

Sideline Management Skills: Negotiating Differences Skills

Perhaps nothing will define you as a Sideline more than how you manage differences and unavoidable conflicts that arise, however big or small. Time to test yourself on the following two Sideline Case Incidents of typical Sideline Conflict issues.

TEST YOURSELF

Eight Sideline Negotiating Differences Skill Attributes:

[For definitions of each of these 8 attributes see the Studio Section description of the Skills]

Directions: Negotiating Differences Incidents [select best skill]

From the following list of 8 Sideline Negotiating Differences attributes, identify the skill that appears to best address the Incident, and write a brief explanation about why you preferred the alternative you chose. Then please do submit your answer to the Forum for anonymous community discussion. If you need to review the skill options before responding, click on **Sideline Skills**

Eight Sideline Negotiating Differences Skill Attributes

- 1 Conflicts grow out of differences, more than rights and wrongs
- 2 Diagnose the conflict: is it over facts, methods, roles, goals, values?
- 3 More fixable conflicts are differences over facts or methods
- 4 Value differences are nearly unfixable; avoid them
- 5 When negotiating, focus on number and quality of agreements made
- 6 Be willing to horse-trade when negotiating differences
- 7 It's nearly impossible to "resolve" conflicts; so just manage them
- 8 Any agreement made are only good only until your next planned negotiation

Negotiating Differences Incident #1: I'm co-owner of a four person student-to-student high school tutoring group. We have 10 high school honor students working for us, everyone loves our service, and the tutors are happy. We each make money, and have gotten along great. But its all coming to an end in a few months with us all going our separate ways to college and we never prepared for this. For the first time we're at odds with each other, having very different ideas about what to do, how to pass on the business or run it in absentia, and who deserves what. It's almost easier to just walk away. Ugh.

Which of the 8 Sideline Negotiating Differences Attributes do you pick, and why?

Ans #2: Diagnose the conflict – what are you most disagreeing over? Focus on facts and methods as much as possible and avoid unending disagreements over goals and values. You’ve all done a great job – focus on fixable.

Negotiating Differences Incident #2: I started a boutique stencil company, using my artwork. I’m now in my second year of college and can pretty easily manage the business out of my dorm room, since its 90% online orders from my little web page. Most of my business has come from marinas and boat owners who want a unique emblem on their boat sterns, which I’m happy to provide. Recently a boat owner in San Diego became livid that a boat owner in Portland Oregon showed in a boating magazine the exact same stencil on the stern of his boat. He agreed in writing that the design was mine, and available for non-exclusive use. I found out he posted horrible reviews on Yelp and Facebook, really making me look like a dog. Not sure what to do – I have no extra dollars to hire an attorney, and I don’t even know if I could bring legal action for a customer complaint. Suggestions?

Which of the 8 Sideline Negotiating Differences Attributes do you pick, and why?

#5: Work on Agreements. It appears both sides of this dispute failed to be clear and agreed on ownership and exclusive use of the stencils. Rather than strong-arming the boat owners with the fact that there’s no agreement for exclusive use, try to meet with him/them and set a course for reaching a string of positive agreements. First, when can we meet? Where? Meet for an hour? Ask if each side can have equal talk time to express your understanding of what was offered? Be willing to discuss geographic distances that are agreeable for not selling the same design to nearby customers? Each of these topics can represent potential agreement, albeit small at the beginning. Agreements tend to produce additional agreements. This isn’t about who’s right or wrong.