



YARRA VALLEY FM

Internal conflict policy

Purpose

To manage and resolve any conflict that may arise between staff and/or volunteers.

Principles

When conflict arises, the Committee of Management, or their delegate/s, will need to lead the people involved through the conflict. It is important to deal with conflict promptly to prevent it from getting bigger. The following approach is provided in order to attempt to gain a win/win solution from the conflict:

Understanding

The people involved need to understand what the conflict is about:

- what is the argument about
- where is the anger coming from

It may be useful to draw a 'mud map', putting the conflict in the middle and linking it to everyone else's perceptions of the conflict - the needs, fears and feelings about it.

Give every individual their own space and jot down their take on the situation.

Everyone needs to feel free to say what they feel, and others need to listen and try on a little empathy.

Avoid making things worse

Take a firm hand in facilitating the meeting and ensure that people follow some basic rules:

- no put downs
- no personal remarks, sarcasm or remarks that could hurt feelings
- don't bring up the past – let's move forward
- no interrupting, shouting or raising your voice
- no taking sides
- tackle the issue, not the person
- use clear communication – everyone should own their own thoughts and feelings

Work together

All people involved need to agree on the rules and take turns in saying openly and honestly what they think and feel without blaming others. Use "I" statements like: "I feel put down when you..." rather than "you make me feel...". That way the person who speaks owns their own feelings and does not blame others. Talk quietly, gently and with purpose. It can be easier to control your emotions when you control your voice. Use active listening and reflective listening techniques.

Indicate to the other person that you are listening (without interrupting) via body language. Repeat what you have heard to clarify, for example, "So you feel that...?"

Find the solution

Brainstorm a wide range of options that could resolve the conflict. Be creative, don't censor and get everything written down.

Look for solutions that provide mutual gain - the win/win solution. Check that everyone can commit to that solution, identify what everyone is to do, stick to what you have decided and check in again on progress.

Sometimes the conflict can't be resolved. Despite having worked through all the conflict resolution techniques, there may be irreconcilable differences that just cannot be worked out. In these instances, you may need to make the call and suggest that the team disband or a solution is found that does not include the people in conflict working together. It's tough, but sometimes people just can't get on.

Other relevant policies

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to read this policy in conjunction with other station policies.

Refer also to our **Workplace Conduct Policy**, which defines committee, staff and volunteer rights and responsibilities in regard to merit, anti-discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, victimisation, gossip, and the procedure for resolving such issues.

Refer also to our **Volunteering policy**, which sets of the rights and responsibilities of the station and staff, the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, and procedures for disciplinary action or dismissal of volunteers.

More information

If you have a query about this policy or need more information please contact the Station Manager or Chair of Committee of Management.