

Resolving Project Stakeholder Differences

An Online Continuing Education Course for Engineers

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Resolving Project Stakeholder Differences

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COURSE OVERVIEW

This course takes the approach that at some point in your professional career, you will have to act as a calm voice of reason between two or more stakeholders with differences that threaten the success of the project.

We will help you understand the risk involved in a traditional “win-win” approach to resolving project stakeholder differences.



Then you will be able to develop a new strategy and supporting tactics that will either assure “satisfaction” on both sides or at least maintain good will if an agreement cannot be reached. You will learn to analyze the requirements of their satisfaction for every negotiating situation and develop tactics to achieve it.

It begins with a look at the major working styles of the stakeholders involved in the disagreement. Once you are able to identify these traits within each of the participants, you will be able to plan an effective strategy for resolution. Then we explore the fundamentals of differences resolution to identify the skills and concepts that apply in any kind of project setting. Finally, we show you how to lead the stakeholders into identifying what a successful relationship with each other would look like to them. It **does not** discuss developing or negotiating contracts, risk management, nor provide legal advice. Those topics are beyond the scope of this work.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, the student will know:

1. How to identify the four major working styles they will encounter on a project
2. Their own personal working style
3. How to take a flexible approach to deal with the different working style types that would be on a project
4. How to adapt their differences resolution tactics to work more effectively with styles unlike their own
5. How to view the situation through the eyes of the other side
6. How to develop an overall strategy for the upcoming intervention
7. How to select tactics for use that will support the selected strategy
8. How to approach and resolve these stakeholder differences more confidently
9. How to preserve good will even if you cannot reach agreement
10. How to ask questions that help you develop your strategy
11. How to use outside standards to reduce the potential for conflict
12. How recognize and deal with disruptive tactics from the either side
13. A variety of ways to close a differences resolution and get agreement
14. The value of “interests” and the danger of “positions” when constructing a differences resolution strategy
15. How to define what a successful outcome looks like from your perspective and theirs

RELATING TO YOUR PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

You probably have many team members with whom you get along very well because they seem to be a lot like you! Maybe it is the way they present their problem or the way they respond to your answers that makes you think you have a lot in common. Additionally, there are probably many with whom you feel absolutely no connection and it is difficult to deal with them successfully.

The reason may be that your individual *working style* –the way you interact with the world – is similar to some of your team’s working styles and very different from some others. This applies to stakeholders, too. Your interaction with them or their interaction with each other depends on individual working styles, too.

Before we can help you deal effectively with the various personalities with whom you may try to resolve differences, it is important that you know what your working style is so you can identify theirs. Once you are able to understand the clues and characteristics of the four major working styles, it will become easier for you to become flexible in your approach to others who display a different style than yours.

SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY

We all are *combinations of the four major working styles* and, depending on the situation, we may display different aspects of our individual style.

For example, at work we may allow the “take charge” aspect of our personality to lead others while after work, with friends, we may pull back the take-charge element and bring out the “friendly and feelings” aspect of us. Please remember this – we are a blend of these styles and the one that we call upon most is our working style.



Select the response in the following questions which is most likely how you would respond. The answers are neither right nor wrong. Just base your responses on how you are today, not how you think you need to be or want to be in the future.

1. When talking to a vendor or co-worker...

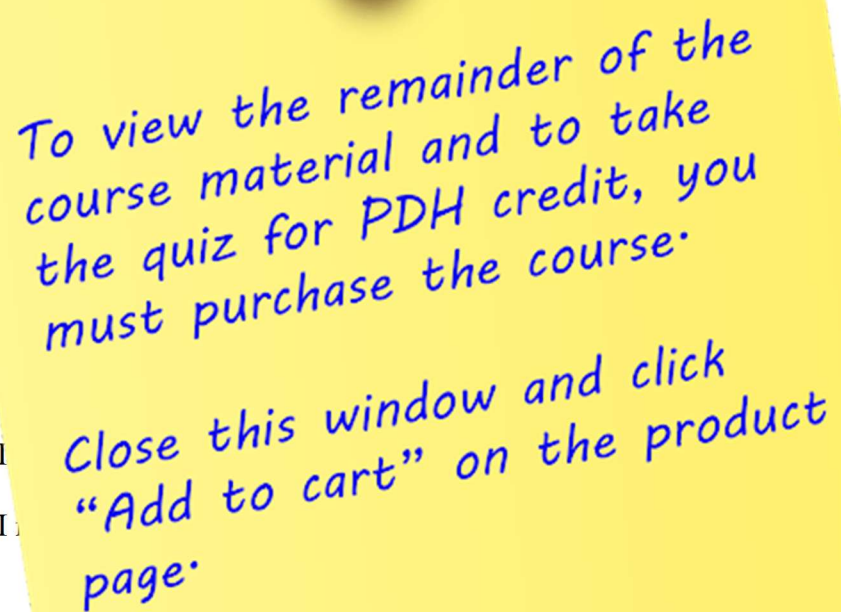
- a. I maintain eye contact the whole time.
- b. I alternate between eye contact and looking down.

2. If I have a question...

- a. I ask the person I am talking to.
- b. I ask a colleague.
- c. I look it up on the internet.
- d. I don't ask.

3. My office contains...

- a. Family photos and personal items displayed.
- b. Inspirational posters, awards, and art displayed.
- c. Graphs and charts displayed.
- d. Calendars and project outlines displayed.



To view the remainder of the course material and to take the quiz for PDH credit, you must purchase the course.

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