

Naomi Nightingale

**Working Through Conflict and Change
Spring 2016**

Syllabus

Change is inevitable. We deal with changes in our daily lives every day; however, in our personal lives we tend to have more control and direct ability to manage the changes we encounter. However, change in the work place is often generated by a conflict within or external to the organization and for which by virtue of title or directive we must assume responsibility for managing. It could be from internal forces due to a company lay off, change in administration, or change in procedures due to implementation of new systems. The conflict could be initiated by external forces such as change in regulations, complaints from customers, or a national disaster. Either way, we must assume responsibility for implementing order – bringing about effective change. Understanding and learning how to manage conflict and change is critical to continuing successful operations within an organization whether it is a private non-profit, governmental, corporation, community-based non-profit or other. A most important consideration in working through conflict and change is how to maintain employee, customer or stakeholder confidence in the stability of the organization.

Pre-Class Activities

After I receive the registration list, I will send you a list of articles to read and topics that will be discussed in class. Please come with your own inquiries that you would like to explore and see answers or strategies for resolution.

In-Class Activities

In this class you will learn fundamental approaches to conflict resolution and management of change processes in a business environment. You will use your own or create a case study wherein conflict and change presents real challenges to successful operations of your business or department. You will be aware of your leadership/management style and that of others whom you may encounter, utilize skills in problem assessment, policy analysis, and oral and written communication in the presentation of a convincing resolution. The in class work during the weekend will consist of formal lectures, interactive discussions, breakout workgroups, development of conflict descriptions and envisioned change, mock oral presentations, feedback participation.

You should bring your lap tops to class as it is anticipated that the class will be joined by a guest lecturer via Skype.

A detailed schedule will be available when we meet.

Class Activities Post Intensive Weekend

You should decide by the end of the week-end intensive what your individual project will be and begin to think about an outline of the essential components, i.e. what is the issue(s), who are the main stakeholders, what are current policies, what are barriers to change. (Consider whether change is necessary), what is the formal leadership, what are the informal leadership and/or influencers.

Readings and Resources

Books:

Kotter, John P., *Leading Change*, With New Preface by Author, November, 2012, Harvard Business Review Press

Kusy, Mitchell; Holloway, Elizabeth, *Toxic Workplace!: Managing Toxic Personalities & Their Systems of Power*, April, 2009, San Francisco, Jossey-Barr

Articles will be emailed to registered students and presented in class.