



Facilitation

The Facilitation process is intended to help individuals who are in conflict resolve those conflicts through shared responsibility and mutual action. All parties recognize that there is a shared problem and that each of them contributes to and suffers from that problem in some way, and also that all parties agree to take action(s) that will ultimately resolve or at least improve the situation. Facilitation is voluntary by all parties and is not linked to any pre-disciplinary/disciplinary actions or grievance processes.

In the Facilitation process, the Employee Assistance Office (EAO) counselor assists participants in communicating their views and in making sure any agreements are mutually understood. The EAO counselor does **not** act as a mediator or an arbiter in any way.

In some cases, those in conflict are interested in having a 3rd party mediator or arbiter, both to determine what behavior is/isn't appropriate and to make clear the consequences of any actions deemed to be inappropriate. While this might be what some situations dictate, the EAO counselor is unable to take on the role. Instead, we suggest you consider one or more of the following:

Your **local HR representative** should be able to manage a conversation between all parties, while also weighing in on what behaviors are inappropriately contributing to the problem. Additionally, your HR representative should then be able to inform all parties about the potential consequences of such behaviors.

The office of **Workforce Relations** may also be able to assist you in “resolving workplace issues through proactive intervention.” They, too, should be able to offer clear guidance on what is/isn't acceptable workplace behavior, as well as the consequences of those behaviors considered out of line.

The **Ombuds Office** is a safe place where UW-Madison employees can seek guidance regarding workplace concerns at any time, without fear of reprisal, and at no cost to them. Ombuds provide faculty and staff with a confidential place to collaboratively explore complaints, clarify issues, and consider options and resources to address their concerns. Ombuds are impartial and non-aligned, working to promote fairness in the workplace.

The **Office of Strategic Consulting** provides a number of services that may be helpful, including guidance on how to change organizational culture and climate. This can be particularly helpful when there are structural issues that may be reinforcing or otherwise contributing to an existing conflict.