

BACKGROUND

These discussions are designed to help you achieve a result where you and the other person agree together how best to resolve the problems between you.

To get there will almost certainly require a lot of detailed information to be exchanged about what is important to each of you. Looking at what happened that lead to the conflict is useful in generating examples of the things (language, principles, behaviour) that matter most to you – but the idea is to use these examples to focus on what they represent to you rather than as an opportunity to start a negative argument.

So it may be helpful for you to make a list of what happened as examples of the key issues you wish to discuss. From this list, you may then find it useful to consider what you would want agreement to in any solutions for the future, compared with the consequences of not reaching an agreement. It also helps if you can think about the same issues from the other person’s perspective. What would they want you to do?

The evidence is that the clearer you are about what you need to discuss, the less time the discussion will take, the less stressful it will be and the greater the likelihood you will reach a mutually acceptable outcome.

The sorts of questions you might ask yourself shown below is not an exhaustive list, but you may like to use it as the start of your preparation checklist.

TIMELINE

It may help you to organize your thoughts first by writing a timeline of what happened and when. Then, next to each, you could put the one word you feel best describes the issue this raises – i.e. communication; trust ; finance etc. Once you have done this, it may be easier to consider the next set of questions.

Date	What Happened	Issue Raised

This timeline could be shared before the meeting, so that each has an idea of the issues the other wishes to discuss, has time to think about them and knows that your own issues will be on the agenda. In this case, your thoughts on this page only could be emailed to the facilitator who would combine them and issue them before the discussions.

PREPARATION QUESTIONS

These questions would be private to you. They don't have to come with you unless this would help and you can use as much space as you want to.

1. WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF NOT REACHING A MUTUALLY SATISFYING AGREEMENT?

How would this conflict affect my work life if it continues?
How could this conflict affect my home life if it continues?

2. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF REACHING A MUTUALLY SATISFYING AGREEMENT?

How would my work life get better if I can reach agreement on the underlying issues?
How would my home life get better if I can reach agreement on the underlying issues?

3. WHAT ARE THE REAL UNDERLYING ISSUES TO THE CONFLICT?

From your Timeline review, what are they key issues that have arisen?

4. WHAT DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE FROM THE DISCUSSIONS?

What do I absolutely have to have agreed as part of any solution?
What can the other Person do to help me achieve this? What are the benefits to them and to me?
What do I think the other Person absolutely has to have?
What can I do to help them achieve that? What are the benefits to them and to me?
What is the best possible outcome I could hope for from the discussions?
What is the least favourable outcome of the discussions that I could accept?

OTHER POINTS I WANT TO RAISE
