

## NEGOTIATION

Negotiation in its most creative form is similar to collaboration and in its most poorly managed form may resemble a competing approach. Negotiation frequently resembles compromise when it is used as a conflict resolution strategy. During negotiation, each party gives up something, and the emphasis is on accommodating differences between the parties. Because we live in a world with others, we have conflicting needs, wants, and desires that must be constantly compromised. Few people are able to meet all their needs or objectives. Most day-to-day conflict is resolved with negotiation. When one nurse says to another, "I'll answer that call light if you'll count narcotics," he or she is practicing the art of negotiation.

Although negotiation implies winning and losing for both parties, there is no rule that each party must lose and win the same amount. Most negotiators want to win more than they lose, but negotiation becomes destructively competitive when the emphasis is on winning at all costs. A major goal of effective negotiation is to make the other party feel satisfied with the outcome. The focus in negotiation should be to create a win-win situation.

Many small negotiations take place every day spontaneously and succeed without any advance preparation. However, not all nurses are expert negotiators. If managers wish to succeed in important negotiations for unit resources, they must (1) be adequately prepared, (2) be able to use appropriate negotiation strategies, and (3) apply appropriate closure and follow-up. To become more successful at negotiating, people need to do several things before, during, and after the negotiation.

### Before the Negotiation

For managers to be successful, they must **systematically prepare** for the negotiation. As the negotiator, the manager begins by gathering as much information as possible regarding the issue to be negotiated. Because knowledge is power, the more informed the negotiator, the greater his or her bargaining power. Adequate preparation prevents others in the negotiation from catching the negotiator off guard or making him or her appear uninformed.

Additionally, individuals must remember that negotiation takes place on two levels. Doland (1998) says the first level is a substance level of who, what, when, where, and how of an issue. This is the area where we prepare our strategies. However, Doland cautions that we must not forget the second level, which is the human side of every negotiation and interaction. Remember that the "opponents" you face across the bargaining table are individuals like you. The way the other party perceives you as being fair and open to negotiate often plays a role in the decisions that will be reached in the negotiation.

It also is important for managers to decide where to start in the negotiation. Umiker (1996, 1997) suggests that managers should initially focus on seeking a bigger pie instead of dividing the pie up. In other words, the negotiators add value to the package rather than seeking concessions from each other.

When this is not possible, the focus must shift to compromise and priority setting. Because managers must be willing to make compromises, they should choose a starting point that is high but not ridiculous. This selected starting point should be at the upper limits of their expectations, realizing that they may need to come down to a more realistic goal. For instance, you would really like four additional full-time RN positions and a full-time clerical position budgeted for your unit. You know that you could make do with three additional full-time RN positions and a part-time clerical assistant, but you begin by asking for what would be ideal.

It is almost impossible in any type of negotiation to escalate demands; therefore, the manager must start at an extreme but reasonable point. It also must be decided beforehand how much can be compromised. Can the manager accept one full-time RN position or two or three? The very least for which a person will settle is often referred to as the *bottom line*.

The wise manager also has other options in mind when negotiating for important resources. An alternative option is another set of negotiating preferences that can be used so that managers need not use their bottom lines but still meet their overall goal. For instance, you have requested four full-time RN positions and one full-time clerical position. You could get by with three full-time RNs and one part-time clerk. However, you believe strongly that you cannot continue to provide safe patient care unless you are given two RNs and a part-time clerk—your bottom line. However if the original negotiation is unsuccessful, reopen negotiations by saying that a second option that does not entail increasing the staff would be to float a ward clerk for 4 hours each day, implement a unit-dose system, require housekeeping to pass out linen, and have dietary pass all the patient meal trays. This way, the overall goal of providing more direct patient care by the nursing staff could still be met without adding nursing personnel.

The manager needs to consider other trade-offs that are possible in these situations. *Trade-offs* are secondary gains, often future-oriented, that may be realized as a result of conflict. For example, while attending college, a parent may feel intrapersonal conflict because he or she is unable to spend as much time as desired with his or her children. The parent is able to compromise by considering the trade-off: eventually, everyone's life will be better because of the present sacrifices. The wise manager will consider trading something today for something tomorrow as a means to reach satisfactory negotiations.

The manager also must look for and acknowledge *hidden agendas*—the covert intention of the negotiation. Usually, every negotiation has a covert and an overt agenda. For example, new managers may set up a meeting with their superior with the established agenda of discussing the lack of supplies on the unit. However, the hidden agenda may be that the manager feels insecure and is really seeking performance feedback during the discussion. Having a hidden agenda is not uncommon and is not wrong by any means. Everyone has them, and it is not necessary or even wise to share these hidden agendas. Managers, however, must be introspective enough to recognize their hidden agendas so they are not paralyzed if the agenda is discovered and used against them during the negotiation.

If the manager's hidden agenda is discovered, he or she should admit that it is a consideration but not the heart of the negotiation. For example, although the hidden agenda for increasing unit staff might be to build the manager's esteem in the eyes of the staff, there may exist a legitimate need for additional staff. If, during the negotiations, the fiscal controller accuses the manager of wanting to increase staff just to gain power, the manager might respond by saying, "It is always important for a successful manager to be able to gain resources for the unit, but the real issue here is an inadequate staff." Managers who protest too strongly that they do not have a hidden agenda appear defensive and vulnerable.

## During the Negotiation

Negotiation is psychological and verbal. The effective negotiator always looks calm and self-assured. At least part of this self-assurance comes from having adequately prepared for the negotiation. Part of the preparation should have included learning about the people with whom the manager is negotiating. There are many types of personalities, and it is necessary to negotiate with most of them.

Preparation, however, is not enough. In the end, the negotiator must have clarity in his or her communication, assertiveness, good listening skills, the ability to regroup quickly, and flexibility. Strategies commonly used by leaders during negotiation to increase their persuasiveness and foster open communication include the following:

- Use only factual statements that have been gathered in research.
- Listen carefully, and watching nonverbal communication.
- Keep an open mind, because negotiation always provides the potential for learning. It is important not to prejudge. Instead, a cooperative (not competitive) climate should be established.
- Try to understand where the other party is coming from. It is probable that one person's perception is different from another's. The negotiation needs to concentrate on understanding and not just on agreeing.
- Always discuss the conflict. It is important to not personalize the conflict by discussing the parties involved in the negotiation.
- Try not to belabor how the conflict occurred or to fix blame for the conflict. Instead, the focus must be on preventing its recurrence.
- Be honest.
- Start tough so that concessions are possible. It is much harder to escalate demands in the negotiation than to make concessions.
- Delay when confronted with something totally unexpected in negotiation. In such cases, the negotiator should respond, "I'm not prepared to discuss this right now" or "I'm sorry, this was not on our agenda; we can set up another appointment later to discuss that." If asked a question the negotiator does not know, he or she should simply say, "I don't have that information at this time."
- Never tell the other party what you are willing to negotiate totally. You may be giving up the ship too early.

- Know the *bottom line* but trying never to use it. If the bottom line is used, the negotiator must be ready to back it up or he or she will lose all credibility. Doland (1998) says that negotiations should always result in both sides improving their positions, but in reality we sometimes have to walk away from the negotiating table if we cannot improve our situation, because not every negotiation can result in terms that are agreeable to each party. If the bottom line is reached, the negotiator should tell the other party that an impasse has been reached and that further negotiation is not possible at this time. Then the other party should be encouraged to sleep on it and reconsider. The door should always be left open for further negotiation. Another appointment can be made. Both parties should be allowed to save face.
- If either party becomes angry or tired during the negotiation, take a break. Go to the bathroom or make a telephone call. Remember that neither party can effectively negotiate if he or she is enraged or fatigued.

## **Destructive Negotiation Tactics**

Some negotiators win by using specific intimidating or manipulative tactics. People using these tactics take a competing approach to negotiation rather than a collaborative approach. These tactics might be conscious or unconscious but are used repeatedly because they have been successful for that person. Successful managers do not use these types of tactics, but because others with whom they negotiate may do so, they must be prepared to counter such tactics.

One such tactic is *ridicule*. The goal in using ridicule is to intimidate others involved in the negotiation. If you are negotiating with someone who uses ridicule, maintain a relaxed body posture, steady gaze, and patient smile. Body language must also remain relaxed and nonthreatened.

Another tactic some people use is *ambiguous* or *inappropriate questioning*. For example, in one negotiating situation, the intensive care unit supervisor had requested additional staff to handle open-heart surgery patients. During her bargaining, the CEO suddenly said, "I never did understand the heart; can you tell me about the heart?" The supervisor did not fall into this trap and instead replied that the physiology of the heart was irrelevant to the issue. Because people tend to answer an authority figure, it is necessary to be on guard for this type of diversionary tactic.

*Flattery* is another technique that makes true collaboration in negotiation very difficult. The person who has been flattered may be more reluctant to disagree with the other party in the negotiation, and thus his or her attention and focus are diverted. One method managers can use to discern flattery from other honest attempts to compliment is to be aware how they feel about the comment. If they feel unduly flattered by a gesture or comment, it is a good indication that they were being flattered. For example, asking for advice or instruction may be a subtle form of flattery, or it may be an honest request. If the request for

advice is about an area in which the manager has little expertise, it is undoubtedly flattery. However, exchanging positive opening comments with each other when beginning negotiation is an acceptable and enjoyable practice performed by both parties.

Nurses are also particularly prone to gestures of *helplessness*. Because nursing is a helping profession, the tendency to nurture is high, and managers must be careful not to lose sight of the original intent of the negotiation—securing adequate resources to optimize unit functioning.

Some people win in negotiation simply by rapidly and *aggressively taking over* and controlling the negotiation before other members realize what is happening. If managers believe this may be happening, they should call a halt to the negotiations before decisions are made. Saying simply, “I need to have time to think this over” is a good method of stopping an aggressive takeover.

The manager needs to be aware of destructive negotiation tactics and develop strategies to overcome them. Destructive negotiation tactics are never a part of collaborative conflict resolution. Leaders use an honest, straightforward approach and develop assertive skills for use in conflict negotiation. Maintaining human dignity and promoting communication require that all conflict interactions be assertive, direct, and open. Conflict must be focused on the issues and resolved through joint compromise.

## Closure and Follow-Up to Negotiation

Just as it is important to start the formal negotiation with some pleasantries, it is also good to close on a friendly note. Once a compromise has been reached, restate it so everyone is clear about what has been agreed. If managers win more in negotiation than they anticipated, they should try to hide their astonishment. At the end of any negotiation, whether it is a short 2-minute conflict negotiation in the hallway with another RN or an hour-long formal salary negotiation, the result should be satisfaction by all parties that each has won something. It is a good idea to follow up formal negotiation in writing by sending a letter or a memo stating what was agreed.

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.4

You are one of a group of staff nurses who believe that part of your job dissatisfaction results from getting different patients every day. Your unit uses a system of total patient care, and assignments are made by the head nurse. Two staff nurses have gone to the head nurse and requested that she allow each nurse to pick his or her own patients based on the previous day's assignment and the ability of the nurse. The head nurse believes they are being uncooperative because she is responsible for seeing that all the patients get assigned and receive adequate care. She

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**LEARNING EXERCISE 16.4 (continued)**

indicates that although she attempts to provide continuity of care, it is often inappropriate because many part-time nurses are used on the unit, and not all the nurses are able to care for every type of patient. At the end of the conference, the two nurses are angry, and the head nurse is irritated. However, the next day, the head nurse says she is willing to meet with the staff nurses. The other nurses believe this is a sign that the head nurse is willing to negotiate a compromise. They plan to get together tonight to plan the strategy for tomorrow's meeting.

**ASSIGNMENT:** What are the goals for each party? What could be a possible hidden agenda for each party? What could happen if the conflict is escalated? Devise a workable plan that would accomplish the goals of both parties and develop strategies for implementation.

**ANALYSIS**

A head nurse's goal is to be sure all patients receive safe and adequate care. However, she might have several hidden agendas. One might be that she does not want to relinquish any authority or does not want to devote her energy to the planned change that has been proposed. The staff nurses have goals of job satisfaction and providing more continuity of care; however, their hidden agenda is probably the need for more autonomy and control of the work setting.

If the conflict is allowed to escalate, the staff nurses could begin to disrupt the unit because of their dissatisfaction, and the head nurse could transfer some of the "ringleaders" or punish them in some other way. The head nurse is wise in reconsidering these nurses' request. By demonstrating her willingness to talk and negotiate the conflict, she will be viewed by the staff nurses as cooperative and interested in their job satisfaction.

The staff nurses must realize that they are not going to obtain everything they want in this conflict resolution, nor should they expect that result. To demonstrate their interest, they should develop some sort of workable policy and procedure for patient care assignments, recognizing that the head nurse will want to modify their procedure. Once the plan is developed, the nurses need to plan their strategy for the coming meeting. The following may be their outline:

1. Select as a spokesperson a member of the group who has the best assertive skills but who is not abrasive or aggressive in his or her approach. This keeps the group from appearing overpowering to the head nurse. The other group members will be at the meeting lending their support but will speak only when called on by the group leader. Preferably, the spokesperson also should be someone the head nurse knows well and whose opinion she respects.
2. The designated leader of the group should plan to begin her opening remarks by thanking the head nurse for agreeing to the meeting. In this way, the group acknowledges the authority of the head nurse.
3. There should be a sincere effort by the group to listen to the head nurse and to follow modifications to their plan. They must be willing to give up something also, perhaps some modification in the staffing pattern.

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- LEARNING OBJECTIVES (continued)**
4. As the meeting progresses, the leader of the group should continue to express the goal of the group—to provide greater continuity of patient care—rather than focusing on how unhappy the group is with the present system.
  5. At some point, the nurses should show their willingness to compromise and offer to evaluate the new plan periodically.

Ideally, the outcome of the meeting would be some sort of negotiated compromise in patient care assignment, which would result in more autonomy and job satisfaction for the nurses, enough authority for the head nurse to satisfy her responsibilities, and increased continuity of patient care assignment.



## SEEKING CONSENSUS

*Consensus* is always an appropriate goal in resolving conflicts and in negotiation. Consensus means that negotiating parties are able to reach an agreement that all parties can support, or at least not oppose, even though it does not represent everyone's first priorities (Rowland & Rowland, 1997). Consensus decision making does not provide complete satisfaction for everyone involved in the negotiation, as an initially unanimous decision would, but it does indicate willingness by all parties to accept the agreed-upon conditions.

In committees or groups working on shared goals, consensus is often used to resolve conflicts that may occur within the group. To reach consensus often requires the use of an experienced facilitator, and having consensus-building skills is a requirement of good leadership. Building consensus ensures that everyone within the group is heard but that the group will ultimately end up with one agreed-upon course of action. Consensual decisions are best used for decisions that relate to a core problem or need a deep level of group support to implement successfully (Asselin, 2001).

Perhaps the greatest challenge in using consensus as a conflict resolution strategy is that, like collaboration, it is time-consuming. It also requires all the parties involved in the negotiation to have good communication skills and to be open-minded and flexible.

## INTEGRATING LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS IN MANAGING CONFLICT

The manager who creates a stable work environment that minimizes the antecedent conditions for conflict has more time and energy to focus on meeting organizational and human resource needs. When conflict does occur in the unit, managers must be able to discern constructive from destructive conflict. Conflict

that is constructive will result in creativity, innovation, and growth for the unit. When conflict is deemed to be destructive, managers must deal appropriately with that conflict or risk an aftermath that may be even more destructive than the original conflict. Consistently using conflict resolution strategies with win-lose or lose-lose outcomes will create disharmony within the unit. Leaders who use optimal conflict resolution strategies with a win-win outcome promote increased employee satisfaction and organizational productivity.

Negotiation also requires both management functions and leadership skills. Well-prepared managers know with whom they will be negotiating and prepare their negotiation accordingly. They are prepared with trade-offs, multiple alternatives, and a clear bottom line to ensure that their unit acquires needed resources. Successful negotiation mandates the use of the leadership components of self-confidence and risk taking. If these attributes are not present, the leader/manager has little power in negotiation and thus compromises the unit's ability to secure desired resources. Other attributes that make leaders effective in negotiation are sensitivity to others and the environment and interpersonal communication skills. The leader's use of assertive communication skills, rather than tactics, results in an acceptable level of satisfaction for all parties at the close of the negotiation.

## KEY CONCEPTS

- *Conflict* can be defined as the internal discord that results from differences in ideas, values, or feelings of two or more people.
- Because managers have a variety of interpersonal relationships with people with different values, beliefs, backgrounds, and goals, conflict is an expected outcome.
- Conflict theory has changed dramatically during the last 100 years. Currently, conflict is viewed as neither good nor bad because it can produce growth or destroy depending on how it is managed.
- Too little conflict results in organizational stasis, whereas too much conflict reduces the organization's effectiveness and eventually immobilizes its employees.
- The three categories of conflict are *intrapersonal*, *interpersonal*, and *intergroup*.
- The first stage in the conflict process is called *latent conflict*. Latent conflict implies the existence of antecedent conditions. Latent conflict may proceed to *perceived* or *felt* conflict. *Manifest conflict* also may occur. The last stage in the process is *conflict aftermath*.
- The optimal goal in conflict resolution is creating a win-win solution for everyone involved.
- When using *compromise* as an approach to conflict resolution, parties of equal power give up something that they want.
- The *competing* approach to conflict resolution is used when one party pursues what it wants at the expense of the other parties.



- In the conflict resolution strategy of *accommodating*, one person sacrifices his or her beliefs and wants to allow the other party to win.
- *Smoothing* is a conflict resolution strategy used to reduce the emotional component of the conflict.
- In *avoiding*, the parties involved are aware of a conflict but choose not to acknowledge it or attempt to resolve it.
- *Collaborating* is an assertive and cooperative means of conflict resolution that results in a win-win solution. Both parties set aside their original goals and work together to establish a supraordinate or common goal.
- The most common sources of organizational conflict are communication problems, organizational structure, and individual behavior within the organization.
- Negotiation may be competitive or collaborative, but collaborative negotiation generally has a more positive outcome.
- As a negotiator, it is important to win as much as possible, lose as little as possible, and make the other party feel satisfied with the outcome of the negotiation.
- Because knowledge is power, the more informed a negotiator, the greater his or her bargaining power.
- The leader, while able to recognize and counter negotiation tactics, always strives to achieve an honest, collaborative approach to negotiation.
- The manager must know his or her *bottom line* but try never to use it.
- Closure and follow-up are important parts of the negotiation process.
- Seeking *consensus*, a concord of opinion, although time-consuming, is an effective conflict resolution and negotiation strategy.

## ADDITIONAL LEARNING EXERCISES

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.5

In the following situations, choose the most appropriate approach to conflict resolution. Support your decision with rationale, and explain why other methods of conflict management were not used.

#### Situation 1

You are a circulating nurse in the operating room. Usually you are assigned to Room 3 for general surgery, but today you have been assigned to Room 4, the orthopedic room. You are unfamiliar with the orthopedic doctors' routines and attempt to brush up on them quickly before each case today by reading the doctors' preference cards before each case. So far, you have managed to complete two cases without incident. The next case comes in the room, and you realize everyone is especially tense; this patient is the wife of a local physician, and the doctors are performing a bone biopsy for possible malignancy. You prepare the area to be

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biopsied, and the surgeon, who has a reputation for a quick temper, enters the room. You suddenly realize that you have prepared the area with Betadine, and this surgeon prefers another solution. He sees what you have done and yells, "You are a stupid, stupid nurse."

#### Situation 2

You are the intensive care unit charge nurse and have just finished an exhausting 8 hours on duty. Working with you today were two nurses who work 12-hour shifts. You have each been assigned two patients, all with high acuity levels. You are glad that you are going out of town tonight to attend an important seminar, because you are certainly tired. You also are pleased that you scheduled yourself an 8-hour shift today and that your relief is coming through the door. You will just have time to give report and catch your plane.

It is customary for 12-hour nurses to continue with their previous patients and for assignments not to be changed when 8-hour and 12-hour staff are working together. Therefore, you proceed to give report on your patients to the 8-hour nurse coming on duty. One of your patients is acutely ill with fever of unknown origin and is in the isolation room. It is suspected that he has meningitis. Your other patient is a multiple trauma victim. In the middle of your report, the oncoming nurse says that she has just learned that she is pregnant. She says, "I can't take care of a possible meningitis patient. I'll have to trade with one of the 12-hour nurses." You approach the 12-hour nurses, and they respond angrily, "We took care of all kinds of patients when we were pregnant, and we are not changing patients with just 4 hours left in our shift." When you repeat this message to the oncoming nurse, she says, "Either they trade or I go home!" Your phone call to the nursing office reveals that because of a flu epidemic, there are absolutely no personnel to call in, and all the other units are already short-staffed.

#### Situation 3

You are an RN graduate of a BSN nursing program. Since you graduated 6 months ago, you have been working at an outpatient emergency clinic and have just recently begun to feel more confident in your new role. However, one of the older diploma nurses working with you constantly belittles baccalaureate nursing education. Whenever you request assistance in problem solving or in learning a new skill, she says, "Didn't they teach you anything in nursing school?" The clinic supervisor has given you a satisfactory 3-month and 6-month evaluations, but you are becoming increasingly defensive regarding the comments of the other nurse.

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.6

Often one group is more powerful or has greater status and refuses to relinquish this power position, thus making collaboration impossible. Therefore, negotiating a compromise to a win-win solution, rather than a lose-lose solution, becomes imperative. In the following situation, describe if you could and how you would go about negotiating a win-win solution to conflict.

You are a member of a senior baccalaureate nursing class. In your college, students may elect to accelerate through their course work by combining

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their last two semesters. Consequently, you find that you are one of 16 students electing to combine and have been placed in a class of 32 nonaccelerating seniors. The class has begun work on its end-of-program ceremony in which the students receive nursing pins. Each group in this class (the 16-member group and the 32-member group) appears to have differing philosophies and values about nursing and, because this is the first time they have spent any time together, they do not know each other well. The committee meetings for the end-of-program ceremony have become a series of arguments and battles. The conflict has accelerated to the point at which it has begun to be destructive, as evidenced by some name calling.

The major conflict centers on traditionalists versus nontraditionalists. The 16 students who form the smaller group want a nontraditional ceremony, and the students who make up the larger group want a traditional ceremony.

The faculty member who is the liaison has become alarmed at the situation and has come to you as the leader of the smaller group and to the leader of the larger group and told both of you that she will cancel the ceremony if the conflict is not resolved. The faculty member agrees to give you 2 hours of class time to facilitate the resolution. The leader of the large group tells you she will give you the entire 2 hours to negotiate a compromise. She feels a need to compromise but believes your skill at facilitating a negotiated settlement is greater than hers. She wants the conflict resolved in a win-win situation so that no parties leave angry.

**ASSIGNMENT:** How would you plan to approach the group? What strategies would you use? Explain your rationale. Remember, you wish to negotiate a compromise, and although you desire a win-win solution, you are limited in time and may not be able to facilitate a total collaboration. What is your plan? What is your bottom line?

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.7

You are a woman who is a unit manager with a master's degree in health administration. You are about to present your proposed budget to the CEO. You have thoroughly researched your budget and have adequate rationale to support your requests for increased funding. Because the CEO is often moody, predicting his response is difficult.

You also are aware that the CEO has some very traditional views about women's role in the workplace, and generally this does not include a major management role. Because he is fairly paternalistic, he is charmed and flattered when asked to assist "his" nurses with their jobs. Your predecessor was fired because she was perceived as brash, bossy, and disrespectful by the CEO. In fact, the former unit manager was one of a series of nursing managers who had been replaced in the last several years because of these characteristics. From what you have been told, these perceptions were not shared by the nursing staff.

You sit down and begin to plan your strategy for this meeting. You are aware that you are more likely to have your budgetary needs met if you dress conservatively, beseech his assistance and support throughout the presentation, and are fairly passive in your approach. In other words, you will be required to assume a

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traditionally feminine, helpless role. If you appear capable and articulate, you may not achieve your budgetary goals and may not even keep your job. It would probably not be necessary for you to continue to act this way, except in your interactions with the CEO.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Are such behavioral tactics appropriate if the outcome is desirable? Are such tactics simply smart negotiation, or are they destructively manipulative? What would you do in this situation? Outline your strategy for your budget presentation, and present rationale for your choices.

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.8

You are the head nurse of the new oncology unit. It is time for your first budget presentation to administration. You have already presented your budget to the director of nurses, and although she had a few questions, she was in general agreement. However, it is the policy at Memorial Hospital that each head nurse present her budget to the budget committee, consisting of the fiscal manager, the director of nurses, a member of the board of trustees, and the executive director. You know money is scarce this year because of the new building, but you really believe you need the increases you have requested in your budget. Basically, you have asked for the following:

- Replace the 22% aides on your unit with 10% LVNs/LPNs and 12% RNs.
- Increase educational time paid by 5% to allow for certification in chemotherapy.
- Provide a new position of clinical nurse specialist in oncology.
- Convert one room into a sitting room and mini-kitchen for patients' families.
- Add shelves and a locked medication box in each room to facilitate primary nursing.
- Provide no new equipment; replace existing equipment that is broken or outdated.

**ASSIGNMENT:** Outline your plan. Include your approach, what is and what is not negotiable, and what arguments you would use. Give rationale for your plan.

### LEARNING EXERCISE 16.9

You are the supervisor of a rehabilitation unit. Two of your youngest nursing assistants come to your office today to report that a young male quadriplegic patient has been making lewd sexual comments and gestures when they provide basic care. When you question them about their response to the actions of the patient, they maintain that they normally simply look away and try to ignore him, although they are offended by his actions. They are very reluctant to confront the patient directly.

Because it is anticipated that this patient may remain on your unit for at least 1 month, the nursing assistants have asked you to intervene in this conflict by either talking to the patient or by assigning other nurses responsibility for his care.

**ASSIGNMENT:** How will you handle this staff-patient conflict? Is avoidance (assigning different staff to care for the patient) an appropriate conflict resolution

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strategy in this situation? Will you encourage the nursing assistants to confront the patient directly? What coaching or role playing might you use with them if you choose this approach? Will you confront the patient yourself? What might you say?

## Web Links

University of California, Riverside/American Political Science Association:

<http://www.apsanet.org/~conflict>

*Conflict processes, datasets, a small working-paper archive, and a newsletter.*

Conflict Resolution: Gale Encyclopedia of Psychology:

[http://www.findarticles.com/cf\\_dis/g2602/0001/2602000156/p1/article.jhtml](http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dis/g2602/0001/2602000156/p1/article.jhtml)

*Focuses on the process of defusing antagonism and reaching agreement between conflicting parties, especially through some form of negotiation.*

Conflict Management:

<http://www.wku.edu/~parryle/BA510Class5>

*Explains why conflict management is important and shows the deficiencies in existing approaches.*

Conflict Process:

<http://mindprod.com/conflict.html>

*Ken Keyes' "living love" methods of the conflict process.*

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