



CHAPTER 1

The Joy of Conflict

Driving along a four-lane road several years ago, I came up over a small hill. I knew this road well, had passed this way many times. This time, I noticed a major construction project under way at the gas station on the right-hand side. Workers were digging a hole right next to the road. This hole was huge. I was amazed at how deep it was. I was fascinated.

Have I mentioned the traffic light that was some fifty feet over that rise in the road? Unfortunately, I was much more interested in the size of the hole than I was in the road. Several cars were stopped at the red light just ahead. Cruising over the hill, I smacked into a car waiting there. I rammed into that car hard enough to get the attention of the car in *front* of the car that I had rear-ended. Pretty soon we were all milling around the cars, inspecting the damage.

In that moment, everybody noticed me. The people in the car I hit certainly noticed me. Those in the car in front of the car I hit noticed me. The cops came very quickly—they had also noticed. Later that day, my insurance company noticed.

Since then, I have gotten my car repaired and am back on the road. What I realized then was how many cars I do *not* hit, and that nobody

noticed. No one has ever gotten out of a car to come around and thank me for bringing my car to a complete stop before making contact with the rear bumper in front of me.

And so it is with us all. Throughout most of our days we successfully navigate differences, find solutions, and accommodate others' needs, building compromises and collaborations along the way. When it comes to resolving all of these conflicts, nobody notices. Our skills are taken for granted.

What everyone notices instead are the collisions—those times when our needs and expectations clash with others' needs and expectations. Someone says something, and we are sparked to anger. Suddenly we're standing in the middle of the room, yelling at someone else. Or slamming the door and stomping out of the room. The label "conflict" is slapped on the event, and we walk away embarrassed and ashamed. "How could I have said that to her?" "Why didn't I just let that go?" We turn these moments over and over in our heads, feeling lousy about who we are and what we have done and because of how we reacted.

Conflict Defined

Managers deal with conflict all the time. As leader of a group, the manager's job is to understand the mission of the workgroup—how it supports the mission of the organization—to articulate that mission to staff and to others inside and outside the organization, and to support staff in accomplishing that mission. Providing that support frequently involves resolving differences and disagreements with staff. Often we don't label this "conflict resolution" because we listen, respond, and resolve differences in the workplace before those differences kick up enough emotional dust to be visible. What, then, do we mean by the word *conflict*? Most dictionaries define *conflict* as the competitive or opposing action of incompatibles. In other words, conflict is when what you want, need, or expect interferes with what I want, need, or expect. It may be a disagreement over data or processes (how things get done); or it may be over resources (where the money and staff will come from to do the job); or it may be about relationships or our identities or values.

With this definition, we can consider the various levels of conflict,

from mild disagreements, to disputes that require much time and attention, to intractable conflicts where emotions run high and relationships are broken. Resolving conflicts may be done so quietly and effectively that the moment is not remembered as a conflict. You have probably experienced this on a daily basis. Say, someone comes into your office with a question, you talk it over, agree on an answer, and sketch out a way to proceed. This is the job of management: conflict raised, conflict solved. Other conflicts become much bigger, with tempers flaring and any resolution seeming impossible. What I do in this book is help you develop an understanding of the nature of conflict and its resolution so that more of the conflicts you encounter can be resolved at the lowest possible level—in essence, to manage better.

Most of us face challenges in dealing with conflicts in our professional and personal lives. As I often tell groups I work with, I earned a life degree in conflict, as many of us do—at work, in my community, and with my family. I knew there must be a better way. In 1985, I headed back to school to get a master's degree in conflict resolution. I wanted to work “between people.” I wanted to help them develop skills to address their differences, and use my own skills when they needed assistance addressing those differences. My hope was that they could more frequently walk away from a disagreement feeling relieved—and maybe surprised: “That went better than I thought it would.”

Since then, most of my work has been inside organizations. A large part of my time is employed mediating and facilitating within offices, between bosses and direct reports—helping each to hear the other, so that both can find a productive, mutually acceptable way to move forward. The rest of my time is spent teaching people the skills to manage conflict more effectively themselves.

Learning to handle conflict is a lifelong journey. There will always be differences between and among us. Much of the time, most of us work our way through them effectively. We all also hit the wall on occasion. Someone says something that triggers a response and we go off. Looking back, we scratch our heads and wonder what happened. And we wonder how we can keep that from happening again. What I love about my work is that I see it as a key developmental task for all humans. There is always more to learn, a new test waiting somewhere ahead on the journey.

Conflict in the Workplace

Many people I work with were hired for their technical expertise and promoted into management positions. Sometimes the change happens overnight. The job she left on Friday afternoon is not the job she starts on Monday morning. In that shift, the nature of the work changes dramatically, from dealing with “things”—data, spreadsheets, reports—to dealing with people. Instead of doing the work herself, now she must manage people so that they get the work done. More than once I have had a new manager, who is struggling with difficulties on her staff, look at me forlornly and say, “I’d like to have my old job back, where I knew what to do, where I didn’t have to deal with getting people to do the work I used to do.”

Managing people requires “people skills”—new levels of communication and conflict-resolution skills. Often these new managers or supervisors have new challenges that they had not imagined before. They find themselves in the middle of conflict with direct reports. Many times what the boss wants, needs, and expects from staff is counter to what the staff wants, needs, and expects. The boss also must stand up for the people within the organization, fighting on their behalf with other business units for scarce resources, managing expectations and workload, negotiating for positions, promotions, and opportunities. And the boss also stands between co-workers who are having their own share of conflicts, aiming to harmonize differences so that people can get back to work.

Understanding conflict—how it is created, how we respond to it, and how to manage it more effectively—is what this book is about. We all, at one point or another, find it challenging to handle the differences between us. We need to recognize what is happening and why, know when to walk away and when to stand our ground, and learn how to do all of that more effectively.

The cost of conflict in the workplace is high. Some of the ways that unresolved conflict affects productivity include:

- ▶ 42 percent of a manager’s time is spent addressing conflict in the workplace¹
- ▶ Lost revenue from staff time is spent unproductively

- ▶ Excessive employee turnover (replacement costs average 75–150 percent of annual salary)
- ▶ Over 65 percent of performance problems are caused by employee conflicts²
- ▶ High levels of absenteeism
- ▶ “Presenteeism,” whereby employees are present but not productive, due to low morale
- ▶ High incidence of damage and theft of inventory and equipment as a result of employee conflict
- ▶ Covert sabotage of work processes and of management efforts because of employee anger³

The benefits to a manager, and to a workplace, of resolving conflict effectively, at the lowest possible level, result not surprisingly in minimized costs. While statistical studies are difficult to conduct directly on the relationship between effective conflict resolution and employee satisfaction, nevertheless by improving these skills a manager can expect increased productivity, improved employee morale, and reduced turnover and absenteeism. In a study linking employee fulfillment directly to business performance, “the single biggest contributor to these feelings of fulfillment, empowerment, and satisfaction lie in the day-to-day relationship between employees and their managers.”⁴

Conflict is a broad subject; much has been written already and there is much to say. There are so many skills that managers must use throughout the day. This book is an introduction to these skills, providing tools and approaches that enable managers to deal more effectively with the conflicts they encounter.

One of the challenges for managers is *differentiating*: When is this question a disagreement that I need to engage others in resolving? When does this situation involve the supervisory responsibility to make decisions? There are times when making directive, unilateral decisions is appropriate for managers and supervisors. There are other times when communicating and collaborating (i.e., engaging conflict-resolution processes and skills) are essential in order to get the work done efficiently and effectively.

In this book, I talk about interpersonal conflict—when what you

want, need, or expect gets in the way of what others want, need, or expect. Within an office, the wants, needs, and expectations of an individual may conflict with those of the group and its work. Often, interpersonal conflict in the workplace affects *more* than the two people involved. In an office I was working in recently, the supervisor and the team leader frequently had confrontations and loud disagreements. The tension between the two reverberated through the office. All of the employees became anxious about who was in charge, how decisions were being made, even what they might expect when they came to work the next day. This discomfort and distraction had a direct effect on morale and productivity.

In another office, the ongoing conflict between the manager and a staff member spilled over to the wider office as well, as the staff member spent much time badmouthing the boss. Not only was the employee's own work not getting done, but others picked up this virus of negativity and their work suffered, as well.

Understanding and managing conflict at this one-on-one level also gives the manager skills and insights to deal more effectively with larger conflicts—those involving more people. Each time you add another person to the equation, the web of interaction becomes more complex—just as individuals have their own wants, needs, and expectations within a group, so also groups become entities of their own, with their own wants, needs, and expectations that conflict with other groups. So, I start here, at this foundation, with an understanding of the dynamics between us as individuals, identifying some keys that help reduce antagonism and make it easier to resolve conflicts when they arise (and they *will* continue to arise, even after you have mastered all the skills in this book).

A word of encouragement: Small changes can yield big results down the road. As you read this book, identify small behavioral changes you want to make, and then make a commitment to practice them over a specific period of time, perhaps six weeks or six months. Step by step, you'll see incremental changes practiced patiently build upon each other. Later, look back at how well you have kept your commitment to change, and notice the shifts in behavior

*True life is lived where
tiny changes occur.*

—LEO TOLSTOY

and attitude that have occurred. As I watched the launch of the Mars *Exploration* Rover in 2003, I thought about the difference a small shift in the thrust of the rocket would make. A few degrees in one direction or another would send the Rover into totally different directions over time. Similarly, a slight modification in your attitude and approach may well bring you closer to resolving conflicts more easily.

Drawing from My Own Experience

Jon Kabat-Zinn, in his book *Wherever You Go, There You Are*, reminds us that we are all learners on life's path. As conflict has been the focus of my work for twenty-some years, I bring the lessons I have learned—and continue to learn—to you.

In a wonderfully unfinished story called “Mount Analogue,” René Daumal once mapped a piece of this inward adventure. The part I remember most vividly involves the rule on Mount Analogue that before you move up the mountain to your next encampment, you replenish the camp you are leaving for those who will come after you, and go down the mountain a ways to share with the other climbers your knowledge from farther up so that they may have some benefit from what you have learned so far on your own ascent. In a way, that's all any of us do when we teach. As best we can, we show others what we have seen up to now. It's at best a progress report, a map of our experiences, by no means the absolute truth. And so the adventure unfolds. We are all on Mount Analogue together. And we need each other's help.⁵

Here, I speak with my own voice. I use examples from others, but the perspective is from my own learning and observation. I learned a lot in completing the program for my master's degree. I learned even more in confronting my own “stuff” concerning the people closest to me, who challenged so much of what I thought I knew. The people I have worked with over the years continue to teach me even more.

All that said, even with twenty years' experience as a conflict-resolution professional, when it's about *my* stuff I still don't walk into a conflict saying, “Oh, boy, another growth opportunity!” In the pit of my

stomach is a sinking feeling, a moment of dread. I must pull together inner resources because, in fact, on the other side of this moment is the possibility of reaching a better place, of finding some improvement in the relationship or in my own understanding of myself. As you consider the stories here and apply them to your own situation, you will see that the lessons come in small moments, in tiny packages, and from seemingly insignificant events.

The stories are true—that is, they are based on disagreements, disputes, and workplace challenges I have witnessed firsthand. The names and circumstances have been altered to protect the privacy of individuals. Also, as you will see in some situations I discuss, by the time someone has called me for assistance, the conflict is nearly impossible to resolve. My hope is that this book will provide you with tools and skills that you can use to address difficult moments before they reach this point.

How We Think About Conflict

When I teach, I often start discussions with a word-association game: “When you hear the word *conflict*, what do you think of?” As I write the responses of the group on a flip chart in front of the class, they continue to add words, quickly filling the page. Mostly, the words are negative.

stress	tension
war	disagreement
argument	miscommunication
avoidance	anger
hostility	win-lose
fight	battle

One of my personal favorites sometimes comes up: *dread*. Conflict? No, thanks. I have been there before and it was really ugly. People yelling. Doors slamming. Relationships broken. Destruction. A real mess.

Here are three more words to add to the list: *inevitable*, *growth*, and *progress*.

Conflict Is . . . *Inevitable*

Wherever we, as human beings, interact, it is *inevitable* that we will reach some point where what “you” want, need, and expect gets in the way of what “I” (or “we”) want, need, and expect. It happens on the playground, in the neighborhood, at school, at work, at home, in the wider world of public policies and resources, and certainly between nations and nationalities. Pretending that it won’t happen, or hoping that it won’t, will not make it go away. Thinking that if you live long enough you get beyond it is another fantasy. We can, however, get better at responding to conflicts so that they are resolved with barely a ripple of discord.

I was raised on the standard fairy tales, each ending with that magical statement “And they lived happily ever after.” Really? On the one hand, that sounds like bliss. On the other, it sounds incredibly boring. When I was a teenager, I remember thinking that as soon as I reached twenty-one, life would be a straight shot—I would have it all figured out, and everything would be easy after that. No more conflict, no more troubles. When I got to twenty-one, though, it was a big disappointment. So I raised the number to thirty—surely, by then. Well, thirty came, and I looked to thirty-five. Finally, at about thirty-seven, the light bulb went on: the learning keeps on going from here, until wherever the road ends.

In her mid-nineties, my grandmother told me, “Life is one adjustment after another.” My first reaction to this was disappointment. Wasn’t there some point we would reach when we could quit? When we would be done and could just sit on the porch and watch the seasons change? Then I saw the excitement and possibility of her wisdom. Life continues to unfold, giving us new challenges, new ways of thinking, and new means of relating to each other.

Conflict Is . . . *Growth*

Our personal realizations are steps to maturity. They come packaged as our needs and expectations, as well as our tools for getting those needs met, but they bump into the needs and expectations of others. Conflict brings me face to face with my own hostility and its effect on others. I resolve to change my ways—and I may resolve again and again to do it differently next time, as the growth that I seek slowly transforms my behavior.

I remember standing in the middle of the office when she accused me of not returning her phone calls. I felt my face flush, and I was about to set her straight, to tell her about all of the drama that had gone on in my life in the last two days, to justify my disrespect for her request. Instead, I stopped myself; I took a deep breath and asked her to tell me more. And then I listened to what she had to say.

This small act was a huge step for me—to move away from my usual pattern of reaction and try a new response. Learning to listen more and talk less is an ongoing effort. I can look back and see that I have grown over time by making that change. I am better able to hear others, to understand their concerns, to correct my assumptions, and to answer more calmly. And yes, as the people around me will attest, I am a work in progress.

I have learned something else about conflict—what happens when I go toe-to-toe with someone I care about and discover that he or she will stick with me through it. On the other side of the argument, we are still here together, closer than ever because we understand each other more and we know that the bonds that hold us are tighter than the demons that might tear us apart. We know that the relationship is stronger than all of this.

Fear of difference is dread of life itself. It is possible to conceive conflict as not necessarily a wasteful outbreak of incompatibilities, but a normal process by which socially valuable differences register themselves for the enrichment of all concerned.

—MARY PARKER FOLLETT

I learn from experience that avoidance or accommodation works against me sometimes, and so I look for ways to take on differences before they explode into bigger problems. With some amount of resistance and pain, I grow. For instance, arguments I was in before ended badly. The anger overwhelmed the room, until someone walked out—and often it was me. I was trapped by my fears, not daring to say what mattered to me, what I cared about. I lived much of the time behind a mask of politeness. I shrank further and further into myself, in some ways away from myself.

It is from learning this about myself that I began to understand forgiveness—that others are no more perfect than I am. We cannot function in life, as tied as we are to other humans, without forgiveness. And it is from this place of forgiveness that I learned the power of apology, along with the humility and vulnerability that such an admission takes. This, too, is growth.

When I say that conflict is inevitable, I do not mean that growth through conflict is also inevitable. Growth is optional—a matter of will and wanting. We all know people who don't seize the opportunities for growth that conflict can bring. It can be more comfortable to stay in denial, or to live in defensiveness and self-justification. The manager who is willing to step into the possibility of growth through addressing disagreements must have the courage to admit to him- or herself that maybe there is something the individual needs to acknowledge and change.

Recently I sat in on a meeting between an office director and his staff. Over the years that they had worked together, the staff had become more and more frustrated with this director's behavior. For instance, at a staff meeting, Sal, one of the staff, brought up a problem: "That new software has a serious glitch. A function we were counting on doesn't work." Sal had just begun to describe the problem when the boss cut him off. "Remove that program from everyone's computers. Let's go after the competitor's product, instead." Sal sat back in his chair and sighed. He had no chance to explore some possible fixes for the software. Rather than finding a simple solution, now the staff had a bigger project on their hands: negotiating a new contract, testing the new program, removing the old one, and installing the substitute across the company. Not only was this added work, it was a diversion from the other projects they were doing.

Sal had learned not to press the point. The director would sometimes start pounding on the table and raising his voice to make his position clear, and Sal didn't want to get that started again. Time after time, rather than listening to the staff's concerns and working through the problems with them, he would jump to conclusions and announce what would be done. He was quick to look for a person to blame for any difficulty, too. When a subordinate tried to talk with him about how his

behavior was keeping the team from working together effectively, the boss became defensive. “It’s my job. We don’t have time to waste on those discussions. I’m just trying to keep this place going.”

What Sal couldn’t know was the extent of the pressure and stress that the boss was under to meet deadlines and quotas, and how that stress affected his response—why he often put a premium on hierarchic decision making. And what the boss didn’t know was that often taking the time to listen, to find a solution with his staff members rather than imposing one, could make the work of the office easier. Treating team members and their ideas with respect, and building solutions together, could reap rewards through increased creativity and productivity.

Conflict Is . . . Progress

While “growth” is internal, progress is external—between people. Maybe new systems or agreements are developed. New answers are found to the problems that have become visible through the disagreement. There is little progress that is *not* preceded by some kind of conflict. Necessity is the mother of invention, and conflict is often the mother of necessity. And it is in the caldron of conflict that things get stirred up—and sorted out. We begin to look for solutions, for better ideas and possibilities, and we find them. Often we do not address a conflict until the status quo is so uncomfortable that the time and energy to resolve it seems bearable, though. Had we recognized the need earlier, the time and energy required would not have been so great.

In one office, the receptionist complained to whomever would listen. She never knew where this staff member or that staff member was, or when the individual would be back. After the phone rang repeatedly in the respective cubicles, the call would be automatically forwarded to the receptionist’s desk. The tension mounted over months. The angrier she got, the harder it was for her to talk to the staff. When they finally came to a retreat, the group waded through a long discussion of various grievances and complaints. At last she had the opportunity to express her frustration. Eureka, a solution! Set up a sign-out board in the office so everyone would know who was available when. Could this solution have been found without the months of buildup? Maybe. Because the

problem took so long to come to a head, and the group worked together to establish a new system, everyone recognized its importance and made a strong commitment to keeping that new system in place.

Here is another example of the progress that comes through conflict, this time on a slightly larger scale. Several years ago, a couple came to a large federal agency with a list of complaints. She was blind; he was her companion on life's road. The law says that all federal facilities must meet the needs of people regardless of their disabilities. Their complaints were that the parks they visited were quite restrictive for her. They met with the director, who said, "This is just not a priority for us. It's an unfunded mandate from Congress. We don't have the time or the money to do anything." The couple went away angry. After that meeting they visited 320 parks over a nine-year period, taking notes.

They sent a packet of their findings to the department. Their message was hostile and combative, threatening a lawsuit. The department answered in kind. E-mails flew back and forth, each one creating more animosity. Finally, a meeting was called. The new director said, "Let's sit down, listen to what they have to say, see how we might respond." What the staff heard from the couple was, "A blind person can't use the touch screen on the computer at the exhibit." "The person behind the counter doesn't know where the adaptive equipment is." "The little buttons of Braille that are cast in plastic break pretty quickly—and you can't read it after that." The staff leaned forward in their chairs, eagerly taking notes. Once they started listening, and walking in an unsighted world, their view changed. You could feel the shift in the room, from wary defensiveness and antagonism to receptive encouragement. The new mood was, "Here are two people with a huge commitment to the work we are doing. How can we help them help us do a better job?"

Finally, an example on a grand scale of progress through conflict. White Americans in the years after World War II viewed their world with contentment and optimism. For African Americans, though, the picture was disturbingly different. They were sent to the back of the bus; forced to use the rear entrances of public facilities and the "colored" water fountains; and barred from jobs and restaurants, hotels and stores. It took the courage of many people to challenge the status quo, to say loudly and clearly, over and over again, "This is not acceptable."

Recently I was in Atlanta. As I approached the building where I'd be working, I recognized its shape, even though it had been some fifty years since I last saw it. Everything else about the Atlanta I knew back then had changed. But there it stood, sturdy stucco with department store display windows facing the sidewalk, the decorative balustrades topping the nine-story structure. Rich's Department Store, it had been back then.

This particular morning, as I walked past those windows, long forgotten memories were suddenly standing there with me. This was *the* place where my grandmother and my mother took me as a child for a grand outing—lunch and shopping for school clothes for the fourth grade. “Six, please.” The smiling African-American elevator operator closed the door and up we went. Ordering a grilled cheese sandwich in the elegant dining room was an early lesson in how to be a “lady.”

Today the store windows are filled with the history of Rich's: “The Store That Made a City.” One of the displays stopped me in my tracks. There were pictures from 1960 of protestors outside of Rich's. I could almost hear the crowd in the old black-and-white photos. “Wear Old Clothes with New Dignity. Boycott Rich's,” one sign read. As I stood looking in that window, I realized that when I was that little white girl sitting upstairs in the dining room, I had no idea that other children, little brown girls with their mothers and grandmothers, were not allowed into that room to eat. I was oblivious to the world of privilege in which I was growing up. It took some heroic, determined individuals who were willing to face conflict in order to achieve progress. Few of us are this far-sighted, courageous, or strategic.

Sometimes we need conflict—we need people who have the courage to stand up and say “This cannot stand.” Those who are comfortable with the status quo can stay there a very long time. It took a strong dose of discomfort on the national news every night—conflict—to rock the dominant culture out of that comfort zone.

From the personal to the historic, progress has come out of the caldron of conflict. Conflict is inevitable. Progress and growth are possible. What moves the possibility into reality is our ability to work through conflict in a positive way, to use appropriate tools and skills. These skills enable us to have the courage to face the fears that often come with conflict.

Several years ago, I stood as facilitator in front of an angry church congregation. Churches are supposed to be places where people come together to share values, care about each other, and learn to love one another, aren't they? For three hours, members waited in lines at the microphones to register their complaints. The complaints they raised reached way back into the church's history. "Five years ago, she told me..." "I couldn't believe it when he showed up at the meeting with..." Clearly, these folks had been carrying around their resentments for a long, long time." Toward the end of the meeting, one participant stood at a microphone, looked around the room, and quoted Gloria Steinem to the crowd, "The Bible says, 'The truth shall set you free.' But first it is really going to piss you off." When I got back to my office, I hung that quote over my computer. It explained so much about conflict and growth.

Consider This

- ☑ Identify a conflict you have been a part of or witnessed that resulted in growth or progress.

Overview of the Book

Part I sets the stage for understanding conflict, beginning with this chapter. Chapter 2, "What Gets in Our Way?" explores what happens when a working relationship has gotten off track—how fear, assumptions, blame, and habits get in the way of resolving conflicts.

Part II, "Understanding the Dynamics of Conflict," provides an analysis of the dimensions of conflict, which points to the tools to understand differences and avoid needless contention. Chapter 3, "What We Need: The Satisfaction Triangle," describes three necessary components of satisfactory solutions. In Chapter 4, "Where We Are: Levels of Conflict," you will see how resolving conflict at the earliest opportunity is easiest—and strategies for dealing with conflicts that have escalated. Chapter 5, "How We Respond: Approaches to Conflict," enables you to gain a clearer understanding of your own approaches to conflict, and the approaches others around you use. From there, you learn strategies for beginning to change those approaches when they are not useful and to

deal more effectively with other approaches you encounter at work. Chapter 6, “Who We Are: Cultural Considerations,” explores cultural differences and the role these differences play in creating and resolving conflict. Chapter 7, “What We Are Arguing About Matters: Sources of Conflict,” analyzes five sources of conflict in the workplace: information, interests, structural conflicts, values, and relationships—with a guide to using that understanding to resolve conflict more effectively.

Part III, “Keys to Resolving Conflict,” introduces five concepts managers can use to create a more positive climate for workplace relationships. Chapter 8, “Building Trust,” considers behaviors that build or wreck trust and how to rebuild trust that has been broken. Chapter 9, “Apology and Forgiveness,” addresses the role that apologies and forgiveness play, and provides steps to take to apologize effectively and to move toward forgiveness. Chapter 10, “Rethinking Anger,” explores the physiology of anger, as well as ways to manage your own anger or respond to others’ anger. Chapter 11, “A Sense of Humor,” focuses on the importance of keeping the ups and downs of working relationships in perspective; and Chapter 12, “Time,” reflects on the importance of time in decision making and the resolution of conflict.

Part IV, “Putting It All Together,” brings together concepts explored in earlier chapters, providing specific conflict-resolution tools and communication skills. Chapter 13, “Reaching Agreement: A Solution-Seeking Model,” delineates a process for addressing differences, presents a solution-seeking model, and shows how to use it. Chapter 14, “Listening Is the Place to Start,” focuses on listening skills and explores how managers can listen more effectively. Chapter 15, “Saying What Needs to Be Said,” gives a guide and some tips for raising concerns and addressing issues so that others are more likely to hear your message. Chapter 16, “The Challenge of Electronic Communication,” explores how to use electronic communication effectively in addressing workplace conflicts.

Each of the concepts and skills presented here will enable you to resolve conflicts more quickly and effectively, which will have an immediate impact on morale, productivity, and ultimately the bottom line.

Notes

1. C. Watson, and R. Hoffman, "Managers as Negotiators," *Leadership Quarterly* 7, no.1 (1996), http://www.conflictatwork.com/conflict/cost_e.cfm, last viewed August 25, 2010.
2. Daniel Dana, *Managing Differences: How to Build Better Relationships at Work and at Home* (Prairie Village, KS: MTI Publishing, 2006), p. 13.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
4. "Redefining Employee Satisfaction: Business Performance, Employee Fulfillment, and Leadership Practices" (Edina, MN: Wilson Learning Worldwide, 2006), http://wilsonlearning.com/images/uploads/pdf/employee_satisfaction_en.pdf, accessed September 4, 2010.
5. John Kabat-Zinn, *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditations in Everyday Life* (New York: Hyperion, 1995), p. 212.
6. Elliot M. Fox and L. Urwick, eds., *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (London: Pitman, 1973), pp. 1–20.