

Conflict is Crucial to Commitment

Conflict is crucial to any true commitment. Whether it's making a decision about something at home or at work, we need to share what we value, what's important to us, and what we want. And, that may not be the same as what others want. To get to true commitment, it's essential that we hear all perspectives – even the ones where we don't agree. We have found several behaviors that can promote healthy conflict and commitment.

Ways to Promote Conflict & Commitment

- Be aware of your bias, behaviors and reactions to conflict and how you model those to others.
- Encourage and support team members to share their thoughts and feelings regarding conflict with each other. Have them share their preferences and styles from assessments.
 - Consider the Everything DiSC® Productive Conflict Profile: <https://whatleadersneednow.com/pdf-productive-conflict>
- Create explicit team expectations and guidelines for productive conflict. You can find several at this Center for Creative Leadership link: <https://www.ccl.org/multimedia/podcast/6-ways-to-make-conflict-productive/>
- Lead the way by asking challenging questions and seek out and mine for conflict.
 - Patrick Lencioni says that when leaders suspect there's a disagreement, they can gently demand that people come clean. In that way, they recognize that a conversation needs to be happening in the open and not in the hallway after the meeting. They establish an obligation of dissent and debate so conflict isn't a detriment to the team.
- Point out to the team when productive conflict is occurring and remind them that, despite being uncomfortable, it's a good thing.
- Call meetings specifically to address an issue where debate and conflict are present – shine the light on the issue and start the meeting with intentionality.
- Explicitly clarify and recap all decisions and commitments.
- Make sure there is an affirmative “yes” when commitments are made or continue to discuss until there is. Use “thumbs up” icon or use “fist of five” tool when using video.
- Clearly communicate commitments right after decisions are made to all those who will be impacted.

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