

RETROSPECTIVE TECHNIQUE

Don't call it Conflict Resolution – call it a Retrospective

It is a conflict resolution approach, based on:

- nonviolent communication
- sociocratic approach (proposals, rounds, everyone has a voice, reaching consent)
- retrospective means looking to achieve continuous improvement via periodic meetings. How can we do things better in terms of process? How can we improve how we work together as a team?

Meeting #1

Get the whole team together and do some creative exercises aiming to generate ideas: what's going well, what's not going so well and what could be tweaked or improved?

Then prioritize, and ask:

- *What's the cause of these symptoms that we're seeing*
- *What are the next three steps that we need to take?*
- *Agree who's going to do what and a date for the next meeting*

Meeting #2

Review:

- *Have we made progress in those areas?*
- *Have the problems been resolved, got better or got worse?*

Whatever the outcome it's important to agree a date (or time) for a third meeting.

Meeting #3

In this meeting we start by looking at how you define a good team. Split into groups and write up on post it notes the characteristics of a good team. Put them on the wall and cluster them.

What are the behaviours that underpin those characteristics? In the same groups share examples of the actual tangible behaviour that would demonstrate those characteristics. How should we behave to achieve good teamwork? (e.g. transparency, respect, good listening skills, open communication when things are going wrong, or going well).

Share the outcomes of the groups and make a list. Do a round: does everyone think that looks complete? Is it good enough for now?

Lastly, compare where we are now with our understanding of what is a good team, and where we were in the first meeting when we identified the causes of the symptoms we were seeing.

Create a working agreement. In pairs or trios, look at the differences:

- *where we were*
- *where we are now*
- *where we want to get to*

Write a set of guidelines we want to be held accountable to. Then all feedback to each other.

A last round: *Can everyone consent to be held accountable to these?*

Use sociocratic tools to arrive at a set of guidelines everyone is prepared to be held accountable to.

Agree a date for review and amendment if necessary.