

## 5 Keys to Dealing with Conflict

ELEVATE – SNEC Phone Training

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### RULE #1: Know \_\_\_\_\_

Your thumb represents the first step in problem solving—taking a look at yourself. No matter the problem, first you must objectively examine your role in the issue. Ask yourself these questions.

- What's my involvement in this issue? What should my involvement be?
- What do I need to do to effectively resolve this issue in a Christian manner?
- What is my responsibility to God, my team, my church, and my pastor?
- Am I contributing to the problem? If so, how?
- Is my relationship with God healthy, allowing me to be an effective problem-solver?

*“The decision to serve as a spiritual leader signs one up for conflict,”* Reggie McNeal

### RULE #2: You're Not \_\_\_\_\_

In the midst of problem solving, we often forget to look to the people we've assembled around us—a big mistake. Ask yourself these questions.

- Who is legitimately involved in the issue? Who should be involved?
- How can other team members directly or indirectly help the situation? Hurt the situation?
- In what ways can I use the talents and gifts of my team to resolve this issue?
- What procedures or policies can be instituted to discourage such a problem in the future?

God is all about teamwork.

### RULE #3: Leaders Stand \_\_\_\_\_

Your middle finger, standing tall, is a reminder that leaders need each other. As you grapple with a problem, ask yourself:

- Who in your leader network has had a similar experience?
- What other leader has expertise in, or is a good source of support for, this situation?
- How can you make a more informed decision with the input of other leaders?
- In what other area of ministry or life have you seen someone lead a successful resolution to a similar problem?
- What traits do you admire in other leaders that you can emulate now?

Maintain a balancing act between confronting issues that truly need attention and building trustworthy relationships with those in authority.

**RULE #4: We All Have \_\_\_\_\_**

The ring finger “can’t stand alone,” so it reminds us to bring our weaknesses to light. Ask yourself these questions.

- Specific to this problem, in what ways is our ministry weak? strong?
- How do these weaknesses impact our volunteers, children, parents, leadership, and congregation?
- What would it take to remedy these weaknesses?
- How can we learn from our strengths to improve our weak areas?

It takes time to become a successful leader. It also takes commitment, flexibility, and a willingness to acknowledge that we have weaknesses—as people and as programs.

Motivational communicator and children’s pastor Craig Jutila offers these techniques for better communication.

- Use “I” statements when you confront someone.
- Restate what you hear before you reply.
- Reflect empathy when you talk to hurting people.
- Avoid dirty-fighting tactics. Don’t use gross generalizations or attack the person rather than the problem.

**RULE #5: Children Are the \_\_\_\_\_**

The pinky reminds us who and why we serve—the little ones. When others ask us why we work so hard, we all know the answer: “We do it for the children!” So, for the children, ask:

- How could children be impacted by this problem?
- How does this problem affect our mission, value statement, and ministry goals?
- What resolution best serves children?
- What is the potential fallout for children?

Children are the apples of God’s eye.

**ANSWERS:** Yourself, Alone, Together, Weakness, Reason

This lesson is based on an article by Pat Verbal in Children’s Ministry magazine.