Ver. 1.1, updated 6 October 2008

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These are **teaching notes.** They are written from the program leader's perspective, as if the program leader is speaking. They are detailed but not comprehensive.   My goal is to give you all the concepts and tools of the program, along with a flavor of my teaching style. You should find here enough information to evaluate whether the program is useful for you, or enough detail to develop it for your own organization.

You'll also find teaching tips or clarifications shaded in gray.

These teaching notes make more sense if you've already read the **Program Overview and Setup** document. It's also best to read the session documents in order, because later sessions build on the work of earlier sessions.

Session 7 Topics

- Shadow reports
- Homework readings
- What is conflict?
- Step away from the gun: managing conflict and change in business
- Managing business conflict
- Introduction to managing change
- Project discussion

Session 7 Key Concepts

- Conflict is an unavoidable part of business.

- Good managers encourage productive task conflict and step up to unproductive or interpersonal conflict.

- A clear conflict management process will help you stay effective.

- The contribution system and Three Conversations models presented in **Difficult Conversations** will help you understand the dynamics of conflict, and help you narrow the interpersonal gap during these moments.

- The "I language" model will help you stay clear and focused in conflict conversations.

- The key to successful change is to manage transitions effectively.

These concepts are essential underpinnings of the Humans At Work℠ program. Do not substitute other concepts unless you are prepared to reconfigure the entire program accordingly. If you are not familiar with these concepts, don't lead this session. These skills should be introduced and demonstrated by expert practitioners who can model the behavior as well as describe it.

You'll find basic handouts for all sessions in the Tools and Materials document.

Homework assignments due for this session

1. Shadow a company manager.

2. Write a performance review of your worst manager.

3. **Managing Transitions** Test Case.

4. Complete your project statement.

5. Readings:

- **Becoming a Manager** (pp.149-173, pp.271-282)
- **Difficult Conversations** (pp.111-146)
- **"**How Management Teams Can Have a Good Fight**,"** Eisenhardt et al, *Harvard Business Review*
- "Want Collaboration?" Weiss and Hughes, *Harvard Business Review*

Session 7 Agenda

Time	#	Topic
9:00	**7.1**	**Open session (see notes)**
9:05		
9:10	**7.2**	**Shadow reports (see notes)**
9:15		
9:20		
9:25		
9:30		
9:35		
9:40		
9:45		
9:50	**7.3**	**Discuss homework readings (see notes)**
9:55		
10:00		
10:05		
10:10		
10:15		
10:20		
10:25		
10:30	■	*BREAK (10 minutes)*
10:35		
10:40	**7.4**	**What is conflict? (see notes)**
10:45		
10:50		
10:55	7.5	**Session manifesto: Worth fighting for – conflict and change (see notes)**
11:00		
11:05		
11:10	**7.6**	**Managing business conflict (see notes)**
11:15		
11:20		
11:25		
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12:00	■	*LUNCH (1 hour)*
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Time	Item	Description
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2:50		*BREAK (10 minutes)*
2:55		
3:00	**7.7**	**Introduction to managing change (see notes)**
3:05		
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3:45	**7.8**	**Project discussion (see notes)**
3:50		
3:55		
4:00		
4:05		
4:10		
4:15		
4:20		
4:25		
4:30	**7.9**	**Summary remarks, final questions and comments (see notes)**
4:35		
4:40		
4:45		
4:50	**7.10**	**Wrap up (see notes)**
4:55		
5:00		*Session ends*

Session 7 teaching notes

7.1   Open Session
A. Brief review of Session 6 outcomes
B. Session 7 goals

7.1 A -- Review Session 6

In our last session, we looked at some of the most important and often intimidating things that managers do to keep the team effective – interviewing and onboarding, helping employees develop, delivering performance and salary reviews, and handling bad performance.

These are moments when employees are particularly vulnerable – when the interpersonal gap is potentially at its widest. Managers must be as clear, transparent and authentic as possible in order to make these moments effective.

7.1 B -- Session 7 goals

Today we're stepping back from some of the detailed activities of a manager, and looking at more general issues.

Conflict and change are a fundamental part of business and a fundamental part of human relationships. They can be scary, disruptive and demoralizing – or they can take your team and your business to new and better places. It's all in how you handle them -- and there's no way to avoid them and still be a successful manager.

Today we'll examine:
- Strategies for managing conflict in business
- The transition-based approach to managing small and large changes with your team.

7.2   Shadow reports

Group discussion of homework assignment: How was your experience with shadowing managers? What did you observe? What did you learn that will benefit you as a manager?

The goal is for participants to share specific details of the experience that struck them, and to begin tying the actual daily work of managers to the concepts they've been learning. Encourage them to make these connections as they talk. Be flexible with time if the discussion goes into new or deeper territory.

7.3   Discuss homework reading

Group discussion of homework reading: Let's talk about the reading from **Becoming A Manager**. What stuck out for you in the reading?

Select a participant to facilitate this discussion. Coach them as they work. The goal is to make sure that responses are specific, and to record key concepts on the flip chart.

7.4   What is conflict?

Group discussion: What is conflict? What's hard about conflict?

Keep this brief. The goal is simply to get everyone on the same page that conflict can be necessary, and specific ways in in which it can be intimidating.

7.5   Session manifesto: Worth fighting for – conflict and change

Please read the Manifesto section in the Program Overview and Setup for more

guidance about the session manifestos.

Put the manifesto in your own words. Testify. And remember that your purpose is to show participants how today's concepts and ideas are related to each other, to the work of previous sessions, and to good management in general. This is where you bring it all together.

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Start every manifesto with a personal story.

Today's story should be about a badly-managed business conflict and the consequences.

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At its most basic level, conflict is nothing more than <u>disagreement</u>. Everything else is a question of degree. When two people negotiate about what movie to see, they are working through conflict. When two countries go to war, they are working through conflict.

We live in a culture that is generally conflict-avoidant except in very structured ways – law, politics, sports and military engagements are all arenas where conflict is accepted. One unfortunate result of this cultural attitude to conflict is that we take almost all individual conflict <u>personally</u>. We respond defensively or aggressively, and the conflict escalates unnecessarily.

The escalation isn't necessary, but sometimes conflict itself <u>is</u> necessary. Conflict reveals new perspectives, new options and new ways of looking things. Conflict is the inevitable result of diversity in thinking.

We should <u>expect</u> conflict in business. Business runs on a constant series of decisions, which are no more than agreements between people. It's inevitable that people in business will disagree about business decisions. It's inevitable that people will have <u>task-based conflict</u>.

Interpersonal conflict happens too. People have different personal styles. They miscommunicate, misunderstand, or simply don't like each other. Disagreeing about business decisions may lead to interpersonal conflict – or mutual dislike

my lead to people opposing each other in business decisions (it's unprofessional, but it certainly happens). Regardless of the cause, when the interpersonal gap is wide enough, we experience interpersonal conflict.

Our culture doesn't teach us how to handle conflict. Many people do not know how disagree effectively. They argue rather than discuss, and advocate a position rather than seeking the best solution among a range of options.

The most effective way to work together is to have good systems around task conflict – clear, transparent and authentic behaviors, and agreements about the process for resolving conflicts. Part of these systems include heading off the slide into interpersonal conflict as much as possible.

Sometimes people at work don't like each other. Big deal. It is entirely possible to work successfully and effectively with people you don't like, even in conflict situations.

Effective conflict is like good sex or good management: we learn through practice.   And since conflict is one of the things that people most commonly avoid, it's especially important that you practice the skills, and <u>keep</u> practicing them even when they don't work for you in a specific situation.

You have already, whether you realize it or not, built up an array of skills to manage conflict – including clear, transparent and authentic communication; key relationships within the company; awareness of the interpersonal gap; strategies for articulating assumptions; and good decision-making process that involves people who might be affected by the decision. These are all skills that you can apply to conflict – in fact, you've spent the last weeks learning to apply them to specific kinds of conflict, or potential conflict, such as forging team agreements, delivering reviews, calling out bad performance, etc.

As you practice, you'll develop a sense of when conflict can be kept (or brought back to) the task level, and when it's escalating beyond that. You'll develop a sense of when to stay engaged and when to walk away. You'll find more tools to help you. And you'll find that you develop understandings with many people about how to minimize the interpersonal conflict and focus instead on resolving the business issues and moving on.

But it does take practice. So be brave, and remember that you don't have to take

it personally even if everyone else is.

One big source of conflict in the workplace is <u>change</u>. When things change, people often become unsettled, upset, defensive and resistant – even if the change is supposedly a positive one.

Change is messy. <u>Business</u> is messy.   One fundamental truth of business is that we cannot make business "neat." Business is a human thing, and humans are not neat little packages, especially in times of change. That's why as managers we need to develop the skills of managing humans well – so that we can expect the mess that comes with change, prepare for it, and help each other through it in the most effective and positive ways.

Effective change is not a one-time event – "Okay, we've changed, let's move on." Change is a process, and like everything else in management, it's a set of behaviors. These behaviors involve clear communication, a transparent process, and an authentic recognition of the <u>transition</u> stages that people go through.

To be an effective manager, you have to acknowledge that many people are afraid of conflict and suspicious of change, and that they often interpret them personally and respond defensively. They do this not because they are stupid or evil, but because they are human.   One of the most important things you can do as a manager of human beings is to model excellent behavior in times of conflict and change, and to structure conflict and change so that people can learn for themselves how to handle them more effectively.

And you'll find as we address these topics today, and as you practice managing conflict and managing change, that we are coming almost full circle back to the start of this program – because managing conflict and change effectively rely in great part on your key relationships, on your good communication skills, and on a set of values that places clarity and good results for the business over the need to "win."

It's your responsibility not to back down from these things. Trust your values, practice your skills, and be brave.

7.6   Managing business conflict

    A. Overview of conflict and difficult conversations
    B. Office politics
    C. Effective business conflict
    D. "I" language model of interpersonal conflict

7.6 A -- Overview of conflict and difficult conversations

Conflict management is a huge topic. We're not dealing with it all today. We're going to focus on making business-related conflict more effective and less personal.

Group discussion: What key concepts did you take away from **Difficult Conversations**? How do they tie in with the communication tools and ideas you've been learning and practicing in this program?

Let points come up as they will, but make sure to lead the conversation toward two goals – mapping the key concepts of a difficult conversation, and helping participants make the connections between these concepts and the interpersonal gap, ladder of assumption, human/business interaction model, leveling behavior and the values of clarity, transparency and authenticity.

Do not let the discussion detour into a lengthy examination of serious interpersonal conflict. That's beyond the scope of the session.

The important concepts of a difficult conversation:

- **The "what happened?" conversation**
    - Don't look for "truth", look for perceptions and meanings
    - Don't assume you know their intention, and don't assume bad intention
    - The contribution system vs. the blame system

- **The feelings conversation**
    - Difficult conversations don't simply include feelings, they are <u>about</u> feelings

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- – People want to be heard. "People almost never change without first feeling understood."

- **The identity conversation**
  - – Difficult conversations challenge our vision of ourselves

- Start from **the third story**
  - – Describe the gap in neutral terms

- Lead the conversation by **reframing**, **listening** and **naming the dynamic**

- **Work together** to figure out the solution

- Managing conflict doesn't mean keeping your balance: it means **getting your balance back** quickly every time you lose it

- Using these techniques doesn't mean you always get what you want.

These concepts apply to the very difficult personal conversations in our lives, and also to the most superficial conflicts we experience in the workplace. Regardless of the "level" of conflict, these concepts may be operating – so stay aware.

7.6 B -- Office politics

Conflict in business happens over choices and decisions, and can include roles and responsibilities (turf wars), process issues, blame for mistakes, strategic directions, allocation of time and resources, etc.

This is what many people call **office politics**.

Many people think all "office politics" is evil, nasty, conflict-producing and wrong. That's a short-sighted perspective – in fact, a lot of managing is about managing the basic political "systems" at work in your team and company.

When you establish and maintain key relationships, you are taking a "political" action. When you go to one of those people and ask for help solving a problem, or when you help them, you are taking a political action. When you oppose

someone's decision because it makes it more difficult for your team to get its job done, you are taking a political action. That's your job.

You can't avoid office politics – they are an essential part of infrastructure. Wherever there are two people or more, there will be politics.

But you do not have to get involved in every decision your company makes. You do not have to express a position on every issue. What you must do is get involved in, and work toward solutions for, every issue that impacts your team and its ability to meet its accountabilities.

You need to establish your place and reputation in the political system by:

- Creating and maintaining your <u>key relationships</u>. These are the people who will help you resolve problems and who will trust you during conflict.

- Understand your <u>manager's priorities</u> and supporting them. If you have a bad manager, this task becomes more difficult. If your manager's priorities directly conflict with what's necessary for your team to do its work, this task becomes more difficult.

- Be very clear about your team's <u>accountabilities</u>, and what you are responsible for in the organization. That, and your values, are the primary filter for deciding what "politics" to get involved in, or to stay outside of. Know your values and operate from them.

  In other words, have a clear <u>business</u> agenda. A lot of political infighting is based on perceptions that people have <u>personal</u> agendas. Be clear, transparent, and authentic about whether or not you have a personal agenda -- especially if you do have one.

- Keep your promises. Follow through and deliver. Talk is cheap – people will judge your trustworthiness and credibility by your behavior, so make sure you model good behavior. This includes good communication behavior.

- Share information freely. This is the key to transparency.

Helpful phrases include:

- "I'm not here to play in your sandbox."
- "I don't have an agenda about this, I'm just trying to figure out what's best for our teams and the company."
- "I know this situation affects us differently. I'm hoping we can find a way that will be good for both of us."
- "Help me understand your position on this."
- "I appreciate your perspective."
- "Am I stepping on your toes by taking this approach? That's not my intention."
- "This issue affects your team much more than mine. It's important that we make sure your needs are met."
- "This issue affects my team much more than yours, and the particular things I need to watch out for are _____."

7.6 C -- Effective business conflict

Not all conflict is bad. The ability to have <u>effective conflict</u> is one of the characteristics of successful business.

Group discussion: How would you describe effective conflict? What does it look and feel like, and why is it good?

Keep this brief and high level – the point is to highlight the positive consequences of conflict that has been effectively managed and resolved.

Then move immediately into the next discussion.

Group discussion: Based on the two articles you read ("How Management Teams Can Have a Good Fight" and "Want Collaboration?"), what are some strategies for managing business conflict effectively?

Take the time to let people explore these strategies. If any participants are unclear about a particular strategy, encourage explanations from other participants before you offer answers.

Make sure the following key concepts are addressed in the discussion, and make sure that you tie them back in to the values, concepts and tools presented in previous sessions.

Also be sure to link the key concepts with the key concepts of **Difficult Conversations,** as appropriate.

Key concepts:

- **Start from a common base**. Make sure up front that everyone is working toward the same goals.

- **Work with as much information as possible**. That way you don't have to make assumptions about what the facts might be. You can focus on issues rather than staking out emotionally-based positions.

  When you see or hear people arguing about assumptions, help people re-focus on getting the data. Help people climb down off the ladder.

- **Consider as many options as possible**, even (especially) ones you don't support.

  An unfortunate characteristic of old-school business culture is the notion that considering multiple options, and possibly changing your mind about the best one, is "weak-minded" or waffling. Don't fall for that. The point is to make the best decision for the situation, not for you to be "right" all the time.

  If you run into this mindset, tackle it directly. Be authentic and transparent: "I want us to make the best decision for the (team, company, situation, etc.). So this isn't about whose idea wins. If we make a good decision, <u>everyone</u> wins. So if another idea is the best decision, then I'm all for it."

  Find your own words. But don't ever be afraid to say this kind of thing out loud. Saying it in public helps take the power out of behind-your-back whispering.

Describing yourself authentically is an important part of working through conflict and an important part of finding a place in your company's political structure.

- **Use the 70% consensus approach**. Remember that most people have the incorrect idea of consensus as "everyone has a veto" or "it isn't consensus if I don't like it completely."

    Don't get caught up in arguments about non-essential details. People have different ways of doing things -- learn to let go of the need to "have it your way" if it doesn't matter to the overall result., especially when you're not the one doing the work.

- **Institute a process for resolving conflicts.** This is where your ability to articulate accountabilities and roles/responsibilities can really pay off. If everyone involved in an issue knows going in where the lines of authority and responsibility are, they are less likely to get into turf wars.

    If there are clear, transparent tools and process in place for getting all the information, examining multiple options, and coming to 70% consensus, people are much less likely to take the results personally.

- **Make sure the process includes clear criteria.** When everyone involved in the issue knows going in what the company's overall values and "give" points are, people are much more likely to make the necessary concessions without taking it personally. For example, if everyone knows that margins are more important than volume, people are less likely to fight for deep discounts or other volume strategies, even if those strategies make their short-term performance look better.

    Developing clear process and clear criteria helps with transparency. It makes the "company thinking" more clear to everyone, and that makes good decisions at every level of the company much more possible.

If this all sounds a lot like effective decision-making – it is.

These strategies won't <u>prevent</u> conflict, and they shouldn't. Different points of view are necessary to the overall success of the business. What these strategies

will do is keep the focus where it belongs – on the decisions, not on the people.

What you can do to help make this happen:

- Practice a clear, transparent decision-making process with your team.

- Develop a conflict resolution process for the team, including how people can escalate conflict to you if necessary.

- Discuss with your manager how to institute a conflict management process on a wider level.

- A lot of everyday workplace conflict stems from unclear lines of authority. Develop criteria and tools with the teams that you hand off work to, or that you receive work from. These tools could include a matrix of who is responsible for what decision, who has approval authority for changes to specifications or process, etc.

- Another common cause of workplace conflict is assumptions, either with regard to facts/information, or with regard to personal intent. Point out assumptions (and their negative consequences) when they come up, and ask people to do the same for you.

- When you find yourself in a conflict situation with someone at work, step back and start a conversation about how you will resolve the conflict – try to agree with them on a process, criteria, what data you need, etc.

- Stay aware of the interpersonal gap and use your communication skills to keep everyone (including you) focused on the issues and aware that you intend no interpersonal attack. Be authentic and transparent about this.

- Step away from the need to "win." Help people around you re-define "winning" as "let's make the best decision for all of us."

- Remember to listen.

- If you start taking things personally yourself, either move into an

interpersonal conflict-management mode (see below), or take a break from the conversation to regain your perspective.

7.6 D -- "I language" model of interpersonal conflict

No conflict process is perfect, and some conflict at work will end up being interpersonal – your worldview and approach will be so utterly different from someone else's that you seem alien and hostile to one another.   Or you'll be dealing with someone who doesn't have the skills to depersonalize the conflict.

When this happens, a basic strategy is to use "I language".

The purpose of "I language" is to help minimize escalation by defining and describing rather than accusing or blaming. Again, the focus is on the issues between you, and how to resolve them, rather than on which of you is "wrong" or "bad."   The goal is to work together toward specific actions or behavioral changes that will make your interactions go more smoothly in the future.

The model works like this:
- Identify the specific behavior or result that is bothering you.
- Say "When you say/do X, I feel Y, and the result is Z."
- Ask for a specific behavioral change or for help working toward a solution.

Example of how this works in a non-personal conflict:
- When we don't get notice of a production delay, we don't have a change to notify customers, and we have to field more angry phone calls and spend time putting out fires. I'd like to work with you to figure out how we can give our customers more notice of delays.

Example of how this works in a more personal conflict situation:
- When you interrupt me, I feel that you're discounting my ideas, and I find myself pushing to be heard. I'd like you to let me finish talking so that I can express my ideas.

If you're dealing with someone who absolutely will not respond to discussion of feelings, then use the same model with the "feelings" left out.
- When you yell, I stop listening to you even if you have a valid point. I'd

like us to talk without yelling.

Remember the third conversation, and reframe, listen, and name the dynamic as necessary to get things back on track.

If nothing is working, leave the conversation. You can always take a break.

Remember that you don't have to engage on the other person's terms. No matter how difficult it is – and it <u>is</u> difficult – **you always have the choice to find your balance.**

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Group brainstorming: What are some strategies for regaining your balance when someone is taking a conflict to a bad place? What can you do to keep from getting defensive, jumping into the blame game, yelling back, etc.?

Select a participant to facilitate this discussion. Coach them as they work. The goal is to make sure that responses are specific, and to record key concepts on the flip chart.

The goal is for participants to find a variety of mental, verbal and physical strategies to regain their balance and center themselves. These are personal choices – the purpose of the list is to give people many tools to practice with.

Suggestions could include: take a deep breath; count silently to 10; phrases such as "Please give me a minute to take in what you're saying" ; visualize a calming mental image; etc.

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Group exercise: Regaining balance and finding the third conversation.

Have prepared several opening lines of a conflict situation.

Also write the following notes on a flip chart:
- Regain your balance
- Focus on getting to the third conversation – describing the situation or gap from both points of view without judgment

- Remember to acknowledge feelings when you hear them.

You will play the role of the person bringing the conflict to the manager. Participants will take turns in the role of the manager. The rest of the group will coach the participant when either the participant or you asks for it.

Encourage participants to stay focused on regaining balance, paraphrasing and acknowledging feelings, and reframing to get to the third conversation.

Do not make the scenarios overly aggressive or wacky – find situations that feel realistic in terms of common conflicts in business. Remember, this is not a deep-dive session on serious interpersonal conflict.

Don't spend too long on any one scenario, and don't expect resolution. This is to practice technique, not to run the gamut of a single conversation. Make sure as many people as possible get a turn.

7.7 Introduction to managing change

    A. Test Case homework
    B. Preview of key concepts

7.7 A -- Test Case homework

Group discussion of Test Case homework from **Managing Transitions**:

- What process did your group use to come to agreement about the checklist answers? Did anything stick out for you about the process?

- What did you think of the author's answers? Were there any surprises for you? Anything you want to share from your group discussion?

Keep this discussion focused so that all groups have a chance to make some kind of report.

7.7 B -- Preview of key concepts

You'll each receive a copy of **Managing Transitions** at the end of today's session, and you'll be reading it for the next session. Today we'll spend a little time talking about change and getting a preview of key concepts in the book.

Group discussion: Why is change so hard? What stories do you have about a change that went well or not well? What made the change succeed or fail?

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Keep the following preview brief: the goal is to get participants ready to encounter these ideas in their homework reading, not to explain them fully in this session.

Here are some of the key concepts you'll find in **Managing Transitions**:

Managers should focus on managing <u>transitions</u>, not managing change. Change is situational and often a discrete event: transition is the psychological process caused by the change.

Change succeeds when these transitions are managed well, and fails when transitions are managed badly.

The three phases of the transition are:

- <u>Ending</u>. Letting go is hard, even when people view a change as positive.

- The <u>neutral zone</u>. People feel stuck between the demands of ending and the demands of beginning something new. It's an anxious time. People in the neutral zone may resist new systems, lose productivity, feel overloaded or discouraged.

- <u>Beginning</u>. Adopting new ways can be uncertain and stressful.

These phases do not happen in neat, consecutive order. They overlap, and people move through them at different rates. As a manager, you may find

yourself managing "beginnings" early in the process and managing "endings" well after the change has occurred.   You may find yourself having to help people who let themselves stick in the neutral zone so they don't have to move on to the new thing. These are all the human parts of change.

These transitions are as much about feelings as they are about "what's happening." As well as talking about the facts of the change, be prepared to use your communication and conflict management skills to talk about feelings and identity issues.   Always stay clear, transparent and authentic.

You'll be reading more about these ideas **in Managing Transitions** as homework.

Pass out copies of **Managing Transitions**.

7.8   Project discussion

Table discussion: Discuss the status of your project. This is your chance to get input, feedback and suggestions from your peers. Talk about whatever you feel is most important or pressing right now. Examples include:

- How are you doing in defining and planning your project?

- Where are you feeling anxious or stuck?

- What program ideas or skills will be important to your project?

- How can you help each other?

- Or any other questions, issues or discussion that comes up.

This will be something of a free-range discussion. The goal is for participants to share their feelings about their project help each other generate ideas or clarify issues.

Spend time with various groups listening and helping them focus or clarify.

Resist the temptation to jump in with answers.   Instead, encourage them to help each other.

7.9   Summary remarks, final questions and comments

Today we've focused on two things that are inevitable in any human undertaking, including business: <u>conflict</u> and <u>change</u>

- Conflict is simply disagreement.

- Task conflict is essential in business. Without conflict, we may never be exposed to opinions, data and perceptions that differ from ours. When managers avoid conflict, they also avoid the opportunity to help the team and business improve (and to improve themselves).

- Interpersonal conflict happens. We don't always like each other. Sometimes our styles abrade, or we misunderstand each other and fall into defensive positions.

- There are ways to have effective conflict. You need a clear process for handling conflict, including: setting common goals; setting clear criteria for decision-making; working from as much information as possible; considering as many options as possible; and using the 70% consensus rule.

- The "I language" model is an effective basic model for addressing conflict in an everyday work situation. You can use it in task conflicts or when you are requesting a change in someone's personal style of interacting with you.

- For any conversation that feels difficult to you, use the Three Conversations model.

- Look for contribution rather than blame. Try to find the "third conversation" where you can describe the situation in non-judgmental terms.

- Acknowledge people's feelings, including yours.

- Stay alert for clues to underlying identity issues (yours and theirs).
- Use reframing, listening and naming the dynamic to help guide the conversation and keep it clear and focused.

- Work together to figure out the solution.

- Listen, listen, listen.

- Managing conflict means getting your balance back quickly every time you lose.

- Many of these same skills apply to managing change and transitions, as you'll discover in your reading.

- Change is an event: transition is a process. Change is much more successful when transitions are managed well.

- As you read **Managing Transitions**, remember to pay attention to strategies for managing endings, the neutral zone, and beginnings. Remember that these are not consecutive phases, but rather overlapping processes that everyone goes through at different speeds.

Questions or comments about what we've covered today?

7.10 Wrap up
    A. Preview Session 8
    B. Review homework assignments for Session 8

7.10 A -- Preview Session 8

Our last session is coming up. We'll spend that time talking about change; discussing your project plans; developing ideas for how you can continue to

support each other as you become great managers; and reviewing whatever ideas, skills and concepts you'd like to revisit before the program ends.

7.10 B -- Homework for Session 8

Refer participants to homework sheet in their notebook. See Tools and Materials section for homework sheet and all worksheets.

1. Read **Managing Transitions**, pp. 23-95. Then do the Practice Case exercise that begins on p. 121. Do this exercise individually.

2. Readings:

   - "Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction" by Etienne Wenger (http://www.ewenger.com/theory/communities_of_practice_intro.html)
   - "Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System" by Etienne Wenger (http://www.co-i-l.com/coil/knowledge-garden/cop/lss.shtm)

3. Revisit your vision statement of yourself as a great manager. Does it still apply? Revise if necessary to make it current.

   Revisit your values. Do they still apply? Revise if necessary to make them current.

   Spend time thinking about this program and reviewing your notes and materials. Select 5 ideas, tools or topics that have been meaningful to you in the program.

   Write a personal essay that includes the following:
   - Your current vision statement of yourself as a great manager
   - Your current values as a manager
   - The 5 ideas, tools or topics you selected as meaningful
     - Describe them in your own words.
     - Why they are important to managing well?

> – What are your goals for yourself in these areas?
> – How do you see yourself applying these ideas in your work and life?

Email your essay to the group before the next session.

In our final session, I'll be asking you all to share your vision of yourself as a manager, the values that are meaningful to you, and some points of the program that have been meaningful for you. You don't have to read your entire essay – it's fine to highlight a few of the key points – but I will want you to share your complete vision statement.

You will already have read each other's essays posted to email. But it's important for you to publicly commit to your vision and to say whatever you are moved to say about what you've learned, what you've discovered, and what you want to do next. This is your opportunity to testify. Be ready.

4. Revise your draft project statement into a final project plan with the following components:

- A clear, brief description of your project – what you will do, and why it is important. Use "I" language ("I will _____") as much as possible.

- Your goal for this project – what you specifically intend to complete – and a target deadline.

- The specific benefits you expect for yourself and your team as a result of this project.

- Your specific measures of success.

- Any areas of challenge or concern (whether regarding your management skills, company policy, potential conflict with other employees, etc.) and how you intend to address them.

- Your specific action steps.

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Email this plan to the group before the next session.

5. Make a list of program concepts, ideas, or tools you still feel uncertain about.

    Be specific: what information do you want to help you feel more grounded in any particular area, or what concerns or questions would you like to discuss? What would you like to practice more (in exercises or role play)? This should include any areas of your project you're feeling stuck on or anxious about.

    We will discuss as many of these questions or concerns as we can in Session 8. Please prioritize your list so your most pressing questions have a better chance of being addressed.

    Please email your list to the program group as early as possible so everyone has time to review them and prepare for the session.   You will be each other's resources for this discussion – sharing information and ideas, and helping each other clarify concepts or brainstorm solutions.