

# 8

Field-Tested Strategies for  
Human Resources Professionals

# CONFLICT SPARKS CHANGE

KIM FAIRCLOTH, PHD  
& DAWN BEDLIVY, ESQ



RIVER GROVE  
BOOKS

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher and author are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Nothing herein shall create an attorney-client relationship, and nothing herein shall constitute legal advice or a solicitation to offer legal advice. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Published by River Grove Books  
Austin, TX  
[www.rivergrovebooks.com](http://www.rivergrovebooks.com)

Copyright © 2025 Kim Faircloth and Dawn Bedlivy  
All rights reserved.

Thank you for purchasing an authorized edition of this book and for complying with copyright law. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the copyright holder.

Distributed by River Grove Books

Design and composition by Greenleaf Book Group  
Cover design by Greenleaf Book Group  
Cover images used under license from ©Adobestock.com

Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication data is available.

Print ISBN: 978-1-63299-921-4

eBook ISBN: 978-1-63299-922-1

First Edition

## STRATEGY 1

### ***Shifting Your Mindset***

Sammie glances at the calendar and there it is again: the XYZ budget lead, Jordan, as the first appointment of the day, and Sammie is sure Jordan will complain again about the lack of respect being paid to money boundaries on the team. Sammie is just sick of it because it feels like every idea raised has to go through this “we don’t have the money” and “how much will that cost” debate. As Jordan arrives, Sammie gets ready to argue that it is too early in the recent project to talk about money. Sammie is shocked when Jordan says, “You know, Sammie, you are the lead, and I’m not going to raise money issues again unless you ask. I’m sorry if I’ve disrespected you.” Sammie grabs what feels like a great win, and graciously says, “I know you’re just doing your job.” It feels like a great meeting, except months later during a status update the steering group looks at the top three emerging ideas from the team and says they’re floored by the cost. The steering

group demands to know why no conversation or preplanning for the currently unrealistic ideas occurred. Sammie leaves that meeting and immediately calls Jordan. Jordan says of course the ideas are unrealistic with the current budget structure, but Sammie didn't ask and that was the agreement between them. This is a classic example of yielding or compromising too soon during the early phases of change efforts—and this, along with other harmful conflict responses, can easily derail an entire project.

Let's embark on a transformative journey by reshaping your perspective on the advantages of conflict within the workplace. As human resources professionals, you wield significant influence as agents of change. Consider this: conflict serves as the catalyst for evolution and progress. Absent opposing viewpoints or spirited debates, we risk succumbing to the perils of groupthink. While harmonious interactions may seem ideal, they often stifle innovation and hinder collaborative decision-making. Our objective is to harness the constructive potential of conflict by channeling our focus toward the task at hand rather than toward interpersonal discord. This endeavor, though seemingly straightforward in theory, proves challenging in practice. This is precisely where your role as an HR professional becomes indispensable—you facilitate constructive dialogue, guide individuals toward productive conflict resolution, and ultimately shape the cultural fabric of organizations through your interventions.

Employees most often come to you for help when they've already tried to work things out or they are conflict-avoidant. They come to HR because they want your intervention. It's often a profoundly vulnerable space for them, and the first step in being trusted to help is for you to become competent. Your competence leads to confidence, and employees in conflict will notice that confidence and begin to relax into problem-solving.

Looking back to when we began in the HR and alternative dispute resolution field as mediators, we started our work with a legalistic mindset. While we entered into the work to engage with conflict at the earliest and lowest level possible within organizations, the truth was that what we meant by that is we wanted to resolve conflict before it led to costly formal actions or to resolve those already formally levied grievances with mediation and coaching instead of investigations. We were only partially on the right path with this mindset. We still agree that a facilitated approach—where the employee has an active part in resolving formal actions—is often better than an investigation that ends with the feeling that someone is winning and someone else is losing. After working with many clients, we realized that frontline leaders and human resources staff could not have intervened earlier in the conflict. What if the conflict in front of us were channeled to a better path, instead of just handled by tamping it down? How many employees had to witness or hear about or be otherwise impacted by the

entrenched conflict before someone intervened? What was the opportunity cost?

The cost of conflicts to the organization in terms of innovative debate is a big deal. Change models have traditionally been linear: in other words, getting from here to there. Change was managed as an input-to-output process with little attention paid to team dynamics. The input process had a beginning, when a team was chartered by identifying goals and key stakeholders; the team was staffed and assembled; a project plan was developed with milestones and due dates; and then ideas about how to achieve the goal went through rigorous documentation, facilitation, and narrowing by trained project managers. Through efforts like Total Quality Management and Lean Six Sigma and similar project planning methodologies, we examined how to be efficient and effective. Most of the attention in these efforts was paid to timelines and output goals.

With the rise of the internet and globalization, changes began happening more rapidly and sometimes even chaotically. New approaches to innovation processes recognized the need to be quicker, so project managers and leaders felt the need to focus attention on further processes to help with decision-making and risk management. Not quite sure what to do with these human behaviors and many times conflict-avoidant, the idea was that if employees could just be encouraged to deliver results by paying attention to output processes, team dynamics would be optimized through the feeling of accomplishment. Brainstorming

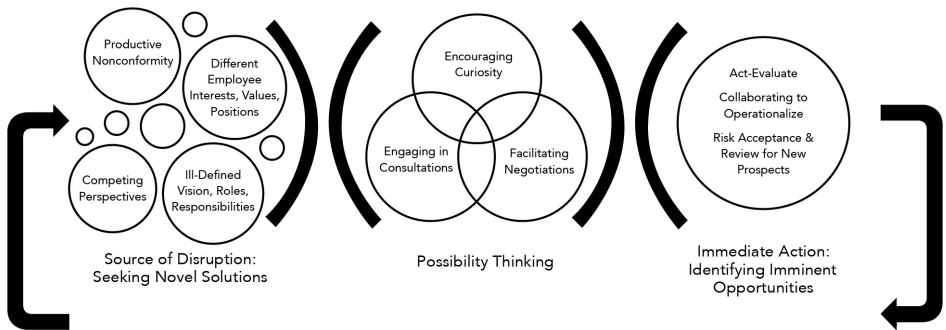
tools could be used to debate ideas to keep everyone focused and that work could be included on a strict timeline, and any other underlying conflict was often ignored or even disciplined. “Time is money” became a common refrain.

But there is a shift happening now, because more and more companies are recognizing that their true competitive edge is contained within the brains of their workforce. Leading human resources is no longer the job of a department but is the responsibility of leaders, project managers, and professional human resources experts. We know about this recognition not because of research (although it exists), but because these project leaders and managers are showing up in the same human behavior coaching technique classes, conferences, and workshops as human resources experts. Suddenly, there is a whole lot of attention paid to team dynamics and how we enter into the change process. You won’t get very far into a coaching workshop before the topic of conflict comes up, and this subject is very often raised by project leaders and managers who are seeking HR experts to help.

The first shift, then, is to shift your mindset about change. Traditionally, we are taught to think about conflict in two ways: conflict is interpersonal (we just need to get along), or it is costing money so we should tamp it down fast. As we saw in the chapter’s opening anecdote, when we yield or compromise too quickly on important issues like budget, we can end up with a result later in the project implementation that can be derailing. If Sammie and Jordan had spent more time in constructive debate

on pros and cons, perhaps Sammie could have seen Jordan's budget concerns as valid points. That "get along" mindset limits opportunities to harness the power of conflict for good. Taking a stand for the benefits of conflict means that you must not only conceptually believe conflict is beneficial, but you also need to be able to articulate a new change model to your workforce. Here is that change model:

### CONFLICT SPARKS CHANGE: A DYNAMIC MODEL



In this model, the first observation is there are differences in ideas, concepts, or opinions, alongside a spirit of curiosity and healthy debate, which forms its foundation. What sets this model apart is its emphasis on devoting equal attention and time to the initial phase of change, where various sources of disruption are recognized as a necessary catalyst for change. Understanding how and why ideas are generated or dismissed is as important as meeting deadlines, which typically receive the most focus in many organizations. Merely striving for diversity in hiring or staffing isn't sufficient; HR experts must advocate



for diverse thinking tools to foster robust debate, or else the efforts in hiring will be futile.

Enhancing your expertise as an HR leader necessitates gaining proficiency in the first part of the change model—source disruptions—which involves learning additional conflict resolution strategies outlined in this book. The reason? Teaching employees conflict management skills benefits every stage of the model, as each idea debated in subsequent stages relies on supporting and channeling the inevitable yet beneficial conflicts that arise in the initial phase of change. Your objective as an HR professional is to navigate the workforce through conflict consistently. Let's delve deeper into how conflict manifests within each stage of the model.

**HR TIP:** Imagery can be very useful in conflict. We keep several sets of 4x6 picture cards and pull them out when clients are unable to articulate how it feels to be in conflict or what a great team atmosphere would be like.

## Source Disruptions

The source disruptions stage in conflict tells us something new is unfolding. Conceptually, we have just a few ways to handle conflict: (1) fight it out until someone wins, (2) avoid it, (3) compromise or yield, or (4) activate it to capitalize on conflict's benefits. Fighting it out in the workplace is draining and damaging, and it is often impossible to tell who won. Avoiding

conflict leads to a whole host of problems—simmering until explosion, quitting on the clock, opportunity costs, and mediocre thinking. Compromise may be necessary to move forward, but it's yielding to the point that later down the road, you're building upon a situation that began as a lose-lose proposition. The other concern with compromise is that it kicks conflict down the road. After all, when something doesn't turn out well, the other party will say, "We should have gone with my idea in the first place." We rarely let go of an idea that is compromised. It's only the last possibility—activating conflict—that makes a difference in the beginning of change.

When the disruption is simply a strong hold on competing ideas, we can channel this by learning about respecting others' ideas and building upon them, rather than simply restating ours. We have four great and simple ideas for encouraging teams to welcome and respect new ideas.

1. Employees must demonstrate and encourage respect for new ideas. One effective way to do this is by consistently acknowledging the positive aspects of an idea before adding further thoughts or criticisms. For example, immediately after an idea is presented, the leader or coworker could say, "I like [specific aspect] about that idea," before offering additional input. Similarly, when someone builds upon the initial idea, they should also begin by highlighting what they appreciate about it before expanding upon it.

2. Foster a more inclusive and respectful environment for capturing ideas in group settings, especially during times of change. Two examples—
  - *Avoiding the “parking lot” metaphor.* Using phrases like “let’s put that idea in the parking lot” can inadvertently signal that certain ideas are being set aside or dismissed. Instead, employing imagery like the refrigerator encourages a more positive and inclusive approach. By visualizing ideas as items stored in a refrigerator, it conveys the message that these ideas are valued and preserved for future consideration, rather than being forgotten or discarded. Emphasizing the team’s responsibility to pull ideas out before they go stale reinforces a collaborative mindset where everyone plays a role in nurturing and developing ideas.
  - *Respectful summarization of ideas.* When summarizing ideas, it’s important to ensure that the essence of each idea is accurately captured. Simply asking if the idea has been represented in a way that aligns with the originator’s intention demonstrates respect for their contribution. This approach acknowledges the diverse perspectives within the group and affirms each individual’s unique contribution to the discussion.
3. Translate commitment to teamwork into concrete actions that support daily collaborative efforts. For instance, during the initial stages of team formation, it’s common

for members to seek the leader's attention. While it's natural for employees to desire recognition, excessive individual attention can be detrimental. As a leader, valuing teamwork means acknowledging individual contributions while immediately redirecting focus to the team. When an employee shares their work, it's essential to inquire about their collaborators and invite them all to a meeting to discuss progress and celebrate achievements together. Similarly, when recognizing employee contributions, it helps to prioritize team achievements over individual ones to avoid fostering competitiveness and potential conflicts among team members.

4. Navigate role ambiguity and overlapping tasks. When the source disruptions are not about competing ideas but are behaviorally focused, things get trickier. There may be confusion about roles and responsibilities, as this is a common source of workplace conflict. Despite efforts to assemble a skilled team, modern work environments, especially those reliant on knowledge, involve fluid roles and tasks that often overlap. While avoiding duplicated efforts is important for cost efficiency, the real concern lies in the conflicts arising from role ambiguity. No one wants to invest effort only to find it duplicated by a team member. However, acknowledging that such conflicts are inevitable helps mitigate them through effective communication. It falls on leaders to regularly inquire about task

ownership and foster a culture of collaboration where team members share updates and successes, facilitating the detection and resolution of duplicated efforts.

In the next potential source in the disruption stage, conflicts can arise from differences in how employees value and manage their work. These discrepancies in interests, values, and approaches to teamwork often become apparent in teams with diverse compositions. Such differences are commonly referred to as varying work ethics, although this terminology can be misleading. Some employees prioritize work as a central aspect of their lives, while others may not place as much emphasis on it. There are employees who are politically savvy or strive for recognition to advance in the organizational hierarchy, while others may view such behaviors as sycophantic or narcissistic. These differing perspectives can lead to tensions within the team. Conflicts may also arise from employees coming from diverse cultural backgrounds or different eras where values such as loyalty, hard work, and commitment are emphasized differently. These disparities can lead to clashes over the interpretation and importance of these values in the workplace.

**HR TIP:** During onboarding, be intentional about discussing behavior norms that align with the organization's mission and value statements. If perseverance is a key value, for example, tie that to how you deal with conflict.

It's astonishing to witness how organizations, in their sincere efforts to foster team cohesion and personal development, inadvertently sow seeds of divisiveness that can lead to conflict. Have you ever participated in a workshop or course that broadly categorizes generations, such as millennials and baby boomers, with sweeping generalizations? Or perhaps you've taken an assessment that assigns you a label, supposedly for better understanding behavior within a team, only to find that it differs significantly from someone else's label and explains away your problem communicating with that person. What's concerning is that this penchant for labeling individuals creates a dangerous dichotomy of "us versus them" thinking. When we start categorizing others and attributing motives to their actions based on these labels, we veer away from discussing the task at hand, inviting interpersonal conflicts to take center stage. Even when these labels could offer valuable insights into team dynamics, facilitators often fail to provide guidance on how to navigate conflicts that arise from these differences. Instead, employees often adopt a passive stance, attributing conflicts to immutable characteristics, saying, "This is just the way they are," instead of actively engaging in resolving conflicts that stem from differences.

While the intention behind these activities may be to enhance team cohesion and personal development, the unintended consequence is often the reinforcement of divisive thinking patterns that hinder collaboration and breed conflict. Organizations need to recognize and address these pitfalls to foster a more inclusive and harmonious work environment. Here are two tips:

1. Be extremely cautious about who you select to facilitate team-building activities. As an HR professional, you hold the responsibility of being the gatekeeper in this regard. It's up to you to decide whether facilitated assessments, coaching, and team-building exercises will be beneficial for a team in conflict or whether you need to engage in rigorous debate of new ideas. You also have the discretion to determine if gaining a deeper understanding of each other's personality types is necessary. It's essential to conduct thorough research and not assume that your employees are well-versed in the social sciences and understand how to use these labels effectively. We've observed instances where employees—and even leaders—have used their personality type labels to justify their behavior, saying things like, “I'm a [insert label], so you need to understand this about me. This label explains why I act the way I do.”
2. Bring individuals in conflict into a mediation (facilitated dialogue) quickly. This facilitated dialogue serves a vital purpose, as evidenced by the existence of comprehensive strategies for conducting such conversations. The phrase “misery loves company” holds true in this context. It reflects the observation that conflicts tend to escalate rapidly within teams as individuals attempt to rally support for their viewpoints. While some may label this behavior as gossip, it's essential to recognize that gossip often serves as a communication channel rooted in underlying conflicts.

Yet another disruption has to do with different innovation styles. This pertains to how individuals within a team approach and engage with new ideas. Instead of categorizing employees, it's important to recognize that some people are more inclined to be agreeable to others' ideas while others tend to challenge them. A successful team benefits from a balance of both types, as each brings unique perspectives and contributes to the innovation process. In terms of managing conflict, individuals who prefer to test ideas before accepting them often exhibit a strong inclination toward nonconformity. This means that they tend to subject every idea to rigorous scrutiny and analysis, often pointing out potential flaws or weaknesses before deeming it acceptable. While this approach is not inherently obstructive, it may be perceived as such, leading to misunderstandings or negative judgments.

To address this, the term "productive nonconformists" is introduced in the change model, emphasizing the importance of having at least one such individual on any team focused on innovative thinking. It's a better term than "devil's advocates," which can sound off-putting or combative; the more helpful label of "productive nonconformists" reflects a future-oriented stance that more fully captures the positive intent behind these types of employee actions. Rather than relying solely on processes like brainstorming to prevent groupthink, try deliberately considering and discussing innovation styles during the team formation stage. Without someone who challenges ideas in the early disruption stage, there's a risk of groupthink stifling creativity and critical thinking.



It's also essential to manage the potential frustration and conflicts that arise from these nonconforming innovation types. One strategy is to teach them to acknowledge and respect others' ideas before offering counterpoints, which can help prevent them from being perceived as obstinate. Fostering open and continuous discussions within the team about the value of counterpoints encourages a culture of constructive criticism and collaboration. When counterpoints are raised they should be publicly acknowledged and welcomed, reinforcing their importance in the innovation process.

There are so many more opportunities for disruptions, but whatever the source, your mindset about how important they are to creating a learning, idea-focused organization is essential. Conflict sparks change because it is the part of the model where two perspectives don't align yet, and something new is trying to emerge. Constructive controversy leads to creativity, and channeling conflict to achieve it is an HR leader's big job for advocating for this type of creative environment.

## **Possibility Thinking**

Once you've set up a culture that supports conflict and idea sharing seems like it is going pretty well, you might think your work with channeling conflict is done. But you'll realize that conflict shows up again. As employees settle in on exploring one or more ideas as "leading thoughts" for the moment, it is natural that they begin to align with one or the other ideas about the

way forward. Successful facilitation helps to harness the positive benefits of conflict in this section of the model when we—

1. *Establish a culture of conflict and idea sharing.* Initially, the focus is on creating an organizational culture that encourages open communication, idea sharing, and constructive conflict resolution. This lays the groundwork for effective collaboration and innovation within the team or organization.
2. *Notice continued conflict in the idea exploration phase.* Even after successfully fostering a culture of open communication, conflicts can resurface during the phase of exploring various ideas. This occurs as team members naturally gravitate toward different concepts or solutions, leading to diverging viewpoints and potential tensions.
3. *Actively facilitate conflict resolution.* Effective facilitation becomes important during this phase to manage conflicts and maintain focus on the task at hand. Various tools such as force field analysis, brainstorming, mind mapping, affinity diagrams, and Ishikawa diagrams are employed to guide discussions and align team members' perspectives.
4. *Teach process.* The use of multiple tools highlights the meticulous attention paid to the process of idea exploration and conflict resolution. Each tool serves a specific purpose in helping team members express their thoughts

and opinions while ensuring that the discussion remains productive and focused.

5. *Carry over and expand upon team behavior norms.* It's emphasized that the positive team behavior norms established in the earlier stages must be maintained throughout the process. This includes respecting diverse ideas and perspectives, regardless of whether they align with one's own.
6. *Purposefully integrate new team members.* When new members join the team, it's essential to integrate them into the existing team dynamics and ensure they understand and adhere to the established norms of respectful communication and collaboration.

Through the use of force field analysis, brainstorming, mind mapping, affinity diagrams, Ishikawa diagrams, and other similar tools, team members stay focused on the work but also feel like their thoughts are included. Can you see how much (good) attention has been paid to process with all these tools? The model reminds you that we must carry over team behavior norms of respecting ideas now in place from the work done in the first stage. One caution here is that when new team members are introduced, attention to teaming behaviors with the new team members and existing team members is necessary. How will you, as the HR expert, facilitate this and help the team talk about their vision for teamwork?

During this phase, as the team delves into specific ideas, collaboration with various departments becomes essential. Consultations with resource departments, technology experts, and others may be required—potentially introducing further conflict, especially if key stakeholders disagree. It's important to prepare team members for these encounters by helping them anticipate responses from stakeholders, both positive and negative.

We advocate for integrating negotiation skills into foundational employee training. Engaging in endless debates can drain team energy and escalate tensions when progress stalls. While various methodologies exist, it's essential to tailor the training to individual employees rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all approach. Establishing a shared language and process and fostering active listening skills empowers each team member to anticipate and navigate the negotiation process effectively. Employees can support each other, particularly when someone lacks polished negotiation skills. Implementing this integrated training initiative, spearheaded by the HR department, can address power imbalances within the team. While we often associate power imbalances with positional authority, they can manifest in various ways. Strong personalities or individuals with a results-driven focus may dominate discussions, overshadowing quieter team members or those averse to conflict. Equipping all employees with negotiation skills fosters a more balanced dynamic, mitigating unproductive conflicts and yielding substantial benefits for the organization.

In your capacity as the HR expert, your pivotal role extends beyond traditional administrative tasks. You are entrusted with the responsibility of fostering a cohesive and harmonious work environment by orchestrating discussions that center around teamwork and aligning the team's vision. Your multifaceted duties encompass a spectrum of activities aimed at enhancing collaboration, communication, and conflict resolution within the team. As a facilitator, you utilize your specialized knowledge on human behaviors when you orchestrate various team-building exercises and workshops designed to fortify bonds among team members, cultivate effective communication channels, and equip individuals with conflict resolution skills. Through these interactive sessions, you strive to nurture a culture of mutual respect, understanding, and synergy.

Your role transcends mere facilitation; you serve as a pillar of support and guidance for both seasoned veterans and newcomers within the team. Whether it's providing mentorship to new recruits or offering advice to existing members who are navigating challenges, you play an integral part in ensuring every team member feels empowered and valued. And as the organizational landscape evolves, so too does the role of HR. In today's dynamic environment, HR professionals are increasingly called upon to actively engage in change management processes. This evolution necessitates a proactive approach wherein HR professionals not only facilitate discussions, but also actively participate in steering organizational transformations.

The strategies delineated in this book serve as invaluable tools to aid you in your journey—and essential to their efficacy is a recognition of the evolving nature of HR's role. Embracing this evolution empowers you to not only facilitate discussions but also spearhead transformative initiatives, thereby driving organizational growth and success.

## **Implementation**

This is the part of the model that has undoubtedly received the most attention in other change models. Here we need to decide the way forward by weighing the risks against the benefits. This is also where negativity or positivity bias occurs, and bias does cause conflict between employees. Sometimes team members are hesitant to implement for fear of failure. This is also where the pressure to produce gets significant. Emotions rule as employees become weary from the work, overly excited, relieved, and sometimes apprehensive that the project will stick. These conflicting emotions cause conflict among team members, and when you add on the external pressures from key stakeholders (it seems like everyone has an opinion on what to do), it can be frustrating and exhausting. Frustration and exhaustion lead to acting out, even among great team members.

This is why we believe, in this final stage, we need to take the word “decision” completely out of the picture because the

word implies a permanent, unchanging state. What happens is that we act and evaluate. We collaborate and operationalize. The minute we do so, no matter how well we've done in the rest of the model, we will soon see the need to reevaluate and change something else. What else, after we implement, will we learn? What shows up in this new way of doing or thinking about something? Which outcomes will mean some ideas are not implemented? This is where a learning and curious team, led by a leader championing the idea of continuous rethinking and idea generation, will level up once again. Since the final stage of change is fraught with emotions, HR has the responsibility to know this and seek out facilitation and training that will help the team move forward.

In this stage, it is helpful to learn critical thinking processes that help reduce choice. We each have our way of approaching choices, and that can cause us to have individual blinders. Just as employees have individual levels of comfort in taking risks, employees also apply critical thinking differently. We encourage you to take the word "bias" and change it to "critical thinking" by implementing processes that require an evaluation process before and after an output is operationalized. If you've taken the step to add nonconformists to your teams, how are you supporting them as they voice differing opinions? When employees are starting to see light at the end of the tunnel, are you asking, "What are other possible opinions?" Sometimes, these other opinions lead you to implement temporarily and enter right

back into the change model. Other times, it is the competing opinions that help you evaluate ideas by building in “what if” questions. Perhaps you’ve not imagined your HR role in this implementing debate stage, but conflict is there and you should be there too, with expertise and support.

As we transition from this broad strategic perspective to more targeted approaches, it’s essential to recognize the pivotal role of your expertise in HR conflict resolution in driving successful organizational change. If you’ve previously viewed your role solely through the lens of administrative leadership rather than as an active participant in fostering innovation, it’s time to reassess. HR professionals serve as custodians of organizational culture, with conflict resolution serving as the litmus test for the manifestation of desired behaviors. Embracing this mindset shift forms the bedrock upon which all subsequent strategies are built. Every conflict, no matter how seemingly insignificant, is a vital component of the change journey. By honing your conflict resolution skills and fostering professional growth, you have the power to effect profound and enduring change in collaboration with your workforce. Embrace this opportunity to harness the transformative potential of conflict and pave the way for a more resilient and adaptive organizational culture.





### *Critical Thinking Questions*

---

1. When contemplating conflict, which emotions and descriptors immediately come to mind?
2. Upon further reflection, what constructive and uplifting words can you incorporate into your perception of conflict?
3. As an HR professional specializing in conflict intervention, what legacy do you aspire to leave behind (how do you want to be remembered)?
4. What are a few profound quotes about conflict that resonate with you most deeply, serving as enduring pillars of guidance and reflection in your professional journey?

## *About the Authors*



**Kim Faircloth (PhD, SHRM-SCP, SPHR)**

is a seasoned professional with over 30 years of experience in conflict resolution coaching and mediation, leadership development, and executive coaching. As the owner of Integrated Conflict Solutions, LLC, she empowers individuals and organizations to effectively manage conflicts and enhance employee engagement. A certified coach and trained mediator, Dr. Faircloth has guided thousands in addressing workplace conflicts. Her expertise spans roles such as ombudsman, workforce strategies consultant, and director of human resources. Drawing on her doctoral studies in conflict and mediation, she is a senior principal trainer and consultant at the Mediation Training Institute based in St. Petersburg, Florida. She continues to make significant contributions to the field, driven by her commitment to peacemaking and educating future HR professionals.



**Dawn Bedlivy (Esq)** is a distinguished conflict resolution specialist with over three decades of experience. Her expertise encompasses leadership development, alternative dispute resolution, and conflict systems design. Ms. Bedlivy has successfully led teams

and delivered consultation and training at prestigious venues. As an accomplished ombudsman, mediator, and organizational systems coach, she has applied her skills to spearhead an innovation ecosystem. Demonstrating her commitment to education, Ms. Bedlivy serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, where she educates future professionals in conflict resolution.