

Group Communication and Group Conflict

Source: <https://managementhelp.org/groups/group-conflict.htm>

<https://www.mbaknol.com/business-communication/introduction-to-group-communication/>

<https://www.mbaskool.com/business-concepts/marketing-and-strategy-terms/7049-group-communication.html>

- **Group communication** is an extension of [interpersonal communication](#) where more than two individuals are involved in exchange of ideas, skills and interests. A group is a number of people with a common goal who interact with one another to accomplish their goals, recognize one another's existence and see themselves as part of the group. Groups provide an opportunity for people to come together to discuss and exchange views of common interest. There could be many different groups for as many different reasons.

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Group communication is considered effective as it provides an opportunity for direct interaction among the members of the group; it helps in bringing about changes in attitudes and beliefs.

Group communication has limitations too, as group interaction is time consuming and often inefficient, especially in an emergency.

Besides, imbalances in status, skills and goals, may distort the process and the outcome sharply.

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- **Group communication** is a mode of communication in an organization, between employers and employees, and employees in teams/groups. Group communication can further be looked from an marketing perspective as communicating to a group of people or target customers in order to market a product.

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- **How to Manage Group Conflict**

If there seems to be prolonged conflict among several members of a group, then consider the following guidelines.

They might not be in destructive conflict, at all. Robust groups might have conflict if members feel comfortable with sharing their views. Conflict is destructive if there is ongoing disagreements, name calling and people are getting upset. So, for now, describe what behaviors you are seeing that might indicate destructive conflict. Do not try to “diagnose” the causes of those behaviors, just saw what you are seeing or hearing. Acknowledge that conflict is natural in healthy groups, but explain why you suspect that conflict has become destructive.

Take a 5-minute break. Ask one or two other members (a subgroup) to step aside with you. Ask them to suggest approaches to address the conflict, and then read the ideas listed immediately below. Ask them which approaches are most likely to move things along.

Explain that the approaches were selected by several of you, not by just one person. Ask that members set aside 10-15 minutes on the agenda to try them out. The more the members are in destructive conflict, the more likely they will be willing to try out the approaches.

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- **Possible Approaches to Conflict Resolution**

Depending on the situation and duration of the conflict, there are a variety of approaches that might support resolution of destructive conflict. Here are some possible approaches:

Focus on what members agree on, for instance by posting the mission, vision and/or values statements to remind people of why they are there.

Ask members, “If this disagreement continues, where will we be? How will it hurt our organization?”

Have members restate their position. If it will take longer than three minutes, allow opportunities for others to confirm or question for understanding (not disagreement).

Shift to prioritizing alternatives, rather than excluding all alternatives but one.

Take a 10-minute break in which each member quietly reflects on what he/she can do to move the group forward.

Take 5-10 minutes and in pairs of two, each person shares with the other what he/she is confused or irritated about. One person in the pair helps the other to articulate his/her views to the larger group. Then switch roles and repeat the process.

Propose an “agree to disagree” disposition.

If disagreement or lack of consensus persists around an issue, have a subgroup select options and then report back to the full group.

Tell stories of successes and failures in how group members operate, including how members got past their differences and reached agreement.

Call for a vote on a stated question or decision.