



DAR Leadership Training – Webinars Narration Script for Presentation

Conflict Resolution Donna Elin, National Chairman DAR Leadership Training February 26, 2013

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Good Afternoon and Welcome! My name is Donna Elin and I will be presenting today's webinar, Conflict Resolution

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If you search on Google and type in Conflict Resolution – you will have nearly 40 million hits. Conflict Resolution is a broad subject and all the answers cannot be covered in one initial webinar. Building the skills to conflict resolution is a journey....you can't be an expert in an hour; it takes skills, patience and practice.

But what we hope that after viewing this webinar

- you will understand the typical causes of conflicts that may arise within your chapter or state ,
- you will have good foundation to approaching a resolution,
- and you will recognize the leadership traits and skills that will help you manage and resolve conflicts.

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What makes DAR unique is that we are women's service organization with over 175,000 members worldwide. As individuals, we represent different cultures and values.

As a group, we volunteer our time and our talents to preserve history, promote education, and instill patriotism. When we provide service *for* our organization, we receive the rewards of sharing our time with other members who share the same objectives of our society.

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Have you ever spent a lot of time and effort on a project, then only to receive criticism as your reward? In a professional setting, we have to take this feedback objectively – it comes with the job.

But things are *different* with volunteers.

- We might have expectations that members do things a certain way,
- But they might not finish the project in the way we imagined it.
- We forget that with each member, she does things differently.
- And we forget that members make mistakes such as arriving late to a meeting or how to make a motion.

It is normal to feel frustrated and our response determines whether conflict follows.

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For the next 35 minutes our agenda will cover

- What causes conflict
- What is conflict resolution
- Step-by-Step Resolution Approach
- Useful skills and traits
- What to do in several DAR scenarios
- And we will conclude with questions and answers.



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Volunteers and members give time and energy to the organization where they serve. Despite all best intentions sometimes conflict occurs. After all, two people can't be expected to agree on everything at all times.

What is conflict? A conflict is a direct opposition; a clash or disagreement between people. Conflict is normal, and can be healthy if managed correctly.

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There is no denial that conflict causes individual stress. But how can it affect your chapter? Chapter conflicts may result in lower attendance, lower participation, and reduced cooperation. This may lead to an

- More resignations and transfers out
- attention taken away from other DAR activities
- Members being less motivated to accomplish the goals of the society.

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Let's take a poll - Examine the questions on this slide and choose all that apply to you.

- Have you ever had a disagreement with a member?
- Have you ever felt disrespected, hurt or upset by the actions of a member?
- Have you or that other person held grudges and there continues to be a barrier today?
- Do you wish that you or she could just get over it and move on?

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Where do we encounter conflict? It seems Everywhere!

Conflicts are experienced at home, at work, with our friends, and in social and professional organizations.

Conflict means different things to different people. Some of the causes of conflict include personality styles, unclear responsibilities, misunderstandings and change. Look at this slide for a moment and think about the conflict you might be experiencing in your chapter?

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We have listed 6 conflict scenarios that members might have experienced within their chapter.

1. Miscommunication: A committee member missed a chapter meeting only to learn the chapter regent was upset as the member was supposed to give a report. Did one side not communicate enough information to the other side, did someone misinterpret the real meaning of someone's words.
2. Different Personalities and Difficult People provide one of the most common sources of conflict. In one example, chapter officers feel that their chapter regent is unkind to some members. Her attitude is negatively impacting the chapter and affecting membership attendance.
3. Lack of Leadership: Some active members feel that unclear goals and ineffective chapter leadership has caused division in the chapter.

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4. Change can be difficult for many people. Often times change occurs when chapter meeting times switch, new leadership begins, or there are changes in procedures and organizing new chapters.



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5. People use their values and beliefs to guide their actions and behaviors. Our values are things that we deem important such as equality and honesty. Our beliefs on the other hand are assumptions that we make about the world. They apply not only how we see ourselves but also how we see other people. Chapter members will have different ideas for handling situations based on their values and beliefs, 6. Chapters politics and power struggles can leave members feeling left out and resentful. It is usually one of the reasons why members resign or transfer. Some chapters may have encountered power struggles such as a past officer continues to monopolize meeting time and appears not to want to give up her past position.

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Personality Styles or Difficult People might be the most difficult cause of conflict to address in DAR, so of the ones we mentioned, which would be the next hardest cause of conflict to resolve?

- Miscommunication – failure to communicate clearly
- Lack of Leadership - unclear goals, unclear responsibilities and ineffective chapter leadership
- Changes - new administration brings new policies; new meeting times or locations, organizing a new chapter
- Values/Beliefs – members will have different ideas for handling conflict situations based on values/beliefs
- Politics and Power Struggle – a past officer doesn't want to give up her past position

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Next we will answer - What is Conflict Resolution

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What is conflict resolution? Conflict Resolution is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement, The disagreement may be personal, financial, political, or emotional.

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The goals of conflict resolution are

- to come to a solution to which all parties can agree
- to work as quickly as possible to find a solution
- and, to improve, not hurt, the relationship between the conflicted groups.

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The term "conflict" is associated with negative encounters, but conflict itself is neither inherently good nor bad. In fact, engaging in conflict can have positive effects. Here are some positive sides to conflict

- Resolving conflict is quicker and more efficient than letting conflicts fester.
- Conflict can show that problems exist.
- Conflict requires creativity to find the best outcomes.
- It raises awareness of what is important to individuals.
- Managing conflicts appropriately help build self-esteem and is a sign of maturity.
- Conflict encourages people to grow.
- It creates opportunity.



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To get ready for the key steps to conflict resolution, let's see if you know this definition.

To try to see things from another's point of view is called "showing..."

- empathy
- etiquette
- tact
- sympathy

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When you try to see things from another's point of view, it is called showing EMPATHY. In the following slides, you will see how this can help you with conflict resolution

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Let's review a step by step approach to resolution

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There are many different approaches to resolving conflict and there is no easy solution, "silver bullet" or "magic pill".

We studied many approaches and put together a Step-by-Step approach that may help you in many DAR situations.

Here are the steps

1. Can this problem be realistically solved?
2. Gather and review all the facts
3. Understand all perspectives
4. Brainstorm ideas to get to resolution.
5. Make decisions

Let's look at each step more closely.

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Can this problem realistically be solved? Some conflicts might seem impossible to fix or it might not be worth to try and resolve. Here are a few questions to ask yourself before deciding:

Can current bylaws or parliamentary procedure help clarify a situation

How important is the relationship?

Do you have any power of influence?

Do you believe both parties are willing to compromise?

Is time of importance?

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Once you decide you are going to pursue a resolution – next is to understand the issue. Gather and review the facts. What really is the conflict about? Could there be other underlying issues? Are others having the same conflict? Do all parties understand that the conflict may be a mutual problem?

The more you understand the problem, and the facts, the less personal you will make the conflict.

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Next Understand All Perspectives of the parties involved.

Know yourself - know when you get frustrated or things you might say.



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Be a leader – listen to each point of view.

Present your facts you have gathered and reviewed

Put yourself in other people's shoes so you can better empathize and identify with the other person.

Taking the time to see a situation from someone else's view might reveal a compromise.

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Now that you understand the problem, have gathered the facts surrounding the problem, and have looked at all points of view, now, make a list of all possible ways to resolve the issues!

Brainstorming generates ideas to a solution. Go through the ideas and share ideas with both parties.

During this exercise, be open, be positive and be kind when looking at all your options.

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Once everyone knows the options, choose the ones that create the best chance for success while keeping in mind what is best for the chapter, state and the National Society.

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This is one approach to resolution. With the conflict that you have, have you thought whether this approach might work?

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Let's take another poll now that we know one approach to reach resolution. Which activities might be good to apply during the Step By Step conflict resolution?

- Ask the other member what she wants
- Focus on the problem, not the person
- Continue until conflict is resolved when emotions are running high
- All the above
- A, and B

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Did you choose E?

Definitely ask the other member what she wants while sticking to the problem at hand.. Focus on the problem, not the person. (The answer is E: A and B)

D is not one of the answers as don't want to continue the conversation if emotions are running high - take time to cool off before beginning negotiations.

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Let's look at a few skills and traits that will help you through the resolution approach.

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There are several skills and traits that will assist you as you work through the Step-by-Step approach.

On the following slides, we will review some of the skills you can learn, some personal and leadership traits that will be valuable as you resolve conflict, and finally, suggested ways to cope with stressful situations.



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You may be familiar with the *Myers Briggs* personality test, which tells us that the way normal people prefer-- to approach things --reveals their personalities, their differences and their preferences. Your personality type governs how you obtain energy to get yourself going, how you see and perceive things in the world, how you make decisions, how you manage and organize your life and work *and* how all of these differences can bring about misunderstandings. Understanding other personality types can help with resolution, but **understanding yourself** is most important and will get you there faster.

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Improving certain skills may help resolve or prevent conflict. Practice your listening skills which include good eye contact and posture. Allow the other member to speak without interrupting. If you know you will be having a one on one discussion, rehearse the situation to avoid becoming over emotional. Have a willingness to change, be open to others ideas, and adjust to other situations. Be sure to realize that some scenarios will never please everyone, but still try to find small common interests.

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Possessing key personal traits will help you in your resolution efforts.

- Most people view your intentions as honorable when they see you as loyal and trustworthy.
- When you show respect to others, it prevents misunderstandings.
- Showing empathy will help resolve conflict.
- Try to understand what motivates other members and be sure to communicate your motivations with them. Support the leaders and your other chapter members, remembering you are part of a team.

And improve these personal traits to enhance your leadership skills

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Look at those leaders you respect – you can see the Traits that our leaders have:

- Being Proactive – avoid problems before they arise
- Good communicator – listen, work to understand the needs of the members, share your plans and ideas
- Flexibility - ?unexpected situations? Adapt to the new situations and doing your best to adjust
- Respectfulness – care about others like you care about yourself
- Confidence – recognize your talents
- Enthusiasm – be motivated and excited about your chapter, others will follow
- Open to Change – take all views into account and be willing to change when a policy is out of date or no longer beneficial
- Organized – prepare for meetings and events
- Delegation – cannot do it all - delegate tasks to those with talents and interest
- Initiative – going beyond “doing the job”

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Even with all the conflict resolution knowledge and experience you have, you will more than likely encounter a stressful situation. Here are a few techniques to consider:



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1. Have the Right Attitude –

- Strongly emphasize a partnership atmosphere. State clearly that you see conflict resolution in which you need each other.
- Seek first to understand then to be understood

2. Use the Right Words

- Attempt to change the language of the conversation, steering away from “I” and “me” and towards “we” and “our”, thus reinforcing teamwork

3. Move Towards the Right Results

- Encourage one other to talk about what the issue really is
- Share options
- Think of what is best for the chapter , state and the National Society.

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There are many personal traits that can help one prevent or resolve conflict. Let’s take another poll to see if you can guess one of the traits.

The personal trait that includes loyalty and trustworthiness is

- responsibility.
- self-esteem.
- integrity/honesty.
- self-management.

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The answer is C. The trait of loyalty and trustworthiness is integrity and honesty. This is important trait when it comes to resolving conflict.

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Let’s now review some ideas you, your leaders or members might consider to the common DAR conflict scenarios we mentioned earlier.

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Remember the Scenario about Miscommunication - a committee member missed a chapter meeting only to find out the chapter regent was upset that a report was not given.

This scenario is a misunderstanding between the member and the Chapter Regent, or a lack of communication from the regent to the member or the member to the regent. One of the first methods to use in combating miscommunication is to get both parties together and clarify the issues

The relationship is important enough for the committee member and can understand why the Regent might be frustrated.

The member can clear up any current and future misunderstanding by calling the regent. If they are both open to compromise, they can come up with a solution so these misunderstandings won’t happen.

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The truth is that every one of us has come across unpleasant people in our personal and professional lives. Dealing with difficult people is a topic in itself– but let’s use the skills that we have and see how we might approach the regent whose attitude is negatively impacting the chapter.



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- If the two players must work together, consider introducing a third party, preferably one with some seniority. Perhaps schedule a relaxing lunch with all conflicted parties
- Discuss the facts (e.g. losing members because of negativity)
- Remind all parties the traits of a leader
- Listen and gather ideas from the regent – maybe there's more going on than you know
- Work together to get ideas to stop the negativity and change the mood of the chapter to a positive environment.

Dealing with difficult people and different personalities won't be easy and there are many resources available including books, articles and training. These will help you moves towards being a confident leader and managing conflict better.

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With the Lack of Leadership scenario - some active members feel that the chapter was being divided due to ineffective chapter leadership.

The committee member might:

- ask another trusting member with seniority to assist
- Talk to regent right directly after the issue occurs. Delaying feedback loses its effect.
- Be specific and objective when discussing issues
 - *"I'd like to talk to you about what happened during our chapter meeting today"*
- Ensure that you maintain the regent's self-esteem - listen to her concerns
- Work together to get ideas to start instilling the traits of a leader

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Change will occur in chapters. Some members can handle and embrace change more than others.

Here are some ideas for leaders and for members:

Leadership

- Needs to be proactive about communicating the facts of the change
- Needs to provide the why, how, what, who, when etc. with the changes in their communication messages
- Empowers others to get involved in the change - Participation in decision making gives people a sense of involvement

Members

- Remember that Change is necessary in organizations that wish to prosper and grow
- Change, like life, won't always be perfect, you won't know if you don't try.

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Each one of us handles conflict differently based on our beliefs and values. Whether it is right or wrong, good or bad. No two people ever have the same life experience, so we ultimately have different sets of values and beliefs that guide our decisions and behavior.

The important thing in trying to resolve conflict is to remember:

- Some conflicts might be resolved by applying bylaws.
- Read up on NSDAR policies
- To think and act like a leader – you could be a role model to the next new member
- to know our society's objectives of historic preservation, education and patriotism



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- To respect and be understanding of differences which will broaden horizons, and help members become more informed
- To ask questions, listen to the answers, be sensitive, and build trust.

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Finally with the Politics and Power struggles scenario– a past officer didn’t want to give up her past position.

Understanding the facts or where the past officer is coming from will be helpful. You might say , “From what I understand, you think this is an expensive chapter project.”

As always, read Robert’s Rule of Order or check with your chapter/state parliamentarian if you don’t know how to make sure that members are heard, but are not taking over the meeting.

AND

- Be aware of any obstacle that clouds your peace of mind, or anything prevents the fulfillment of the society’s objectives.
- And, once you gain clarity to these obstacles, you might be surprised that you can change any situation, no matter how difficult

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You are well on your way to learning to resolve conflict with all the ideas and approaches you have learned in this webinar. These along with these tips will now help you prevent conflict.

- Consider having frequent board meetings and allowing members to express themselves openly.
- Share the chapter objectives with all, while clearly defining the roles of each participant.
- Be sure to distribute tasks fairly...everyone wants to be involved.
- Make sure to be a role model, never criticizing the leadership or other members publicly.

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We’ve given you a lot of information in a short amount of time. Conflict Resolution is not easy, but it can be worthwhile for the DAR, for relationships and for you. .What might be your main “takeaway” or what one thing can you do today to change or approach conflict differently than you did before this webinar?

Respect and understand that people have different values and beliefs

- Put myself in other people’s shoes
- Remember to think of what’s best for the National Society, the chapter and state
- Enhance my listening skills
- Think through the facts

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Before we end our webinar, let’s review what we learned and where you can go for more information

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WE have learned

- The causes of conflicts in our organization which will help how we want to approach resolution
- We learned a step-by-step approach to conflict resolution
- We recognize leadership traits and skills to help to achieve conflict resolution
- Solution ideas for certain DAR conflict scenarios to consider



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- We are thinking about how to best approach a current conflict that we are facing in our chapter

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Be sure to...

- Read the DAR Handbook and talk to experience Dar members to be more knowledgeable in the DAR
- Study parliamentary procedures and Roberts Rules of Order to help you guide your meetings
- Ensure officers and committee chairman know their roles
- Know how you handle conflict and find ways to improve your conflict resolution skills
- Realize that conflict can be a healthy sign of your chapter, increasing creativity and action.

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Thank you for attending the Conflict Resolution. We hope you gained further knowledge and skills in dealing with conflicts.

If you have any questions, please contact me at leadershiptraining@dar.org