



# **MANAGING CONFLICT IN YOUR ROTARY CLUB**

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**Rotary District 9685**



# Aims for Session

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- Understand the sources of potential conflict in your club
- Identify different methods used to resolve conflict
- Develop and implement an action plan to reduce & manage conflict in your club
- Identify opportunities to increase skills in conflict resolution, complaint and dispute handling



# The Potential for Conflict

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- Voluntary organisations are strongly values-based, and may experience intense conflicts about directions and policies.
- Volunteers can assume a special “ownership” of a project or organisation
- Their interest can involve such dedication that it can become a passion. For some, this can reach the level of obsession.



# Scenarios

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- Rotary
  - Food
  - Venue
  - Cliques
  - Financial statements
  - Roles



# The Impact of Conflict

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- ❑ Disputes are time-consuming, and get in the way of the good work.
- ❑ Public image and reputation.
- ❑ Adversely affect membership, morale, relationships and fund-raising potential.
- ❑ Like other sectors, the voluntary sector is looking for ways of managing conflict and resolving disputes.
- ❑ Conflicts, left to themselves, nearly always grow!



# The Impact to Rotary

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- Aggrieved person
  - Becomes disinterested
  - Becomes negative
  - Takes leave of absence
  - Joins another Rotary Club
  - Resigns from Rotary



# The Impact to Rotary

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- The Club
  - Becomes focussed on conflict and not service
  - Becomes divisive rather than inclusive
  - Loses another member
  - Becomes a smaller club
  - Loses its vitality
  - Loses critical mass
  - Fails to meet its reason for being
  - Club folds



# Nature of Conflict

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- Understanding conflict is basic to its resolutions
- Conflict is natural, inevitable, necessary and normal
- Conflict may be viewed as a feeling, a disagreement, a real or perceived incompatibility of interests, inconsistent world views or a set of behaviours





# Sources of Conflict

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- There are 5 basic sources of conflict:
  - Communication
  - Emotion
  - Values
  - Structures
  - History



# What Not to Do at your Club

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- If you notice a member or partner in your club is unhappy or has raised a complaint you can:
  - ignore him/her and the problem will go away eventually
  - try to talk the person/s out of it by saying it is not important
  - tell the person to forget about it
  - make jokes over dinner in front of others
  - the member was probably going to resign anyway
  - it's not my problem so I'm not getting involved
  - it was his/her choice and every end is a new beginning



# Create a Conflict Management System

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- prevent and manage conflict and
- create a culture of conflict competence- the creation of an environment where all who experience conflict feel comfortable to raise it, knowing it will be dealt with respectfully and responsibly.
- Training
- Feedback



# Types of Interventions

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- Facilitative
  - Negotiation – Mediation - Facilitation
- Advisory
  - Counselling – Coaching - Investigation
- Determinative
  - Adjudication – Arbitration – Expert determination



# Coach/Advisor

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- ❑ Active listener, doesn't interrupt
- ❑ Asks open questions
- ❑ Reality tests proposals
- ❑ Coaches you through options
- ❑ Plays the “devil's advocate”



# Mediation/Conciliation

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- ❑ the process whereby an impartial third party (the Mediator) assists parties in dispute to agree on terms to resolve their dispute.
- ❑ Confidential process
- ❑ Can provide guidance, but does not impose an outcome
- ❑ Internal– a Rotarian mediator
- ❑ External – CJC or LEADR



# Impact on Club

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- ❑ Retention of members who may otherwise leave.
- ❑ Happier club atmosphere
- ❑ Better outcomes and mutual respect for all Rotarians



# **Amendment to Bylaws of Rotary**

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- Adopted enactment 07-343
- Article 24 – Arbitration and Mediation





# Disputes

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- ❑ Any dispute, excluding an internal club dispute, or a dispute over a decision of the Board of RI, that cannot be settled amicably,
- ❑ Current or former member of a Rotary club, Rotary district, RI or an RI officer
- ❑ By request by any disputant, to general secretary within 60 days of dispute arising
- ❑ First to referred to mediation; if a party refuses mediation, then direct to arbitration



# Mediation

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- ❑ Within 90 days after request
- ❑ Procedure set by RI board
- ❑ Mediator appointed by general secretary or his appointee
- ❑ Mediator to be a Rotarian with mediation skills & experience, not from the disputing clubs
- ❑ Outcomes/agreements to be recorded & copy provided to general secretary
- ❑ Costs to be borne equally



# Arbitration

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- ❑ If a disputant objects to mediation
- ❑ At the request of a disputant, if mediation is unsuccessful
- ❑ Each party shall appoint an arbitrator & arbitrators shall appoint an umpire
- ❑ Arbitrators & umpires are to be Rotarians
- ❑ Decision by arbitrators or umpire (if they can't agree) is final and binding
- ❑ Costs to be borne equally



# Internal Club Dispute

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- ❑ The club rules or constitution must provide a process of conflict resolution
- ❑ Train the board to be conflict competent
- ❑ Consider crucial conversations and plan them



# Basis of Resolving Conflict

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- Interest based
  - focuses relationships
- Rights based
  - Focuses on perceived legal entitlements
- Power based
  - Relies on the power of numbers or position



# The 4 Way Test

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of things we think, say or do:

- ❑ is it the truth
- ❑ is it fair to all concerned
- ❑ Will it build goodwill and better friendships
- ❑ Will it be beneficial to all concerned



# Conflict Management Options

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- Conflict coaching
- District conflict officer
- Mediation
- Arbitration



CLUB MEMBERS



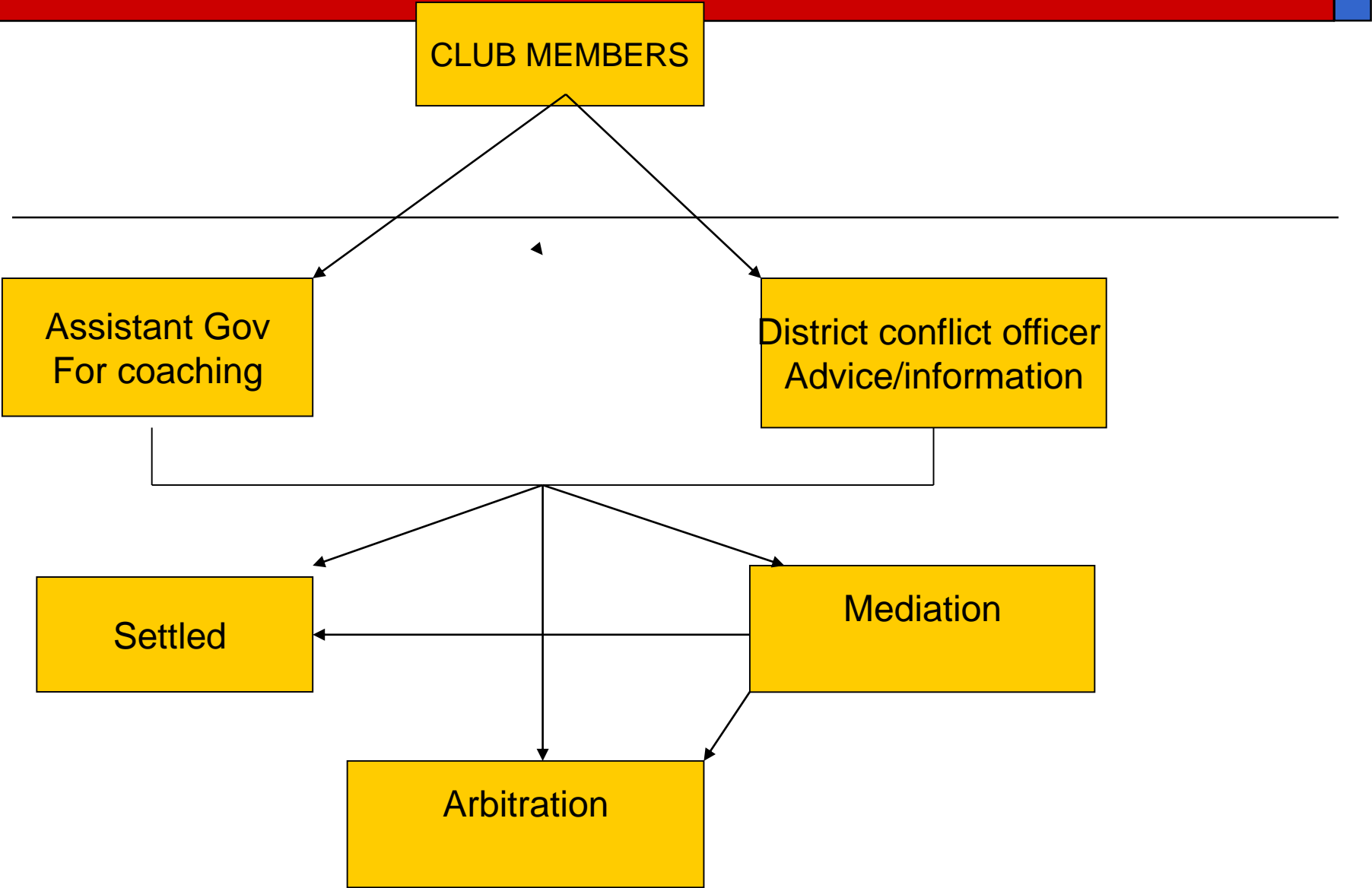
Assistant Gov  
For coaching

District conflict officer  
Advice/information

Settled

Mediation

Arbitration







# Conclusion

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- Traditionally, there has been a tendency for dispute avoidance, rather than resolution.
- Create conflict management skills within clubs & districts
- Resolve disputes at the lowest level
- If disputes cannot be resolved:
  - refer to district conflict officer,
  - if conflict is between clubs, members of other clubs, or with the district, refer to RI general secretary for mediation & if necessary, arbitration