



Weirdos and Wildebeests:
Encountering Conflicting...Personalities

David Haggard
Bryan College



We are all different






What is Conflict?






Taming the Wildebeest

- Interpersonal
- Customer Service
- Leadership




Interpersonal weirdness

- Understand the weirdness
 - Its creation
 - Our responses
 - The destructive results
- Harness the weirdness
 - Personal
 - Relational
 - Organizational





The Birth of Conflict

- Triggers
- Fuel
- Effects



Triggers for Conflict

- Diversity
 - Natural differences in preferences and priorities
- Misunderstandings
 - Issues with communication
- Self-focused Attitudes
 - Sense of entitlement or focus on personal needs



"We're ALL a little crazy in our own special way."

someecards.com



Fuel for Conflict


- Reactions to triggers
 - What do we do with feels that arise from diversity, misunderstandings and self-focus?
- Out-of-control desires
 - Is there anything that you want so much that you are willing to hurt others over?
- Cultural messages
 - "you're worth it" and "have it your way"



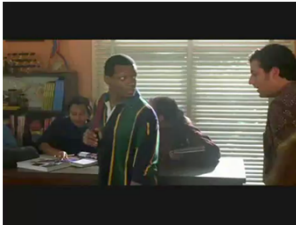
Negative Responses


- **Explode**
 - “Fight”
 - Retaliate in words or actions
 - Verbal assault to physical violence
- **Stuff it**
 - “Flight”
 - Retaliate with silence or gossip
 - Denial to self-harm




Responding from your “Medulla Oblongata”





Negative Effects

- Open hostility
- Unpleasant environment
- Unhappy individuals
- Lack of teamwork
- Less productivity
- Loss of good people



"This is Dr. Fredericks, the company's psychiatrist. He's here to determine whether or not your disgruntled."



The Redemption of Conflict

- When understood and dealt with, conflict can be embraced and harnessed as a path to greater success. It can serve to strengthen us as individuals, enhance our relationships and can move our office on to becoming more effective.




Changing the Course of Conflict

- Identify the triggers
- Acknowledge your desires
- Assessing our view of others
- Filtering messages/advice
- Altering our response
- Don't make it personal
- Focus on the solution




Positive Responses

- Overlook
 - After reflection if the offense was minor and can be left behind
 - No lingering effects
- Engage
 - Work one on one with the individual to explain and work through issues
 - Listen and explore mutually agreeable options
- Mediation
 - Seek the input and assistance of a neutral figure



Positive Effects

- **Personal**
 - Live your values
 - Enjoy your work more
 - Freedom from stress & bitterness
- **Relational**
 - Make a friend & ally
 - Collaboration
 - Peace



Positive Effects

- **Organizational**
 - Increased Trust
 - Greater teamwork
 - Positive environment
 - Safe to present ideas
 - Safe to constructively challenge ideas
 - Better solutions
 - Accountability
 - Mission-effective



Weirdos outside the Herd

- **Steps to dealing with angry student and parent wildebeests:**
 - Keep Calm
 - Don't take it personally
 - Let them be heard





Steps to dealing with angry student and parent wildebeests:

- Actively sympathize
- Apologize gracefully
- Provide a path to resolution
- Take a break

Adapted from forbes.com



Tips for the Head Weirdo

- Recognize the existence and power of conflict
- Analyze your own contributions
- Be vulnerable and promote trust
- Address unresolved conflict
- Be objective/don't take sides
- Train on conflict resolution
- Seek outside help
- Identify and remove toxic wildebeests



Contributing Resources:

- *The Peacemaker* by Ken Sande
- *The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution* by Dudley Weeks
- *Unglued* by Lysa TerKeurst
- *The Advantage* by Patrick Lencioni

21



**Deep thoughts, comments,
conflicting views of reality
or questions
for the weirdo up front...**

david.haggard@bryan.edu
