**Conflict Resolution Skill Builder**

Great teams have great communication and conflict resolution skills. When people feel hurt and become angry because of something someone else has done, most times they confront each other with accusations in ways that escalate conflict and make the situation worse.

*When you* (state the problem behavior),

*I feel* (express your feeling)

*because* (state reasons for your feeling).

Statements that point blame usually begin with “You” and focus on the other person in a highly judgmental and negative way.

Statements that begin with “I feel” focus on our own feelings in response to the other person’s behavior.

Example 1: A member of your team interrupts you constantly when you are talking.

“You” statement: "You’re so rude! You never let me say anything!'

“I feel” statement: “***When you*** interrupt me, ***I feel*** really hurt ***because*** I think that what I have to say is important too.”

Example 2: Two members of the team are holding the instruction sheet so you can’t see what it says.

“You” statement: “You two are always hogging everything!”

“I feel” statement: “***When you*** two have the instruction sheet between you, ***I feel*** left out ***because*** I can’t follow what’s going on.”

Example 3: A member of your team is busy throwing paper wads and talking to members of another team.

“You” statement: “You’re such a goof-off. You never help.”

“I feel” statement: “***When you*** start doing things with people in other teams, ***I feel*** really upset ***because*** we need everyone’s help to get this project done on time.”

Positive requests are another strategy to use in building good communication and conflict resolution skills. Positive requests usually begin with “I want you to,” “I would,” “I’d like you to” and “I need you to.”

Negative: “Stop interrupting me.”

Positive and specific: “**I want you** to wait until I’m finished before you start talking.”

Negative: “Stop hogging all the cards.”

Positive and specific: “**I need you to** put the cards in the middle of the table so I can see them.”

Negative: “Stop messing around.”

Positive and specific: **“I would like you to** fill in the chart with the information from our notes.”

Read through the following examples and think about how you could use a combination of "I feel" statements and positive requests (“I want you to,” “I would,” “I’d like you to” and “I need you to”) to resolve conflict in the following situations.

1. One member of your team is doing all the work on the presentation. Every time you try to make a suggestion you are ignored. When you pick something up to try to help, he takes it away from you.
2. There are only three people in your team. The other two are good friends but you don’t know them very well. They are sitting close together and are acting as if you don’t exist.
3. One member of your team always gets good grades on all of her regular class work but in team discussions, she never contributes. You suspect that she knows the way to solve the problem you’re all working on.