



**ISSUE:** Problem solving with others, how do I negotiate and work out problems with co-workers so that we both end up as winners.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER:** Negotiating takes everyone involved to solve a problem. There are expected rules to follow to make negotiating a problem successfully. Successful negotiation allows everyone to leave feeling like they were heard, respected, and taken seriously. Below are some things to consider to help in the process of 'working it out'.

- Agree on a time when all involved are ready, willing and able to be a part of the discussion.
- Ensure upfront that everyone is on the same page and that there will be no name-calling, put downs, judgments, threats or sarcasm used during the discussion.
- Everyone involved need to agree to keep working at solving the problem for the time it takes to reach a resolution. This may require coming back to the problem again at another time during another discussion.
- Stick to the topic, making sure everyone is aware of the issue and stick to it. If someone starts to go off topic, gently remind them why you are there.
- Everyone must agree to listen to everyone else, even when you don't agree with what is said or if you don't like what you hear.
- Each person must be open minded, willing to listen and willing to change.

**THINGS TO DO:** Agree to set time aside to work it out, if there is a chance it might take a few tries, set a limit, say one hour and agree to come back to it another time. Everyone must remember that problem solving is a process and that it will not be solved immediately. Below is a simple procedure to help get through the issue or problem.

- **Define the problem:** Each person must be allowed to say how they see the problem without reaction from the others. It might help if you try to see it from their point of view. You may not agree however it could help to understand each other on the road to a solution.
- **Brainstorm some solutions:** Each person should offer ideas about how to deal with the problem. All suggestions should be treated with respect and taken into consideration no matter how silly, ridiculous, or far-fetched they may sound. Once all suggestions have been shared, everyone will have the opportunity to say which ones are absolutely not acceptable to them. It helps to write down the solutions, so the unacceptable ones can be crossed off, and the ones that are left can be discussed until a solution is agreed upon. Remember that all problems require a little give and take. You may not get your way entirely, however compromise helps everyone feel satisfied.
- **Take action.** Do whatever it is that you have agreed to do. Measure the outcome and ask yourself whether it worked to solve the problem or do you need to try something different.

**For more info on Potluck Recipes for Success: Heather O'Hara - Executive Director**  
**T: 604.683.0073 ext. 379**  
**E: heather@potluckcatering.com**  
**W: www.potluckcatering.com**



Find Potluck Recipes for Community Success at [www.potluckcatering.com](http://www.potluckcatering.com)