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| • Have your emotions under control. Calm yourself and be prepared – or consider waiting until you can get to that place.  
• Prepare your description of the conflict in as small and specific way as possible.  
• Be prepared to respect the other person’s response and openness to discussion. | • Don’t assume you know how the other person feels or why they did what they did.  
• Don’t create a long list of problems – focus on one or two that are most important to you.  
• Be prepared to hear that you are also contributing to the conflict in some way. | • Identify any areas where you both agree. (“Sounds like ‘x’ is important to both of us.”)  
• Exchange ideas on actions that might help the situation. (“How about if we tried ‘x’?”)  
• Look for actions that will work for both of you (“Would ‘x’ work for you?”)  
• Keep the conversation focused on today and the future, not the past. (“That’s what I have done in the past, what would be helpful going forward?”)  
• Propose solution(s) that meet your interests and theirs. | • Don’t give in or come to an agreement too quickly without careful thinking  
• Don’t rehash the conflict without moving to solutions  
• Don’t blame one another  
• Don’t be disappointed if the discussion does not lead to an agreement. Don’t make the problem worse by overreacting in frustration. |
| **WHAT TO DO**       | **WHAT NOT TO DO**   | **WHAT TO DO**       | **WHAT NOT TO DO**   |
| • Pick a time when you and the other person are likely to have a few minutes and the problem is not “hot”.  
• Ask – “May I talk with you about something?”  
• Describe your plan - “I would like to tell you about a problem I am having and then I would like to hear how you see it.”  
• Describe the conflict/problem as you experience it and why it is important to you.  
• Invite the other person to explain how they see the situation and listen closely to their response.  
• Check your understanding of the other person by summarizing what you heard. | • Don’t discuss the reason you believe they do it or their intentions (“You did that because…”).  
• Describe your feelings when the conflict occurs, but don’t act them out.  
• Don’t communicate those feelings as judgments or “you” statements (“You make me angry”), but instead as “I” statements (“I feel angry when this happens”).  
• Don’t jump to conclusions and solutions. This is a time for understanding both sides of the conflict. | • Check to be sure you are in agreement about who will do what and by when.  
• Thank the other person for their willingness to listen to you and work with you.  
• Remember to hold up your end of the agreement.  
• Watch for opportunities to recognize when the other person follows up as agreed. |