



# Tips on how to manage conflict

## Dispute Resolution Centre

If you are in conflict with someone and you don't know what to do, some of these tips may be helpful.

### Talking about the issue

If there is no threat of physical violence, talking it out is the best solution. Face-to-face contact is better than letters and messages - and a good deal better than banging on walls, throwing things, or complaining about it to everyone else.

Choose a good time to approach the other person so that neither of you is rushed. Don't start when the other person is on the way to work, or you've had a terrible day, or you're just about to cook dinner. That will only add to the frustration.

Find a place where you can both sit comfortably and quietly for a while. Explain that the conflict has been worrying you and you'd like to sort it out.

### Think beforehand about what you want to say

It's important to state clearly what the problem is and how you feel about it.

### Don't blame the other person for everything

Or begin with your opinion of what should be done. Avoid name calling - it only makes it harder for the person to hear what you are saying.

### Don't be tempted to interpret the other person's behaviour.

Don't say 'You're blocking my driveway on purpose, just to make me angry'. Instead, say 'When your car blocks my driveway, I get angry because it is difficult to get in or out'.

### Give the person a chance to tell you the other side of the story.

Be prepared to relax, listen, and take everything in.

Let the person know you are listening. You may not agree, but there's nothing more frustrating than trying to talk to someone who doesn't appear to be listening.

Say that you're glad you're talking about the problem.

This helps to ease the tension and is a great help in moving things towards an agreement.

### Try working on the dispute cooperatively.

Work out what you both have to do to resolve the problem. Two or more people working on a problem together can get further than one person telling the other to change.

## Take the time to get it right

Since you're taking the time to work on a problem, take the time to get it right. Get the whole problem out in the open. Don't leave out the part that seems less important or is the hardest to talk about. Those are the things that will ruin the solution you come up with.

Agree to check with each other at a specific time in the future to see how things are going—and don't forget to do it.

### If things have gone too far, there is help at hand.

Our Dispute Resolution Centres provide a free, confidential, and impartial mediation service throughout Queensland. Trained mediators are available to guide discussion and help you reach a solution.

### For mediation services, contact:

#### South Queensland

Ph: (07) 3738 7000

Toll free outside Brisbane 1800 017 288

email: [drc.sq@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.sq@justice.qld.gov.au)

#### North Queensland

Ph: (07) 4417 8141

Toll free outside Townsville 1800 809 605

email: [drc.nq@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.nq@justice.qld.gov.au)

#### Far North Queensland

Ph: (07) 4037 2600

Toll free outside Cairns 1800 671 680

email: [drc.fnq@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.fnq@justice.qld.gov.au)

#### Central Queensland

Ph: (07) 4887 1760

Toll free outside Rockhampton 1800 817 927

email: [drc.central@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.central@justice.qld.gov.au)

#### Mackay–Whitsundays

Ph: (07) 4889 8402

Toll free outside Mackay 1800 501 576

email: [drc.mkywhit@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.mkywhit@justice.qld.gov.au)

#### Wide Bay

Ph: (07) 4120 6708

Toll free outside Hervey Bay 1800 681 109

email: [drc.wb@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:drc.wb@justice.qld.gov.au)

