

A PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESS: SUMMARY

STEP 1. REFLECTION AND CENTERING

- Step back and reflect on the situation.
- Consider your own intention, interests and hopes for the conversation.

STEP 2. SETTING THE TONE

- Invite the other person to a conversation.
- Be clear what it is that you want to talk about.
- State your intention for a positive resolution.

STEP 3. SHARING PERSPECTIVES

- Ask the other person to describe the situation from her/his perspective.
- Briefly paraphrase what you have heard, the facts and, if overt, the feelings. Ask for clarification if necessary. Continue to ask and summarize until there is nothing else.
- Acknowledge your responsibility.
- Describe your perspective of the situation, including both what your concerns are and, if appropriate, how you feel about the situation. Be specific.

STEP 4. BUILDING UNDERSTANDING (Addressing Issues)

- List the issues that have to be addressed.
- Discuss one issue at a time. For each issue:
- Check out assumptions (intent>action>effect)
- Explore interests

STEP 5. CLOSURE AND AGREEMENTS

- Generate options for each issue.
- Work out solutions that both people can agree to.
- Summarize and clarify agreement.
- Determine the agreement specifics.

For more information on the skills required for the Problem Solving Process, please check out the following courses: Difficult Conversations, Shifting from Positions to Interests and Assertive Communication.