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How to make change happen and to solve conflicts?

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Focusing on navigating change and resolving conflicts, this toolkit equips young people with tools to handle challenges in personal and professional contexts. Through participatory exercises, they will explore the dynamics of change, learn to manage value-based conflicts, and build skills for fostering constructive solutions.

[Related Module: Module 4 - Adapting to life and workplace changes](#) →

Toolkit Overview ▼

Topic or issues covered

- Defining what change is for us and how we experience change
- The importance of initiating change and knowing how to steer it
- Resolving conflicts that the initiator of change enters into - especially conflicts of value

Aim of activities



- Understand what change is
- Understand and practise how to plan change
- Understand and practise peaceful conflict resolution

Learning objectives

- Making young people aware of the essence of change and its impact on their lives and behaviour.
- Making young people aware of the changes they could bring to the workplace and how best to introduce it.
- Teaching young people how to deal with value conflicts - providing a focus on conflict management and giving tools to face difficult situations with those who do not share the same values.

Target group

15-30 years old

Brief summary of active and participatory methodologies used

All the activities proposed in this toolkit include active and participatory methodologies such as work in small groups - groups of 2, 3, 4; whole group discussion; brainstorming; creative thinking activities; and case study solutions.

Quality standard checklist

- ✓ **Inclusion and diversity:** the activity is open to all young people, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.
- ✓ **Respect:** this activity promotes an environment where young people respect others, their viewpoints, and opinions, even if they differ from their own.
- ✓ **Sustainability:** this activity promotes behaviours and practices that respect the environment and are sustainable in the long term.

- ✓ **Personal growth:** offers opportunities for the personal and professional development of young people, helping them discover and cultivate their talents and passions.
- ✓ **Active citizenship:** this activity promotes the values of civic and social engagement by young people, encouraging them to actively participate in their community and make a difference in the world around them.
- ✓ **Green Values in career:** this activity promotes an idea of career orientation that considers ecological values and environmental sustainability and encourages the adoption of eco-sustainable work practices.

Activity 1

GETTING ACQUAINTED AGAIN!

 **Estimated Time 40 Minutes**

This activity allows participants to re-engage with each other, whilst exploring themes of change through a series of interactive tasks.



Materials and equipment required:

- Sticky notes
- Pens for participants
- Poster board
- Marker pens



Description of the activity:

1. Icebreaker - 10 min.

Each participant chooses an object in the room and introduces themselves to the group as that object. E.g. – I have four legs and a comfortable pad to sit on. After doing the exercise, briefly reflect on how participants feel and accepted the change of the usual way of greeting and introducing oneself.

2. Introduction and presentation of a module - 5 min.

The youth worker presents the module and its objectives and reminds all of the rules for group work accepted by the participants during the first encounter.

3. How does the changes affect me? - 15 min.

- i. Participants arrange themselves in a circle, each extending a hand, closing their eyes and moving towards the centre. They must try to find and hold the hand of another participant. Ensure all find a partner.
- ii. In pairs, one leads the other, who has their eyes closed, by holding them by the shoulders and guiding them movements around the room. The roles are then reversed.
- iii. All participants line up and each holds the shoulders of the one in front of him. The first participant has their eyes open, as does one in the middle and at the end. The first participant leads the group trying to ensure the comfort of the other participants.
- iv. The group divides into two. The first group completes the sentence 'change makes me feel nervous...' Everyone adds some words to the phrase, on sticky notes. The second group completes the sentence 'change makes me feel excited...'. Everyone adds some words to the phrase, on sticky notes.

The facilitator asks the participants, after listening to the phrases they have created, if they can share anything more about how they felt during the activities, in terms of unusual change.

Finally, the facilitator summarises how change exerts influence over our feelings, attitudes, behaviours and that is why we have to consider that influence when we introduce a change.

Tips for Youth Workers:

- These introductory activities offer participants to experience a situation of change. The facilitator should give clear instructions because confusion and misunderstanding on the part of some of the participants will create problems in the discussion - how did I feel in these situations of unusual change?
- It is good to use the momentum from these activities for the key exercise - how change impacts me.
- If time remains, participants will try to work out their own definition of change. The facilitator should watch for time boundaries and then summarise the key points about change, how it affects us and why we need to deal with change and, where necessary, initiate it.

Activity 2

ANNIE PLANS THE CHANGE

 Estimated Time 40 Minutes

This activity encourages participants to analyse a case study, in which they develop a plan for change, applying principles of change management.

Materials and equipment required:

- Pens and paper or computer/tablet for discussion notes and plan.
- Read: [What exactly is individual change management? - WalkMe Blog](#)

Description of the activity:

Annie wants to change male-female relations in the workplace

The participants are presented the case of Annie who is harassed and discriminated against at work, and wants to change this.

For the last few months, Annie, a Roma girl of 23 years old with a degree in computer science, has been working in a large factory producing refrigerators. She works as a design engineer in a large team of mostly older male and female colleagues. She enjoys her work and is well regarded by her colleagues.

However, recently, many of her older colleagues have been making inappropriate remarks about her sexuality, relationships with others and her Roma background, which have made her feel very uncomfortable. Annie speaks directly to her boss, but he waves away the concern and nothing to worry about.

Annie feels that every day her dignity is affected, and wishes only to be accepted as she is. She seeks advice from friends and one suggests that her company could adopt an antidiscrimination and sexual harassment policy. Annie sees the adoption of such a policy as a solution to her problems. It will bring a change in her relations with her colleagues, and a change in the relations in the collective in general.

Task: Discuss the situation in your group and try to identify the steps Annie needs to take. Make a plan for how such a rulebook could be proposed and adopted.

After 20 minutes, there is a whole group discussion over the quality of the plans presented.

Basic principles of successful change management

1. Create a Climate for Change

For any organisation facing the prospect of change, the first step is to create a climate receptive to change. Change can intimidate, or even frustrate, and it is vital for management to decrease resistance by communicating the importance of the change, guiding the teams where change occurs and providing a clear vision to jump-start the transition process. Communication and transparency on the 'why' and 'how' behind change are crucial for gaining employee trust and buy-in for change. This helps employees be owners and implementers of the change.

2. Engage and Enable Change

Once the climate is favourable, the next step is to engage and enable the organisation to enact change. When change is required, it is important to allocate responsibility. Does this change require a specific individual or a team for implementation? Is it an organisational change to be enacted at multiple levels? If so, who will be responsible for coordinating these different levels? Having each of these questions answered can help guide the change process and reduce ambiguities. For this reason, it is important to keep communication open, transparent and clear. Also, creating short-term wins can help to keep morale and enthusiasm at high levels.

3. Implement and Sustain Change

With the organisation engaged, individuals and teams enabled and motivated, it is time to implement and sustain the change. At this point, it is important to keep focused and maintain the push to achieve the desired outcome. Often, the focus is relaxed at this point meaning the process falters. If the target goal shifts during the change process, do not hesitate to adjust accordingly, shifting responsibilities or procedures to keep the drive and focus sustained.

Once the change is implemented and the project has been completed, it is time to solidify the new status-quo and transition the organisation from a state of flux to a state of permanence in order to sustain the change.

4. Review and Reflect on Change

With the general principles in place, one final step in the change management process is a review. Despite the best efforts of management personnel to communicate effectively and properly assign responsibilities, change is a dynamic process. After completing a period of transition, it is important to review the aspects of your process that did or did not work effectively, then learn from the results.



Tips for Youth Workers:

- Keeping the plan simple is key - identify the steps Annie needs to take to get her idea of creating a byelaw against sexual harassment and discrimination adopted in the company. What should Annie do to succeed? Give the groups a chance to share their suggestions and finally note everyone's input and outline the general contours of the byelaw.

Activity 3

WHAT THE CONFLICT IS FOR US – DISASTER, OR AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PERSONAL GROWTH?

 Estimated Time 30 Minutes

This activity provides an opportunity for participants to explore their perceptions of conflict, how they react to it, and how it can be viewed as an opportunity for growth.



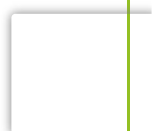
Materials and equipment required:

- Material on Conflict for the facilitator [DOWNLOAD](#)



Description of the activity:

1. Icebreaker



Make your way through the crowd – 10 min.

Participants walk freely around the room and at some point are instructed to choose one direction and follow it forward and back, regardless of the fact that other participants will be in their way too. Follow the direction! Don't back down!

Discussion - the participants share how they felt and the facilitator points out that this is a simplified model of a person's journey through life and the constant conflicts and obstacles that arise along the way.

2. To enter or not to enter conflict – that is the question?

The group divides in half - one group completes the sentence:

I avoid conflict, because...

The second group completes the sentence:

I like getting into conflict because...

Participants share their views on the nature of conflict and how people react in conflict situations. The facilitator briefly introduces the basics of conflict, the nature of conflict, and the idea of peaceful conflict resolution.

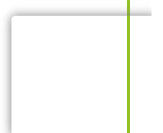


Tips for Youth Workers:

- In these introductory activities to the session, it is important to set a more energetic pace of work but also to give participants the opportunity to share, if necessary. The Youth Worker can use the whip technique, naming everyone in turn, so all young people can take part in the activity and share their comments, opinions or doubts.
- It is important that the facilitator prepares well (using pre-designed posters) to present clearly and concisely the basics of peaceful conflict resolution, which will enable participants in the following activities to feel safer and more sure.

Activity 4

THE ORANGE



 **Estimated Time 20 Minutes**

This activity uses a role-playing scenario to demonstrate that conflicts can be resolved through understanding each other's needs and perspectives.



Materials and equipment required:

- Print the scenarios below for each group



Description of the activity:

Parent (same for both groups)

Your children are fighting in the kitchen and you ask "why?" They both answer - "I want the orange!" The simplest thing you can do is to cut the orange in half and give them half each. But your children are still unhappy and you can't understand what's going on. So you ask, "Why are you unhappy?"

Group 1

Child 1

There is an orange at home and you want to use it - to squeeze the orange for juice. Your sister also wants to take the orange but you want it all and so argue with her about it.

Child 2

There is an orange at home and you want to use it - you want to use the peel for a cake you are going to make with your grandmother. Your sister also wants to take the orange but you want it all and so argue with her about it.

Group 2

Child 1

There is an orange at home and you want to use it - to squeeze the orange for juice. Your sister also wants to take the orange but you need it all. You don't want to argue with your sisters though so try to explain what you need it for.

Child 2

There is an orange at home and you want to use it - you want to use the peel for a cake you are going to make with your grandmother. Your sister also wants to take the orange but you need all of it. You don't want to argue with your sisters though so try to explain what you need it for.

Two trios of participants are selected in the group.

In each trio, Child 1, Child 2 and Parent are agreed. Each participant gets an instruction card for their role and rehearse a short routine acting out the scene.

After watching both scenes, there is a general discussion in the group.

The facilitator asks following questions:

- What are the similarities and differences between the two stories?
- How was the conflict resolved in the first case and the second case? Were the two children happy in either?
- How did the parent's new question change the situation?
- Which condition do you think is most important for the conflict to be resolved?

After the discussion, the facilitator summarises the idea of peaceful conflict resolution - emphasising the importance of the interests of the parties to the conflict, their desire to resolve the conflict together, to preserve their relationship, and to both be satisfied with the resolution.



Tips for Youth Workers:

- Try to get each trio to discuss what happened as well as getting feedback from the whole group.

Activity 5

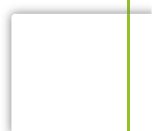
IT'S SO SIMPLE – YOU WANT TO MAKE CHANGE BUT CONFLICT ARISES!

 Estimated Time 40 Minutes

This activity puts participants in the situation of resolving a conflict that arises due to initiating change, through practical application of conflict analysis and resolution steps.



Materials and equipment required:



- Print the scenarios below or display them on a screen



Description of the activity:

Annie and the rules

We already know Annie's story. That she wants a rulebook against sexual harassment and discrimination proposed and has given the boss a sample draft which is being implemented. Some of her co-workers say it is pointless and won't change anything, but are sympathetic to her. Annie can't answer them other than that she will do everything to get the rules passed. It will be good for them too, but for her it is vital - without changing the relationship between men and women in the workplace, she will not be able to continue working there.

Some feel differently. Two of them in particular have verbally attacked her in front of the others at a general meeting suggesting that this will worsen relationships. They also suggested that she has a hidden agenda, and is trying to intimidate them.

The next day the boss calls Annie and Ivan - the more active of the two colleagues and says - "The atmosphere is becoming intolerable. For me, the most important thing is that the company develops and that relations between people do not affect work. Sit down and try to understand each other - try to resolve the conflict between yourselves, if not I will make a decision and it will be that one of you should not work in the same workplace and will not affect the relations in the collective".

Conflict Analysis – Basic Points

- Participants in the conflict: identify the participants in the conflict. There may be only two, but as in environmental conflicts there may be a dozen or more, such as:
- Positions: Repeat and assess what the positions of the parties in the conflict are.
- Interests: What are the interests of the parties? Why is the conflict important to them?
- Relationships between the parties: Extract the most important thing from the review of the past: what are the relationships between the parties? Is there long-standing hostility and fighting, or is it accompanied by attempts at reconciliation to find a good solution?
- Is there a willingness to find a solution or are the parties only willing to negotiate to resolve the conflict?
- External circumstances: Are there external circumstances that push the parties towards a solution?

- Public opinion about the conflict: What is the opinion of others about the conflict, such as people close to both parties or colleagues?
- Can either party impose a unilateral solution to the conflict?

Let's try to solve a conflict

- Step 1: Agree to a meeting to discuss your differences. Stress the need for such a meeting and your desire to find a mutually acceptable solution.
- Step 2: Discuss the conflict together. The first step will be to set out your views on the conflict and why it is important to you, and the reasons why it has arisen. State your view and listen to the other side. Without understanding the other point of view, you will not be able to move on. Try to keep the exchange positive - avoid insults, judging the other person, focus on the problem, not the other person's personality.
- Step 3: When you have shared your views on the conflict and identified the causes of the conflict, you can move to the next step. Together look for solutions to the conflict that are acceptable to both parties: propose solutions, discuss them, try to develop them, if necessary suggest criteria by which these proposals should be judged.
- Step 4: If you agree on some of the proposals, this is the solution to the conflict, the agreement you reach. Agree how this agreement will be respected and what you will do if it is broken. If the conflict has engaged the attention of your colleagues, communicate the agreement to them.

Briefly, this is the way the conflict could be solved.

- You try to explore the conflict together.
- You share your interests and why the conflict is important to you.
- You look for mutually acceptable solutions together.
- Together you assess the reality of these solutions and reach agreement.

The participants receive materials Annie and the rules, Assessment of a conflict situation and Steps for conflict resolution.

There are three options for conducting the activity.

In the first one, the group is divided in threes. In each, two are the participants in the conflict and one observer. The participants try to resolve the conflict within 15 minutes and then each group shares their solution.



The second option is that volunteers playing Annie and the colleague resolve the conflict in front of the whole group and general discussion follows.

The third possibility is two volunteers resolving the conflict with the help of a mediator, such as the facilitator.

It's up to facilitator to choose the option based on the groups capabilities.



Tips for Youth Workers:

- This activity is quite difficult to implement, given that participants can only enter the topic in such a short time. Therefore, a solution in which the facilitator plays the role of a mediator and thus defines the steps of conflict resolution and manages the conflict resolution process is recommended. The other important thing is for the facilitator to emphasize that this is a typical conflict of values, even though on the surface it looks like a quarrel between colleagues. Annie is defending her dignity and human rights however, the other side may argue for their freedom of speech.

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