



Collaborative Problem-Solving

1. Setting the tone- creating a safe environment for the honest expression of thoughts and feelings
 - Raise the issue and open a dialogue in a supportive manner.
 - Check the physical environment (chairs, timing, privacy).
 - Be aware of your body language.

2. Exploring the problem
 - Share views of what's been happening (both sides).
 - Share feelings about situation (both sides).
 - Explore possibility of mistaken assumptions, misunderstandings.
 - Acknowledge any positive actions, outcomes in situation.
 - Clarify foggy statements—ask: “What did I do?” or “What did I say that led you to feel that way?”
 - Offer specific descriptions of behavior.

3. Generating alternatives
 - Describe what you both want as outcome of resolution and create joint list of potential solutions.
 - Notice if you need more time or information to develop adequate alternatives.
 - Notice if you are encountering resistance. You may need to return to Step 2—there may be other problems that need clearing up before you can deal with this one.

4. Formulating a solution
 - Is it a joint solution? Are you both committed to it?
 - Explore and deal with reservations on either side.

5. Agreeing on an action plan
 - Who will do what when?
 - Are there any potential negative side effects on others?

- How will you keep each other informed about progress or problems?