

Apply Strategies for Changing Difficult Behaviors

When a leader is experiencing a personal conflict with a co-worker on the committee, the leader must approach the behaviors he/she would like to change in a strategic manner rather than becoming defensive. Acknowledgement and positive change may be initiated when a peer privately addresses how the difficult behaviors between two co-workers is disrupting the group performance. When a leader is angry and begins to attack a co-worker, the disagreement becomes personal rather than business, thus shifting focus from the actual issues that demand resolution. Utilizing the following four “Methods for Changing Difficult Behaviors” (Cloke, 2011 pp. 215-218), the other members can help to address which words and actions have been exhibited that are disturbing the committee.

Surfacing the Conflict – Anonymously polling the committee members regarding their observations will more clearly identify exactly what difficult behaviors are being observed and how they are affecting the group. Once identified, the committee can help generate ideas on how to address and resolve those behaviors.

Teamwork – As a committee, it is important that all members participate and contribute as the outcome affects everyone. By breaking the committee into smaller teams, each member is given the opportunity to relay their concerns and solutions. When the teams come back together and present their thoughts to the entire committee, members are afforded the opportunity to expand on each other’s ideas and present new considerations that may not have been previously addressed.

Process Awareness – Difficult behaviors often present themselves when a person does not feel heard. When group members relay frequent and honest feedback, it allows for goals to be defined more clearly and supports a collaborative effort to problem solving. The process by which the group is interacting should allow for maximum participation of all members and not allow any one person to dominate the conversation.

Shared Responsibility – Often, group members sit back and allow the difficult behavior to continue while becoming frustrated that the tasks are not being accomplished. When everyone accepts a more active role to support the change in behavior, it allows for all members to exercise some control over the dynamics of the group when behaviors are becoming disruptive toward the group effort. Every member is encouraged to address the unwanted behavior either by slowing the conversation down and asking for clarification or even calling for a break to allow time for members to calm their emotions and collect their thoughts.

After using these methods the future committee meetings will be much more productive. By working together to inhibit responses made out of anger and personal attacks toward other members, the committee can focus on thoughtful and constructive communication to identify the reasons and rational why individuals believe the department should or should not make police changes. Only through this productive process will the committee come to the consensus necessary to provide the chief with comprehensive and thoroughly considered recommendations.

References: