

Value of conflict



Purpose: To help members understand the value of conflict and hearing opposing points of view.

Materials: Paper and pens or pencils for note taking.

Time: Dependent on group size.

1. Identify an issue for which there are differing points of view.
2. Have group members research the issue outside of the meeting time and prepare a persuasive case for their position.
3. Ask each member to present the argument in a compelling, interesting way and to try to avoid redundancy with others.
4. Allow each member to refute the opposing viewpoint and to rebut criticism of his or her position.
5. Have members reverse roles and present the opposing viewpoint as persuasively as possible.
6. Have the group work to integrate members' positions from the discussion.

Source: **Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., & Tjosvold, D. (2000).** Constructive controversy: The value of intellectual opposition. In M. Deutsch & P.T. Coleman (Eds.), *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice* (pp. 65-85). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.