

Scenarios for Conflict Handling

Scenario 1: You just got out of a meeting with a board member to discuss policy statement revisions supporting Universal Access recommendations, with a focus starting with Africa & other developing countries. You have been working closely with a small working group to create these revisions. The board member said that she just met with someone yesterday about this, (another person from your working group), and his view on the focus of the revisions was quite different so she (the board member) is not sure what the working group's position actually is. You said you would look into the incongruence and get back to her...feeling a bit embarrassed since you were tasked with communicating with this board member. You need to meet with your colleague to discuss this issue.

Scenario 2: (Phone Call): You are chairing a committee and one of the members has turned a comment into a heated presentation of personal views on the evils of ICANN. This person is noted for being demeaning to members "beneath his level" and often interrupts, dominating meeting time with personal views and rants. There are some important agenda items that need to be discussed and the call time is limited. What will you do to handle this?

Scenario 3: You are one of a few experienced participants of a WG but not the chair. The Chair of the WG is not consulting with you or the other experienced people of the WG in the planning of agendas and direction of the WG,—it's irritating, and demotivating. The result is the agendas are all visionary and big ideas with nothing happening to move the work of the WG forward in an effective manner, and interest in the WG is fading. You have decided to have a talk with the Chair to try and resolve the issue and get the WG back on track.

Scenario 4: You are a working group Chairperson who has grown frustrated with a member who can do great work if she wants to, but consistently misses deadlines on action items assigned to her. She shows up at meetings un-prepared. Some deliverables are never completed or get only a cursory treatment. It is having a negative effect on the motivation of the other working group members, and you are working hard at discouraging her involvement, and encouraging other members' contributions. She is very smart and can deliver great work, however you need to confront her inconsistency to fix this current situation.

Scenario 5: You have been caught uninformed and unprepared in a meeting once again. A colleague, from your group, has a bad habit of withholding information critical to your project work, then asking questions about it making you look foolish and unprepared. As one of the "diverse" members in the group, if feels discriminatory. You have met with him several times concerning this issue. His typical response is, "I forgot", or "I didn't think it was that important," "No big deal." You would really like to address the situation.

Scenario 6: Having started your tenure within the NextGen group, you have received funding to the Fellowship program & are very passionate & excited about getting actively involved to make a difference. At the Kuala Lumpur Conference you attended a number WG & SO meetings eager to get involved and make a significant contribution. It has been a frustrating experience as you have been met with more "cold shoulder" than "open arms" welcoming your involvement. One WG in particular, where your education & experience really match, despite making (what you felt) were strong contributions to the conversation, was told by the Chair "thanks, but no thanks!" You puzzled as your expertise fits, so you wonder: is it your age, tenure, gender or ethnicity that might be at issue? You see the Chair during a break & have gotten the courage to have a candid conversation.

Scenario 7: A WG chair (male) seems to never care or fully take into account what fellow female WG members say. He either disregards their input or tries to "mansplain" them during meetings. The chair also makes inappropriate jokes at the expense of women. This situation is untenable if the WG is to be successful. Perhaps he doesn't fully understand his own implicit biases or comes from a male-dominant culture. But it is time to engage in a dialogue and explain your point of view to improve the situation.