



Resolving conflict

THE CRISIS COUNSELOR'S ROLE IN
PROMOTING POSITIVE SOLUTIONS

FEBRUARY 2020

Magellan
HEALTHCARE®



1. Assess whether the customer's conflict can be addressed within the Magellan model.

2. Apply positive solution-focused therapy techniques to conflicted situations.

3. Apply the standard model for two employees in conflict.

Magellan's conflict resolution services require the following elements:



- ✓ Human resource representative or member of management must take responsibility for monitoring and coordinating the services.
- ✓ Management must agree that the services are fully confidential.
- ✓ Participation must be voluntary.
- ✓ Participants must agree to utilize a positive solution-focused approach.



Positive solution-focused approach



- ✓ Avoids rehashing the past and debating who's at fault.

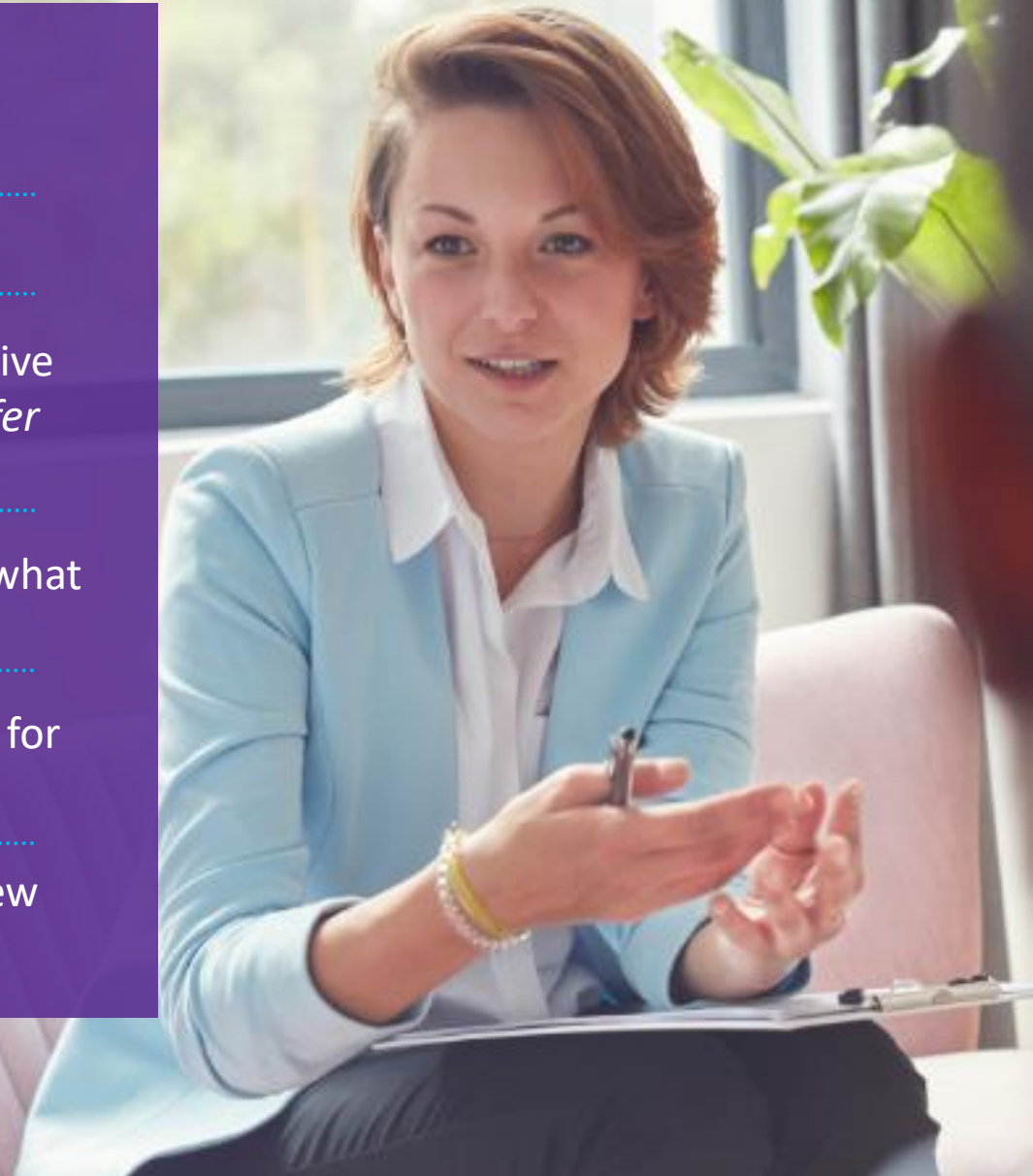
- ✓ Focuses on problem solving.

- ✓ Asks participants to take a positive approach: *What would you prefer instead of the conflict?*

- ✓ Aids participants in identifying what has helped in the past.

- ✓ Encourages participants to look for exceptions to the problems.

- ✓ Suggests experimenting with new behaviors that could help.



First session: Meet with the individual employee



1

Assess employee's motivation to change

Provide *one* opportunity to let the individual say anything on her/his mind, as this can help reduce the continuation of negative emotions and help her/him move forward.



2

Ask probing questions

- What are your best hopes?
- What will be different once the conflict resolves?
- What would you like to see different, and how do you think it can be achieved?
- What does it look like when you both get along?
- How have you both handled disagreements or conflicts in the past?
- What would help you get back on track and keep you focused on moving forward?



3

Ask the *miracle question*

- Envision going to sleep and when you wake up the next morning, your relationship with co-worker is just as you want it to be:
 - What would that look like?
 - How would you handle/address this?
- Let that be your guide...start doing what you imagined.



4

Ask the employee to rate the conflict

- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1=pure conflict, 10=pure collaboration:
 - Where would you say you are right now?
 - Where do you hope to arrive in the end?

Second session: Meet with **both** employees



1

Throughout the meeting, compliment both employees

- On progress they have made in the individual meetings.
- On their commitment to moving forward to resolve their conflict.



2

Remind them about the positive solution-focused approach



3

Ask questions

- What has improved?
- How have you achieved this?



4

Ask them to rate the conflict now

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1=pure conflict, 10=pure collaboration:

- Why/how did you get there?
- What would *one* mark higher look like?
- What are the next steps?
- What would you do differently?
- What can you do yourself, and what do you need from your coworker?



5

Share/solicit feedback

- Compliment them on positive steps taken.
- Encourage each to act as if they have already reached the next mark.
- Enquire if they have found meetings helpful and if/when they'd like to meet again.

Recap positive solution-focused approach

- ✓ Avoids focusing on the problems.
- ✓ Does focus on history of success.
- ✓ Assumes employees in conflict have not had a history of the problems 100% of the time.
- ✓ Assumes that currently there are times the employees get along better than others.



Recap positive solution-focused approach (continued)

- ✓ Asks the employees to identify what they were doing differently during more positive periods and moments.
- ✓ Asks the employees if they can return to those more positive and successful behaviors.
- ✓ Recognizes that employees often can simply decide to do better.
- ✓ Asks the *miracle question* to help participants maintain a positive focus.



Let's review the standard model for two employees

1

A manager or human resource representative must be involved.

2

Initially the counselor meets individually with both employees to ensure they are willing to utilize the positive solution-focused approach.

3

Employee participation must be voluntary.

4

The counselor then consults with the designated follow-up clinician, to determine whether services can move forward.

5

Individual sessions are also an option.

6

If services can move forward, the counselor returns to meet jointly with the two employees.

7

Management participation is typically minimal.

Conflict resolution services are not recommended in these scenarios:



One of the employees has a **delusional or personality disorder.**



One or both of the employees are **not able to take a positive approach.**



Management doesn't support the process.

References



- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>
- Bannink, F. (2009). *Solution Focused Conflict Management in Teams and Organisations*. Author's website. Retrieved Feb. 1, 2020, from https://www.fredrikebannink.com/bannink/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Art_SF_Conflict_Management_in_Teams_and_in_Organisations.pdf



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