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|   | Category: Complaints, Conflict and Disciplinary |                                |                                |               |
| <b>Conflict Resolution Policy and Guidelines</b>                                  |   |                                |                                |               |

| Related Documents   |
|---|
| SID-CCD01 - Scouting Ireland's Grievance and Disputes Process           |
| SID-CCD03 - Scouting Ireland's Disputes Policy (Youth Members Under 18) |
| SID-CCD04 - Scouting Ireland's Disciplinary Process                     |
| SID-39/05 - Scouting Ireland's Code of Good Practice                    |
| TOR-SUB04 - Disputes Resolution and Appeals Panel – Terms of Reference  |

| Revision Schedule |          |                 |
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| Revision          | Date     | Description     |
| A                 | 18/11/18 | Minor Revisions |
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## **Scouting Ireland's Conflict Resolution Policy**

Scouting Ireland recognises the importance of encouraging and promoting effective working relationships between all of its members and Professional Staff.

Scouting Ireland also recognises that, from time to time, the relationships between some of its members/Professional Staff may become strained and lead to a situation where some intervention is required to resolve any conflicts, disputes or differences and restore confidence.

Furthermore Scouting Ireland recognises the importance of resolving any such conflicts, disputes or differences, which may arise from time to time, as soon as possible and at their source.

Scouting Ireland will therefore endeavour to support the resolution of such conflicts, disputes or differences by using whatever resources are available to it including personnel who can offer assistance and support.

In furtherance of the aims laid out in the previous paragraphs Scouting Ireland has established the followings guidelines to assist all parties involved in a conflict situation to arrive at an amicable solution.

## **Scouting Ireland's Conflict Resolution Guidelines**

### **The Nature of Conflict – Seeking Constructive Outcomes**

#### ***“Conflict exists whenever incompatible activities occur” (Deutsch 1969)***

- Conflict amongst group members is inevitable. This will occur no matter what group members do. The issue is not whether conflict can be prevented, but rather how conflict can be managed. Conflict is not a contest. Winning and losing are goals for games, not for conflict. What follows are some strategies, insights and processes for the successful resolving of conflict situations.
- Conflict, when skilfully managed, can be of great value to a group. Here are some of the potentially constructive outcomes of conflict:
  - Conflict makes us more aware of problems in our relationships that need to be solved. Conflict increases our awareness of what the problems are, who is involved and how they can be solved.
  - Conflict encourages change. There are times when things need to change, when new skills need to be learned and when old habits need to be modified.
  - Conflict energises and increases one's motivation to deal with problems. Awareness of conflict can trigger a great deal of physical energy and an intensity of psychological focus, which in turn result in a strong motivation to resolve the conflict and put one's plans into action.

- Conflict makes life more interesting. Being in a conflict often sparks curiosity and stimulates interest. Arguments about politics, sports, work and societal problems make interpersonal interaction more intriguing and less boring. The disagreement of others with your ideas may inspire you to find out more about the issue.
- Better decisions are generally made when there is disagreement about what the decision should be among the persons responsible for making it. Disagreement often causes the decision to be thought through more carefully.
- Conflict reduces the day-to-day irritations of relating to someone.
- A good argument may do a lot to resolve the small tensions of interacting with others.
- Conflict helps us understand what we are like as a person. What makes us angry, what frightens us, what is important to us and how we tend to manage conflict is all highlighted when you are in conflict with someone. Being aware of what you are willing to argue about and how you act in conflict can help you learn a great deal about yourself.
- Conflict can deepen and enrich a relationship, strengthening each person's conviction that the relationship can hold up under stress, communicating the commitments and values of each person that the other must take into account and generally keeping the relationship clear of irritations and resentments so that positive feelings can be experienced fully.
- Conflict can stimulate creativity by promoting an awareness of different ways of viewing problems and situations. The reorientations gained from viewing a problem from several different perspectives generate insights into the problem and foster the formation of creative solutions.
- When a group enters into conflict with another group its cohesiveness increases and its sense of identity becomes clearer.
- Conflict promotes the social development of group members by reducing their cognitive egocentrism and promoting higher levels of cognition and moral reasoning.

### **Conflict Resolution Process**

- Define the conflict.
- Separate a value from a concrete issue.
- Respect the other person's values. Remember everyone is entitled his/her own views.
- If you can, operationalise their values (i.e. make them concrete).

- Interact and appreciate (value the other person).
- Acknowledge that interdependence is needed for successful conflict resolution.
- Communicate openly, honestly and frankly.
- Actively listen to both facts and feelings.
- Communicate in a manner that builds credibility, rapport and trust.
- Understand the nature of conflict.
- Create a climate where differences can surface.
- Delay initial negative judgement about ideas, beliefs, feelings, attitudes, behaviour or concerns.
- Empathise and value the other person's perspective on the issue/problem as legitimate for him/her/them.
- Value diversity and identify the positive characteristics about the other party's viewpoint.
- Seek to determine the dimensions of the conflict.
- Ascertain whether the essence of the conflict is one of values or of issues. Look for consequences and appropriateness.
- Select the appropriate confrontation level.
- Focus on the specific behaviour of the other party.
- Identify the tangible consequences of their behaviour.
- Make the consequences sufficiently compelling to motivate a change in the behaviour.
- Invite (rather than demand) behaviour change.
- Model the behaviour you desire in others.
- Encourage problem solving.
- Ask "what can we do about the situation?"
- Listen to the other party's suggested alternatives.
- Strive toward mutually satisfying solutions (win-win outcomes).
- Follow the problem-solving mode.

- Ensure commitment to change.
- Monitor and modify the follow-up plans as appropriate.

## **Success in Conflict Management**

### **Step 1: Strengthen your Self-awareness and Self-control**

- In a conflict situation, the only variable you can control absolutely is yourself. Skill in conflict management therefore is based, first and foremost, on realistic self-study. In strengthening your self-control, you can think about and practice the following:
  - Desensitise yourself to impending conflict by behavioural rehearsal (by going through it mentally or role-playing with close associates).
  - “Psych down” through relaxation techniques or strenuous exercise.
  - Get a clear sense of your own boundaries and limitations.
  - Put the conflict in perspective: How important is it? What is the worst thing that could happen? What is the best thing that could happen?

### **Step 2: Learn to Handle your Anger**

- Understand how it develops: What is behind your anger? Fear? Disappointment? Confusion? Frustration?
- Learn to deal with your anger by owning and admitting it.
- Calibrate your response.
- Diagnose the threat. Uncertainty is often the real enemy.
- Talk with friends and associates.

### **Step 3: Learn to Confront Anger in Others**

- Most people see, hear and do what they want to see, hear and do. In a conflict situation, these positions/perceptions simply become more rigid and fixed. So:
  - Abandon the need to be logical.
  - State how you feel.
  - Listen (it takes both time and effort).
  - Be persistently reasonable.
  - Ignore abuse.
  - Avoid escalation.

## Valuing Yourself

- In the conflict management process, valuing is essential social cement. It draws people together and encourages co-operation but remember this simple but true adage: **“If you don’t value yourself, you can’t value others”**. Here are some basic rules for valuing yourself:
  - Don’t demand perfection from yourself. Set realistic goals that you can and want to achieve.
  - You have the right to decide who, how and what you want to be without making excuses, justifying or saying “I’m sorry.” You are responsible for everything you do unless you are physically overpowered. It is your life and what happens in it is up to you.
  - Refuse to be manipulated by other people’s greed, helplessness or anger. Set limits. Say “no” when you mean “no”. Confront those who try to manipulate you with “you should”.
  - Recognize feelings of inadequacy and guilt for what they are – legacies from your parents and other adults. You can decide not to feel that way.
  - Be constructively selfish. In the long run, doing what is best for you is usually best for everyone concerned. Remember that no matter what you do, someone is not going to like it so you have to risk being disliked, or even ending relationships, if you are going to function in your own best interests.
  - Recognize that there are limits to your power. You really control no more than 50% of a relationship (your half). Remember, you have the right to say “I don’t understand” and even “I don’t care.”
  - Don’t answer questions you don’t want to answer. Questions are often threatening, demanding, manipulative – especially the “WHY” or “WHY NOT” questions.
  - Stay in the “here-and-now” and cope with reality. If you blame others or the world for your problems, or if your behaviour is aimed at making you feel better instead of solving your problems, you are defending instead of coping. Every healthy person has problems but you do have the ability to cope with them.

## Valuing Others

- Here are some simple rules for valuing others and, in the process, establishing win-win relationships:
  - Listen empathetically to others. Stop yourself from working on counter-arguments while another person is speaking. Take the risk of being persuaded. Try the other person’s reasoning for size.

- Don't make assumptions about how others think or feel or how they react. You can't get inside anyone's head but your own.
- Confront unrealistic or manipulative behaviour but don't attack others. Sarcasm and kidding are dirty fighting.
- Don't label others as dumb, lazy or childish and don't make sweeping judgments about feelings, especially about whether the feelings are real or important or "morally" right or wrong.
- Don't play manipulative games. Be honest, direct, open and specific. Don't correct others' statements about how they feel. Don't tell them how they should feel.
- Be tentative. Don't state your opinions as facts, avoid preaching words and don't exaggerate or bulldoze others. Avoid absolute statements that leave no room for modification. "I think this is the way..." is better than "This is the only way...". Give people room to move.
- If your decisions will affect others, provide some means for their involvement. The "doers" need to feel that they have influence on the decisions that affect them. More than ever before, people want a stake in the decision-making process (especially one that may affect their lives).
- Have clear goals understood and agreed upon. Use the goals, not personal values or preferences, to test whether issues are relevant or not.

### **Conflict Strategies – What are you like?**

- Different people use different strategies for managing conflict. These strategies are learned, usually in childhood, and they seem to function automatically. Usually we are not aware of how we act in conflict situations. We just do whatever seems to come naturally but we do have a personal strategy; and because it is learned, we can always change it by learning new and more effective ways of managing conflict.
- When you become engaged in a conflict, there are two major concerns you have to take into account:
  - Achieving your personal goals – you are in conflict because you have a goal that is in conflict with another person's goal. Your goal may be highly important to you, or it may be of little importance.
  - Keeping good relationships with the other person – you may need to be able to interact effectively with the other person in the future. The relationship may be very important to you, or it may be of little importance.
- How important your personal goals are to you and how important the relationships are affect how you will act in a conflict. Given these two concerns, it is possible to identify five styles of managing conflict.

### **Avoiding (The Turtle)**

Turtles withdraw into their shells to avoid conflict. They give up their personal goals and relationships. They stay away from the issues over which the conflict is taking place and from the persons they are in conflict with. Turtles believe it is hopeless to resolve conflict. They feel helpless. They believe it is easier to withdraw (physically and psychologically) from a conflict than to face it.

### **Competing (The Shark)**

Sharks try to overpower opponents by forcing them to accept their solution to the conflict. Their goals are highly important to them and relationships are of minor importance. They seek to achieve their goals at all costs. They are not concerned with the needs of others. They do not care if others like or accept them. Sharks assume that conflicts are settled by one person winning and one person losing. They want to be the winner. Winning gives sharks a sense of pride and achievement. Losing gives them a sense of weakness, inadequacy and failure. They try to win by attacking, overpowering, overwhelming and intimidating others.

### **Accommodating (The Teddy Bear)**

To teddy bears, relationships are of great importance while their own goals are of little importance. Teddy bears want to be accepted and liked by others. They think that conflict should be avoided in favour of harmony and that people cannot discuss conflict without damaging relationships. They are afraid that if the conflict continues, someone will get hurt, and that would ruin the relationships. They give up their goals to preserve the relationships. Teddy bears say, "I'll give up my goals and let you have what you want, in order for you to like me." Teddy bears try to smooth over the conflict out of fear of harming the relationships.

### **Compromising (The Fox)**

Foxes are moderately concerned with their own goals and their relationships with others. Foxes seek a compromise; they give up part of their goals and persuade the other person in a conflict to give up part of his goals. They seek a conflict solution in which both sides gain something – the middle ground between two extreme positions. They are willing to sacrifice part of their goals and relationships in order to find agreement for the common good.

### **Collaborating (The Owl)**

Owls highly value their own goals and relationships. They view conflict as problems to be solved and seek a solution that achieves both their own goals and the goals of the other person. Owls see conflict as a means of improving relationships by reducing tension between two persons. They try to begin a discussion that identifies the conflict as a problem. By seeking solutions that satisfy both themselves and the other person, owls maintain the relationships. Owls are not satisfied until a solution is found that achieves their own goals and the other person's goals and they are not satisfied until the tensions and negative feelings have been fully resolved.



## Worksheet

Below is a questionnaire to help you identify your conflict style.  
Using the following scale, indicate how you would react to each statement below.

### Scale:

- 5 - Very typical of the way I act in a conflict
- 4 - Frequently typical of the way I act in a conflict
- 3 - Sometimes typical of the way I act in a conflict
- 2 - Seldom the way I act in a conflict
- 1 - Never the way I act in a conflict

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|-----|--|--|
| 1.  | It is easier to refrain than to retreat from a quarrel.  |  |
| 2.  | If you cannot make a person think as you do, then make him or her do as you think.   |  |
| 3.  | Soft words win hard hearts.  |  |
| 4.  | You scratch my back and I will scratch yours too.  |  |
| 5.  | Come now and let us reason things together.  |  |
| 6.  | When two people quarrel, the person who keeps silent first is the most praiseworthy.   |  |
| 7.  | Might overcomes right.   |  |
| 8.  | Smooth words make smooth ways.   |  |
| 9.  | Better half a loaf of bread than no bread at all.  |  |
| 10. | Truth lies in knowledge, not in majority opinion.  |  |
| 11. | He who fights and runs away lives to fight another day.  |  |
| 12. | He hath conquered well that hath made his enemies flee.  |  |
| 13. | Kill your enemies with kindness.   |  |
| 14. | A fair exchange brings no quarrel.   |  |
| 15. | No person has the final answer but every person has a piece to contribute.   |  |
| 16. | Stay away from people who disagree with you.   |  |
| 17. | Fields are won by people who believe in winning.   |  |
| 18. | Kind words are worth much more and cost little.  |  |
| 19. | Tit for tat is a fair play.  |  |
| 20. | Only the person who is willing to give up his or her monopoly on the truth can ever profit from the truths that others hold. |  |
| 21. | Avoid quarrelsome people as they will only make your life miserable.   |  |
| 22. | A person who will not flee will make others flee.  |  |
| 23. | Soft words ensure harmony.   |  |
| 24. | One gift for another makes good friends.   |  |
| 25. | Bring your conflicts into the open and face them directly, only then will the best solution be discovered.                   |  |
| 26. | The best way of handling conflicts is to avoid them.   |  |
| 27. | Put your foot down where you mean to stand.  |  |
| 28. | Gentleness will triumph over anger.  |  |

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|-----|---|--|
| 29. | Getting part of what you want is better than not getting anything at all. |  |
| 30. | Frankness, honesty and trust will move mountains.                         |  |
| 31. | There is nothing so important that you have to fight for it.              |  |
| 32. | There are two kinds of people in the world, the winners and the losers.   |  |
| 33. | When one hits you with a stone, hit him or her with a piece of cotton.    |  |
| 34. | When both give in halfway, a fair settlement is achieved.                 |  |
| 35. | By digging and digging the truth is discovered                            |  |

**Scoresheet:**

The column with your highest mark is indicative of your conflict style

|                              |                              |                                       |                               |                                |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1.                           | 2.                           | 3.                                    | 4.                            | 5.                             |
| 6.                           | 7.                           | 8.                                    | 9.                            | 10.                            |
| 11.                          | 12.                          | 13.                                   | 14.                           | 15.                            |
| 16.                          | 17.                          | 18.                                   | 19.                           | 20.                            |
| 21.                          | 22.                          | 23.                                   | 24.                           | 25.                            |
| 26.                          | 27.                          | 28.                                   | 29.                           | 30.                            |
| 31.                          | 32.                          | 33.                                   | 34.                           | 35.                            |
| <b>Totals:</b>               |                              |                                       |                               |                                |
| <b>TURTLE<br/>(Avoiding)</b> | <b>SHARK<br/>(Competing)</b> | <b>TEDDY BEAR<br/>(Accommodating)</b> | <b>FOX<br/>(Compromising)</b> | <b>OWL<br/>(Collaborating)</b> |

**Steps in Negotiating Resolution of Conflict**

**Step 1: Confronting the Opposition**

- Do not “hit and run”, confront only when there is time to jointly define the conflict and schedule a negotiating session.
- Openly communicate your feelings about and perceptions of the issues involved in the conflict and try to do so in minimally threatening ways.
- Accurately and fully comprehend opponent’s views of, and feelings about, the conflict.

**Step 2: Jointly Defining the Conflict**

- Do not label, accuse or insult an opponent – describe the opponent’s actions.
- Define the conflict as a mutual problem to be solved, not as a win-lose struggle.
- Define the conflict in concise and specific terms.

**Step 3: Communicating Positions and Feelings**

- Conflict cannot be resolved if negotiators do not understand what they are disagreeing about.

- The general rules for negotiating conflicts of interest is to differentiate, then try to integrate your position and your opponent's.
- Understand how your opponent's position, feelings, perspective and needs differ from yours.

#### **Step 4: Communicating Co-operative Intentions**

- The unambiguous expression of co-operative intentions in negotiations and conflicts of interest, results in agreements being reached in shorter periods of time.
- Opponents' defensiveness and egocentrism is reduced. This leads to increased attitude change; reduction of the felt importance of having the "right" ideas about the issues being negotiated; greater comprehension and retention by an opponent of one's position and arguments.
- It is a good idea, therefore, to communicate clearly one's motivations and intentions to co-operate.

#### **Step 5: Taking the Opponent's Perspective**

- In order to understand an opponent's actions and position, you will have to see the conflict from his/her perspective.
- Negotiation requires a realistic assessment of common and opposed interests. It requires the sacrifice of some of the opposed interests so that the parties can build on common benefits, concerns, advantages and needs.

#### **Step 6: Co-ordinating Motivation to Negotiate in Good Faith**

- In order for a conflict of interest to be negotiated constructively, all parties need to be motivated to resolve it.
- The costs of continuing a conflict may be the loss of a friendship, less enjoyment from group membership, constant disruption in the group, lower productivity by group members and harassment.
- The gains for continuing a conflict may be the satisfaction of protecting the status quo or frustrating persons you dislike.
- To increase the motivation of a fellow group member to negotiate, you need to increase his costs of continuing the conflict and reduce the gains.
- To decrease the motivation of another person to negotiate, decrease his costs and increase the gains for continuing the conflict.

#### **Step 7: Reaching an Agreement**

- The conflict of interest is resolved when the participants reach an agreement.

- All participants need to be satisfied with the agreement and committed to abiding by it.
- The agreement should specify the joint position on the issues being adopted, the ways in which each participant will act differently in the future and the ways co-operation will be restored if one of the participants slips and acts inappropriately.
- It should also include some provision for future meetings at which the participants can check how well the agreement is working and how co-operation can be improved.