

[10 seconds of Space Jam theme followed by calm string music]

William: One of the greatest reasons why teams fail repeatedly is that either they lack the knowledge of conflict management or they just don't agree on ideas to appease conflict before it starts. This podcast is a part of our interpersonal communications series, and today our goal is to educate CST 105 Students about the tip sheets available to students at The Speaking Center. I am William,

Grace: And I'm Grace,

William: And we are both CST 390 Students and Junior Consultants at The Speaking Center. And today we'll be talking to you about group conflicts, and managing those conflicts. Today to cover that statement we are going to be explaining the importance of being open and empathetic when working with others.

[Guitar music transition]

Grace: A big part of working with others is acknowledging differences in opinion. So if someone says something that contradicts or disagrees with what you say, don't just ignore the issue. Healthy discussion is good for the group and it is a great way to expand the horizons and correct misunderstandings. So, say you are having a discussion and your groupmate says something benign like "We should use an all black and white color scheme for the powerpoint," and you go ahead and say "Well I think that we should have some pops of color in there." And they just totally ignore you, It's not gonna feel great. You deserve the respect of being heard out, and in that same vein you owe it to others to acknowledge and discuss their ideas and contributions.

William: Groupthink is the phenomenon where everyone in a group all agrees with

everything all the time and there is no critical thinking. While it seems like that is good for group cohesion it ultimately brings the quality of the project down. Think of it this way, when someone says something that is objectively and unequivocally wrong. Your groupmate has announced the sky is green for example. And you know better, but then another group mate agrees. And then so do you and everyone else. You all just go with the flow. And then you fail. Don't fall for group think.

Grace: With that, you want to make sure you are listening to contributions made by the group. Everyone will have something different to add to the discussion. It is important to pay attention and listen to these ideas even if you don't agree with them. There will come a time you feel like you know what is best for the group and that you are right. This may or may not actually be the case, but either way this does not mean that others ideas are not worthwhile or good. Give everyone a chance and it may even surprise you even if it's not what you want.

William: Sometimes when there is an issue between group members, they will both need to give up certain things to come to a consensus with the other members. In a group, you will often experience moments where you are faced with a conflict in opinions and ideas between you and other members. In these situations, both sides may have to give up certain wants to come together and move forward with your project or goal.

William: It can be very easy to let your own self-confidence and ego get in the way when in the problem-solving process, but in order to effectively come to solutions, you need to be able to put this ego aside. Going back to our third point talking about listening to your group members, this is a very important aspect of the

problem-solving process. Listening to ideas of other group members, and not letting your ego or your own ideas dominate the rest of your group, this will only harm you all in the long run.

[Guitar music transition]

Grace: That's all we have for you today and just to sum everything up, the most important parts of managing group conflict is being understanding, empathetic, and open minded. The best way to stop a conflict is to make sure it doesn't happen again. So listen to what people are saying, don't oppose disagreements, and don't fall for group think. So, tune in to our next episode, or join us live or online at The Speaking Center.