Conflict Management Certificate Program - Online / Fall 2020

Course Outline

The program: 12 weekly meetings, filled with information, support, and practice to help you learn how to manage workplace conflict and communicate effectively. Many job descriptions across a wide array of industries and professions, see conflict management skills as a desirable or essential skill. A conflict management certificate can help you secure a better job, be a valued leader in your current employment, or coach and support clients who are frustrated in dealing with conflicts.

Each week of class presents a different “lens” or perspective to help you transform your relationship with conflict, strengthen your ability to communicate effectively, and use what you have learned to share with others at work or anywhere.

In each session, students will have an opportunity to receive feedback from the class and instructors for a current workplace problem. The online format will have class meetings on Zoom, that will include small group activities and discussion, and use of the SSU Canvas LMS online resources.

Weekly Topics Include: foundational skills to understand conflict and communicate better across differences; how organizations can better manage conflict; techniques on how to deal with bullying and aggression; understand and manage gender and cross cultural communication issues; how to manage change effectively; provide and receive feedback; learn how and when mediation is effective; learning to let go of grudges and resentments that impede conflict resolution; negotiate for yourself and others.

Who would benefit from the Conflict Management Certificate?

The certificate is for managers and aspiring managers in corporations and non-profits, C Suite Executives, HR professionals, team leaders, coaches and therapists, instructors, or anyone in agency or organizations who is working with challenging individuals or groups and who wants to be a more effective communicator.

Lead Instructor and Program coordinator—Lorraine Segal, with guest presenters.
Curriculum - Conflict Management Certificate - Draft

Fall 2020 - Thursday, August 27 - November 19 - 6:30 - 9:30 pm
12 weeks  (plus 1 additional flex week in the event of a fall SSU closure)  3.6 CEUs

Week 1: August 27 - Overview plus Understanding Conflict and Communication
—Lorraine Segal

Overview of the certificate program, its topics and elements. How we are viewing conflict and communication skills with a goal of positive transformation. Understand what conflict is and isn’t, and why conflict management is important. Explore the different approaches to conflict and your own preferred approach. Learn about active listening and how it helps with conflict and emotional triggers.

Week 2: September 3 - Conflict and Challenging Conversations
—Lorraine Segal

Conversations with difficult people or on difficult topics can be extremely challenging. Learn how to incorporate curiosity into your communication, understand the power of our stories, as well as other basics of effective conversations. Includes self-assessment and practice.

Week 3: September 10 - Introduction to Negotiation— TBA

Negotiation is another set of communication tools, a language anyone can learn, unveiling needs and interests in a way that helps both parties reach an acceptable outcome where everyone’s situation is improved. We all negotiate, formally (a contract, a job offer or raise, a new car) or informally (disagreements with people at work or elsewhere) frequently. Learn and practice the basics of this important skill.

Week 4: September 17 - Gender at Work: from Conflict to Partnership— TBA
Learn about the cultural characteristics and needs of different genders—our similarities and differences and how they impact successful communication and collaboration instead of conflict. Use your understanding to communicate and manage successfully across genders, especially in the workplace. Practice and rehearsal with scenarios.

**Week 5: September 24 - Bullying at Work—Lorraine Segal**

Bullying is epidemic in workplaces, but often is ignored despite its deep negative impact on workplace culture and success. Recognize the signs, characteristics and trajectory of workplace bullying and aggression and learn what to do about it. Understand the important differences between bullying & mobbing, and interpersonal conflict.

**Week 6: October 1- Improving Inter-cultural Communication at Work—TBA**

Workplaces today are increasingly diverse. We are likely to find ourselves working with people who have different communication and problem solving styles, even different values. These cultural differences and our misunderstandings about them can lead to unnecessary conflicts at work or in the community. But, these same cultural differences and starting places, with understanding and awareness of their impact, can instead contribute to conflict resolution. We will explore mediation/negotiation models and practical ideas and examples to take some of the conflict and confusion out of differences.

**Week 7: October 8 - Letting Go of Grudges at Work—Lorraine Segal**

Holding grudges and resentments can prevent trust and good workplace relationships, wasting valuable energy. Studies have shown that learning to let go and forgive improves leadership, productivity, and workplace satisfaction. In this three hour interactive class, you will learn what forgiveness is and isn’t, the value
of letting go and forgiving at work, and some skills and techniques to get you started, including a guided visualization.

**Week 8: October 15 - Introduction to Mediation - TBA**

Mediation is a valuable tool for resolving workplace conflict. Learn what mediation is and isn’t, types of mediation, elements and processes in mediation. Understand value and limits of mediation, when mediation is appropriate and when it isn’t helpful. Get some tips and techniques for when to help others at work or elsewhere with their conflicts, formally and informally. Mini lecture, demonstration, exercises.

**Week 9: October 22 - Giving and Receiving Feedback—Lorraine Segal**

Misunderstandings about feedback can fuel conflict and impede harmony and productivity at work. Understand the 3 different kinds of information that are called feedback. Learn and practice how to give effective feedback to employees, and get the most out of the feedback you receive, even if it starts out vague or negative.

**Week 10: October 29 — How to Lead More Effective and Productive Meetings—TBA**

Time is money, and you can’t afford to have your meetings fail. Dynamic, well-planned and engaging meetings get results! Participants will learn: How to improve personal effectiveness leading and participating in meetings; New tools to help with meeting structure and process; How to help meeting participants make quality decisions and follow through on action items. **The class will discuss:** Effective and Ineffective Meetings; Self-Assessment; Role of Accountability in Meetings; Designing Agendas and Meeting Goals; Facilitating Decision-Making; and Handling Meeting Challenges
Week 11: November 5 - A Vision for the Future—How Organizations can deal effectively with Conflict—TBA and Lorraine Segal

Does your workplace culture promote conflict or harmony, collaboration, and innovation? This class offers a positive view of the future of workplace conflict, in which conflict management goes beyond individuals putting out “fires”, and, instead, the entire organization proactively addresses situations and problems that lead to conflict. This goal requires commitment and action by leaders and everyone to create policies, procedures, and practices that guide the organization. Learn what leadership needs to do to create a conflict competent organization, and the basics of how to 1) assess organizational conflict and blind spots and 2) create and implement effective policies and procedures. This class introduces ICMS, Integrative Conflict Management Systems as well as innovative ways new companies are addressing conflict..

Week 12: November 12 - Integration: Putting It All Together—Lorraine Segal.

Thoughtful review of all the tools, teachings, and perspectives of the previous weeks, what you have learned and how you can use it. Apply what you’ve learned by analyzing and problem solving real life scenarios and conflicts.

Week 13: November 20 - Flex week if needed (Please reserve this additional week in the event of an unexpected SSU campus closure)

Note: The Conflict Management Curriculum information will be updated when weekly guest instructors are confirmed. Thank you.