

CONFLICT & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The “Facts” Conversation

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, it is *information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). Sort Out the Three Conversations. In *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* (2nd ed., pp. 3–20). New York: Viking Penguin.

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). Stop Arguing About Who’s Right. In *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most* (2nd ed., pp. 25–43). New York: Viking Penguin.

Questions

1. What are the three conversations that occur during a difficult conversation (like negotiation or conflict resolution)? How do these three appear in Stone *et al.*’s example of the conversation between Jack and Michael?
2. What is the truth assumption that underlies the “What Happened?” Conversation? Why does this assumption cause problems for resolving conflict?
3. What should we do instead of arguing over the truth during a conflict resolution? What role does curiosity play in this?
4. Why do we tend to see the world differently? Why is it important to be aware of and appreciate these differences during conflict resolution?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.