity

- **Organizations that understand and manage diversity increase their competitiveness and the productivity of their employees.**
- **These businesses are successful because they anticipate and plan for changes.**

Understanding diversity (continued)

- **People from diverse backgrounds can work and live together.**
- **Prejudices, fears and stereotyping about people who are different than ourselves are learned behaviors.**

Givens of Culture and Values

- **Human beings create culture**
- **Each group has developed its own culture**
- **Cultural assumptions**
- **Everyone is ethnocentric**
- **We compare people and events**

Characteristics of Culture

- **Sense of self and space**
- **Communication and Language**
- **Food and eating habits**
- **Value and norms**
- **Relationships**

Givens of Culture and Values

(continued)

- **Our culture and values influence what we see, hear and feel.**
- **Our values show up in our interactions with people.**

Barriers To Cross-Cultural Communications

- **Preconceptions and stereotypes**
- **Assumed Similarity**
- **Tendency to Evaluate**
- **Verbal Language**

Nuances, slang, idioms, technical jargon

Assumptions based on a person's accent

Pacing and Timing

Word meaning

Barriers To Cross-Cultural Communications

- **Non-Verbal Communication:**

70% of our communication

Smiling, silence, gestures, nodding, eye contact, body language, touch, and personal space

Physical and circumstantial context

Different views of The Parent-Child Relationship

Asian View:

- Children are extension of parents
- The family makes decisions
- Parents provide authority
- Children should remain dependent on family for most needs.

American View:

- Children are individuals
- Child is given choices
- Parents provide guidance
- Early independence is encouraged

The Goal of Cultural Diversity

For each of us to be
acknowledged and
accepted for each of
our **unique qualities!**

Cultural Assumptions

- Beliefs that are so accepted within a culture that you don't even know they are there!

Cultural Assumptions

- **Like assuming everyone in the room can read**
- **Like not realizing that Muslims would be offended at the use of the word “Crusade against Terrorism”**

Cross Cultural Team Building

- We each have our preferred work styles
 - Informal vs Formal
 - Direct vs Indirect Communication
 - Working Alone vs Working on a Team
 - One Task at a Time vs Multi-tasking
- We may not even be aware of them
- We ALL act on them at work!
- There are no right and wrong preferences!

Managing the Differences

- **Reflect** – Know your values
- **Understand** – The values of others
- **Respect** – The values for what they are
- **Accept** – The differences as positives

What is a Team?

- **A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.**
- **Teams can produce something greater than the sum of their parts.**

Which works better, cooperation or competition?

- **The answer is: COOPERATION!**
- **Most big business, school systems, health-care community and parents continue to encourage competition, almost totally neglecting the power of cooperation.**

Which works better?

It seems that cooperation has an impact on individuals working together in several key areas:

- Creates a more fluid leadership**
- Allows everyone to participate**
- Impacts an individual's perception of the work environment**

Which works better?



A cooperative environment increases the number of ideas, improves the quality of the outcome, and facilitates a better working environment.

Ways to facilitate cooperation

- ***Share resources and information***

When people are vying for knowledge, work space, personnel, or anything to help them get the job done, cooperation decreases. The **exchange of resources encourages one person to work with another.**

Ways to facilitate cooperation

Reinforce team efforts:

Rather than praising one person for a job well done, utilize a team approach to problem solving.

Act cooperatively- individuals who have witnessed a cooperative act will “pass it on”

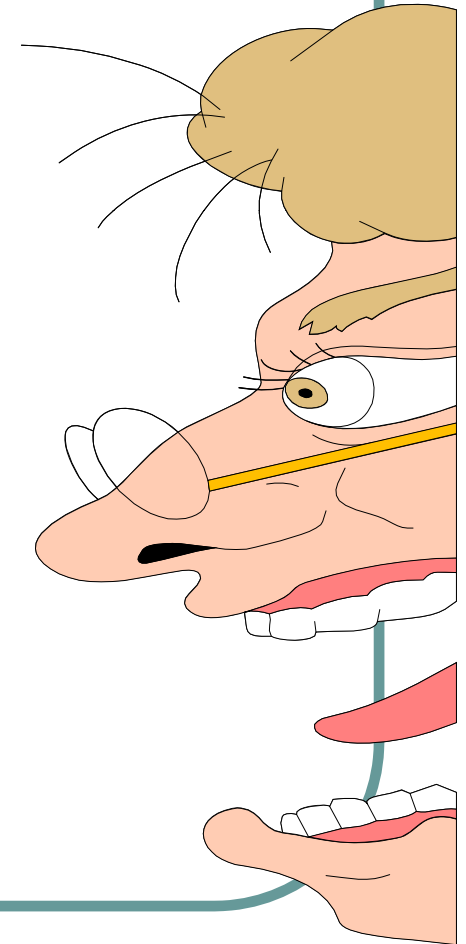
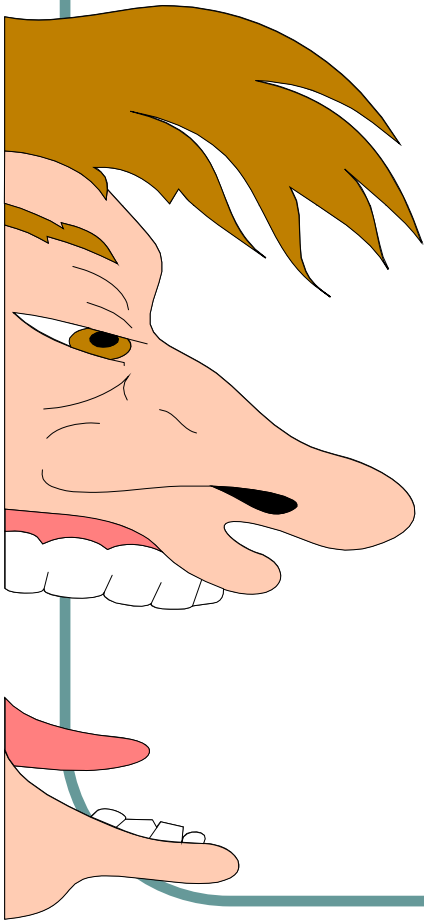
COOPERATION

Cooperation is a valuable commodity and works best when it is freely given and indirectly encouraged.



TRUTHS ABOUT CONFLICT

- CONFLICT IS UNAVOIDABLE
- CONFLICT IS DISRUPTIVE AND/OR DESTRUCTIVE
- CONFLICT IS AN OPPORTUNITY



MYTHS ABOUT CONFLICT

- The Presence of conflict is a sign of poor management
- Conflict is a sign of low concern for the Organization
- Anger is negative and destructive
- Conflict, if left alone, will take care of itself.

MYTHS ABOUT CONFLICT

- Conflict must be resolved
- Conflict is abusive
- People who disagree with each other do not like each other

DYNAMICS OF CONFLICT

- When conflict continues, it tends to increase the perceived differences between positions and parties.
- When we are angry or fearful our adrenaline flows faster, our physical strength increases, our liver pumps sugar into our bloodstream, but the blood supply to the problem solving part of the brain is severely decreased.
- When a climate of distrust and suspicion exists, people feel defeated and leave because of turmoil.

A “Public Agenda Foundation” study revealed the top 10 qualities today’s workforce wants in a job:

1. *Work with people who treat me with respect.*
2. *Interesting work.*
3. *Recognition for good work.*
4. *Chance to develop skills.*
5. *Work for people who listen if you have ideas about how to do things better.*
6. *A chance to think for myself.*
7. *Seeing the end results of my work.*
8. *Working for efficient managers.*
9. *A job that is not too easy to perform.*
10. *Feeling well-informed about what is going on within and about my job.*

Transforming *conflict* into *dispute*...

- Conflict can exist without action or resolve.
- But once transformed into a dispute, action must be taken to resolve.
- At that time, disputants typically begin...
 - Naming
 - Blaming; and
 - Claiming

Naming, Blaming and Claiming

- ***Naming*** is recognition that an experience has in some way been harmful.
- ***Blaming*** is assigning fault or blame to another person or group for the harm perpetrated; usually in the form of a grievance or formal complaint.
- ***Claiming*** is processing the complaint through an appropriate channel for corrective action and remedy.

Three important organizing questions to answer before fighting or fleeing:

1. What?

- WHAT has happened that causes us and/or someone else fear and creates this CONFLICT?

2. So what?

- SO WHAT is it about what has happened that causes this fear and creates this CONFLICT?

3. Now what?

- NOW WHAT if anything can or should we do to constructively address the fear and resolve the CONFLICT?

To be Effective in Conflict Management

- We must change our thinking:
- ***The significant problems we face today cannot be solved with the same level of thinking we were at when the problem was first created.***

Conflictive Partnership

- “If conflict is properly managed, both parties will have the opportunity to maximize their joint productivity and performance.”

- *Dr. John Calhoun
Wells, Director of
FMCS (1996 – 1999)*

Conflictive Leadership

- If conflict is properly managed, both parties *can* maximize productivity and performance *by* having the opportunity to jointly *satisfy mutual interests.*

TECHNIQUES TO MANAGE CONFLICT

- **Separate Relationship Issues from Substantive Issues.**
 - When people at work disagree, two outcomes are in doubt:
 - What decision will be reached?
 - How will the individuals will feel about working together in the future?

Sources of Conflict

- **Be Unconditionally Constructive**
 - Many people deal with people the same way they treat them.
 - “Eye-for-an-eye” policy. If the other person yells at them, they yell back. If the other person snubs them, they ignore the other person.
 - Reciprocation sets off a negative spiral.
 - The alternative is to be committed to forging a good working relationship whether or not the person reciprocates.

Sources of Conflict

- **Beware of Partisan Perceptions**
 - We tend to think that our perceptions are accurate and represent what is occurring.
 - Where you stand on an issue depends on where you sit.

Sources of Conflict

- **BALANCE REASON WITH EMOTION**
 - We all know that in some instances too much emotion can diminish performance.
 - On the other hand, an organization with little or no emotion is dull and lifeless.

Conflict technique

Consult Before Deciding

- We often make decisions or take actions without consulting or even notifying the people who will be affected by these actions and decisions.
- This does not mean giving up your right to decide. Consulting involves letting someone know that you are considering and soliciting input about a particular matter.

Use Persuasion, Not Coercion

- Compliance through coercion, provides only short-term gains and long-term losses.
- People resent being coerced, and eventually express their resentment in outburst of anger or acts of revenge.
- Coercion creates competition to see who will “win”. Rather than resolve conflict, coercion usually just perpetuates or escalates conflict.

Conflict techniques

- **Accept and Deal Seriously with Difficult People**

- It's tempting to scorn and reject people who don't fulfill our expectations.
- When disappointed, we become critical and disdainful.
- We slam the door on communication and give up on problem solving.

Conflict techniques

- **Difficult behavior of many people is simply the bad spot.**
 - Realize and acknowledge the other person has positive qualities.
 - The other person is equally human and worthy of basic respect, even if their behavior is difficult at times.

Nine-Step Model of Conflict Resolution

- **Listen with respect and openness.**
- **Look at the situation from the other person's perspective.**
- **Let the other person hear an explanation.**
- **Recognize similarities and differences.**
- **Acknowledge any cultural differences.**

Nine-Step Model of Conflict Resolution

- **Look for common ground.**
- **Recommend action. Be creative.**
- **Determine what changes each person is willing to make.**
- **Negotiate an agreement.**

Conflict techniques

- What can you do to balance emotional and rational reactions to behavior that upsets you?
- Take a break.
- Count to 10 if an official break is not possible.
- Consult a third party.
- Acknowledge and talk about your emotions.
- Accept responsibility, and apologize if an argument erupts.
- Prepare yourself when you know an emotional situations is likely.

Conceptual Goals of Mediation

- Mediation is a *process* of assisting negotiations.
- Mediation as a *process* involves mutual obligations.
- Mediation can be “*conflict management*” or “*conflict resolution.*”

Goals of Mediation

- **To allow parties a safe harbor in which to vent feelings and reduce hostilities**
- **To clear up misunderstandings**
- **To facilitate clear communications between parties**
- **To determine underlying interests and concerns**
- **To find areas of agreement and mutual interests**
- **To incorporate these areas into solutions which the parties devise themselves**

General Outcomes of Mediated Settlements

- Parties are generally ***more satisfied***.
- There are generally ***more creative solutions***.
- Parties generally ***feel better toward one another*** afterwards.
- Parties ***retain more control*** over their resolution.
- The ***interests*** of the parties are generally ***better served***.