

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY QUILTERS' GUILD (PECQG)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

In any organization there will be conflicts between members, committees, departments etc. Members within an organization typically have a vested interest in the positive aspects of the organization and are committed to seeing it thrive and grow. Conflicts often happen when the direction of the organization is not communicated adequately or when one or more of the members independently decides that one way to achieve the goals is inherently better than another member or other members' ways of doing the same. Conflicts that are handled well usually allow the organization to move forward in a positive manner.

There have been recent as well as previous instances of conflict in the PECQG and unfortunately not all of them have been handled in the best manner possible. The following guidelines are being presented to the membership in hopes that any future conflicts can be resolved in a respectful and positive manner.

TYPES OF CONFLICT

There are three common types of conflict within any organization.

1. Task conflict
2. Relationship conflict
3. Value conflict

Task conflicts often involve concrete issues related to task assignments. They can include disputes about how to divide up resources, differences of opinion on procedures and policies, managing expectations, and the interpretation of facts.

Relationship conflicts arise from differences in personality, style, taste, etc.

Value conflicts arise from different cultures, upbringing, etc.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION COMPONENTS

There are three main components to ensure a successful resolution of a conflict.

1. Open communication
2. Collaboration

3. Respect

RECOMMENDED STEPS TO FOLLOW

In all conflicts, each side will seek out support for their position. This often leads to gossip and rumours, typically not totally based on facts. Both sides of a conflict should attempt to ensure that gossip and rumours are minimized throughout this process so that the best results for everyone involved can be achieved.

1. The first step is for one or both people involved to identify that there is a conflict of some sort. Whenever possible, the conflicted parties should attempt to discuss the conflict to see if it can be resolved between themselves. If a resolution is reached and it seems to affect the Guild's policies/procedures, see step 4. below.
2. If it is not possible for the conflicted parties to work out the conflict between themselves, one or both should approach a possible Mediator. The Mediator must be willing and comfortable to take on this position, ensuring that they would be unbiased in the mediation process. The Mediator must also be familiar with the Guild's processes and procedures. Both conflicted parties must agree to accept the Mediator. The Mediator will ensure that each party can respectfully state what their perspective is, and then be able to ask questions for any needed clarification. The conflicted parties should attempt to separate the person from the problem and to try to find some common ground. This will usually result in a better understanding by both parties, and potentially a collaborative solution to the issue at hand.
3. If a resolution cannot be reached through the Mediator, the issue may be escalated to a Member of the Executive Committee. If a resolution cannot be reached through the Member of the Executive Committee, that Member may suggest a final resolution. If one of the conflicted parties is not satisfied with this final resolution, then a personal decision may be required.
4. If the solution to the conflict affects other policies or procedures of the Guild, then a discussion with the Executive Committee, or a representative of it, is required asap. The Executive Committee or a representative of it will determine what the next steps will be. These could include possible changes to existing policies/procedures, or the creation of new policies/procedures.