MODULE OVERVIEW

When two colleagues clash: Help them find their own solution

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Unresolved conflicts between colleagues are costly: they quietly erode morale and performance, or end up with the manager for lack of a better option. In more autonomous teams, resolving them between peers becomes valuable. Not reserved for managers, and not a matter for professional mediation: the module makes the third-party role a stance anyone can take, with a concrete method and a clear sense of where the role ends.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Adopt the facilitator's stance (neutrality, listening, trust) without deciding for the people in conflict.

02 Hold individual conversations that let emotions out and bring each person's real priority to the surface.

03 Lead the joint meeting, keep the ground rules in place, and guide both people toward a win-win solution.

04 Identify the role's limits: avoid being a false facilitator and hand over when the conflict goes beyond peer mediation.

WHO IT'S FOR

Any colleague willing to help two teammates in conflict, without waiting for the manager to act.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1. **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
2. **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
3. **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
4. **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
5. **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

A SAMPLE PRACTICE SCENARIO

Two colleagues are arguing over the only company car. They chose you together to help them, after a discussion that went nowhere. You met each of them separately. Now that they're together, they ask you how you would split it, since you manage the schedules. What do you tell them?

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Moving from positions to interests and aiming for win-win – based on Fisher & Ury (Getting to Yes, 1981)
- 3-step resolution process: between the two -> trusted third party -> panel – inspired by Morning Star (Frédéric Laloux, 2014)
- The facilitator's 2 key questions – Afthonios method
- An approach based on active listening and neutrality – inspired by Carl Rogers

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Fisher & Ury, Getting to Yes (1981, Harvard)
- Rogers & Farson, Active Listening (1957)
- Gary Hamel, "First, Let's Fire All the Managers," Harvard Business Review (2011) – the Morning Star case
- Weger et al. (2014) – active listening and feeling understood

Module created by Afthonios.com.

Content reviewed on 7 October 2026