

Group Dynamics & Conflict Resolution For Ministry

Ministry Formation Program

Diocese of Rockford

1. Understanding Groups

Nature of Groups

- Emotional Needs
- Behavior Patterns
- Growth and Development
- Similarities of Other Groups
- Usual Adjustment Techniques
- Hidden Influences and Agendas
- Testing Authority

Group Dynamics

- Size
- Cooperation "vs" Competition
- Leadership
- Communication
- Group Pressure
- Structure and Goals
- Status and Position
- Decision Making Structures

2. Communication Climate in Groups

Supportive Climate

- Non-Judgmental
- Solution Oriented
- Spontaneity
- Empathy
- Equality
- Flexibility

Threatening Climate

- Hypercritical
- Controlling
- Manipulators
- Drop Outs
- Superiority
- Dogmatism

3. Skills for Leading a Group

- Insure Maximum Participation
- Starting the Discussion
- Stopping the Discussion
- Handling Side Conversations
- Utilizing Silence
- Drawing Out Silent Members
- Taming Over Talkative Members

4. Conflict and Confrontation in Ministry

- Constructive Conflict always brings opportunity.
- Destructive Conflict always brings limitations.

5. Understanding Conflict

- Commitment
 - Express struggle in a commitment.*
 - Interdependent in its relationship to the commitment.*
 - Perceived interference with the outcome of the commitment.*
- Psychological Actualization
 - Human Development*
 - Emotional Development*
 - Faith Development*
 - Family Development*
 - Vocational Development*
- Theological Interpretations
 - Image of God as over and above rather than within and present; or unity rather than chaos.*
 - Operative Theologies lend themselves to limited interpretation.*
- Relationship to Church and Hierarchy
 - Consumer Approach to the Church*
 - Understanding of Hierarchy*

6. Responding to Conflict

- Aggression
- Abusiveness
- Assertiveness

7. Using “I” Messages

- When the message to be delivered has a strong emotional content, it is best to use an “I” message.
- An “I” message is a statement in which a person tells how he or she feels.
- Using “I” messages can help avoid blaming, name calling, or antagonizing the other person.