Supervisor Roundtable

*ADDRESSING CONFLICT*
*with Student Employees*

**Office of the Ombuds**

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# OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS

## UC SANTA CRUZ

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*A Safe Place to Navigate Through Difficulties at UCSC*

- Confidential
- Informal
- Neutral
- Independent

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# Today's Conversation

- Student Employment as developmental
- Define and explore "conflict"
- Review student employment best practices
- Explore some conflict resolution skills:
  - **Active Listening**
  - **Intent vs. Impact**
- Share information about conflict resolution resources at UCSC
- Closing

# Student Development in Employment

▶ Involvement Theory

    ▶ Astin – Involvement Theory:

        ▶ "Student involvement refers to the quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience. Such involvement takes many forms, such as absorption in academic work, participation in extracurricular activities, and interaction with faculty and other institutional personnel. According to the theory, the greater the student's involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development."

            Astin, Alexander. (1999). Student Involvement: A Developmental Theory for Higher Education. *Journal of College Student Development*, 40(5), 528-529.

    ▶ Strong correlation proven in later research: "students learn from what they do in college. Research has strongly supported this assumption, indicating that engagement is positively related to objective and subjective measures of gains in general abilities and critical thinking."

            Kuh, G. D., & Pike, G. R. (2005). A typology of student engagement for american colleges and universities. Research in Higher Education,*46(2),* 185-209.

# Expectations Students have

- Leadership Experiences vs. Work Experience
  - **They're the same** – you are providing them leadership experiences with work experiences.
- What experiences with conflict resolution do students bring to their role?
  - What do students expect of you/supervisors regarding conflict on the job?
  - What do students expect of themselves regarding conflict on the job?

# Defining Conflict

▶ A disagreement between two or more parties resulting in a perceived risk or threat to one's needs, interests, or concerns.

▶ **Interpersonal Conflict**

   ▶ Two or more people have incompatible goals and,

   ▶ One or both believe that the behavior of the other prevents their own goal attainment.

**The Conflict Cycle**

Results → Beliefs → Conflicts → Responses → Results
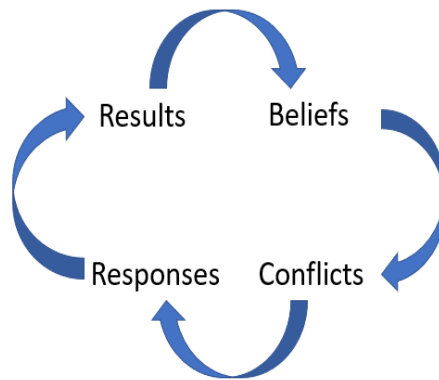
# Sources of Conflict

▶ **Resources**

Money, time, land, labor and material things.

▶ **Information**

Not having sufficient information or possessing varying perceptions of information.

▶ **Emotional and Psychological**

"Bad day" reactions or mental/psychological conditions may affect actions and attitudes.

▶ **Values**

Religion, culture, beliefs.

▶ **Relationships and Roles**

Conflict can arise when people don't fulfill how another sees their role.

▶ **Power and Structure**

Who has access to power and/or resources, and who has the authority to make decisions.

*What are common sources of conflict with student employees?*

# Possible Outcomes of Conflict

## Negative Outcomes

▶ Decreased performance

▶ Dissatisfaction

▶ Aggression

▶ Anxiety

▶ Wasted time / energy

▶ Reduced efficiency

## Positive Outcomes

▶ Identifies issues of importance to others

▶ Resolution of underlying problems

▶ Enhancement of group development

▶ Intergroup conflict can increase within-group cohesion

▶ Facilitation of needed organizational change

▶ Learning about self and others

# What is your "Conflict Style"?

Conflict theorists have observed that how we engage in conflict can be charted according to two variables:
- (1) how much we care about the **outcome** (and are thus willing to be ***assertive***)
- (2) how much we care about the **relationship** (and are thus open to ***cooperation***).

**ASSERTIVENESS**
Concern for own needs

**Competing**
WIN : LOSE
*I'm right, you're wrong*

**Collaborating**
WIN : WIN
*Let's work together*

**Compromising**
"WIN : WIN"
*Let's find the middle ground*

*After you, no after you*
LOSE : LOSE
**Avoiding**

*You're right, I'm wrong*
LOSE : WIN
**Accommodating**

**COOPERATIVENESS**
Concern for others needs

Source: Thomas-Kilmann Instrument

https://ombuds.emory.edu/blog/conflict_style.html

# Active Listening: Defined

*Seek FIRST to understand. Only then to be understood."* ~ *Steven Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

▶ **Active Listening is NOT:**

 ▶ **"Hearing"** (physiology); "Listening" is psychological.

 ▶ Focused on immediate **solution development** or **defending** actions that are criticized while listening.

▶ **Active Listening …**

 ▶ **Facilitates empathy** and understanding.

 ▶ **Listens for what is truly communicated**, not in anticipation of what one thinks the speaker will say or what we want to hear.

 ▶ **Creates trust** – leading to open, honest input.

# Active Listening…

- **Does not ignore or pretend** to listen.

- **Avoids selective listening** – Takes in shared facts, interests, positions, and even resistance. *Remember:*

  - **Defensiveness halts dialogue.**

  - **Formulating a response** while listening prevents actual listening.

  - **The speaker will often mirror** the listener's behavior.

- **Active Listening aims to <u>understand</u>** experiences, feelings, & perspectives regardless of what the listener knows or believes they know.

Active listening

Selective listening

Pretend listening

Ignoring
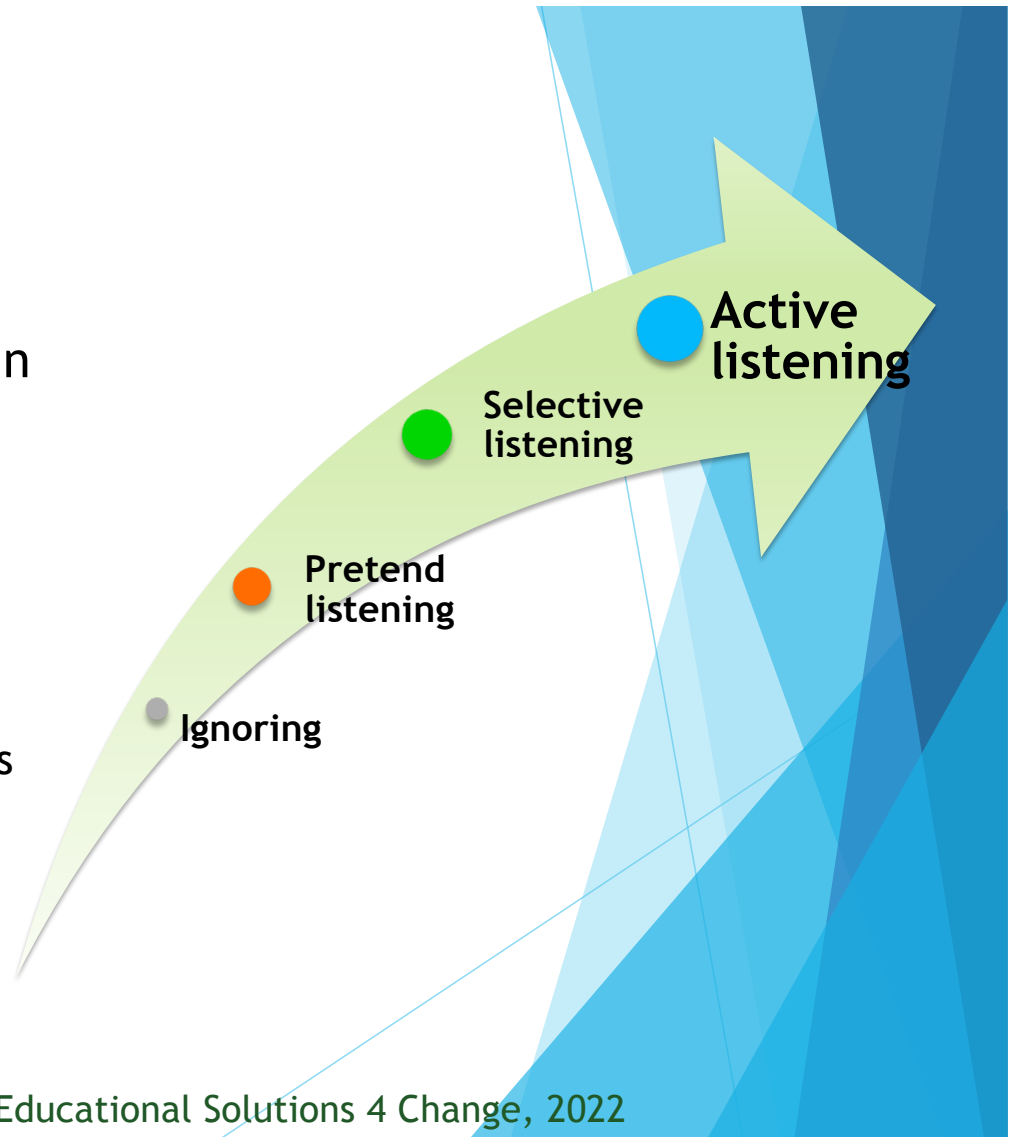
# The Art of the Powerful Question

**Powerful Questions ARE:**

▶ Open-ended

▶ Simple and clear

▶ Thought-provoking

▶ Energy inspiring

▶ Truly inquisitive and curious

▶ Able to create storytelling opportunities

▶ Designed to OPEN possibilities.

**Powerful Questions AVOID:**

▶ Yes or No responses.

▶ *Beginning* with the word "why" which can lead to defensiveness.

▶ Asking questions that imply a solution to the problem.

▶ Getting at the correct or "right answer"

# Powerful Questions: Examples

▶ What would you like to see happen …?

> ▶ *Not so powerful version*: What do you want?

▶ Can you help me understand the rationale for our standard process?

> ▶ *Not so powerful version*: **Why** do we have this process?

▶ What would it look like for you if this were resolved/not resolved?

▶ Are there actions that you were hoping would result from this discussion?

# Powerful Questions are Open-Ended Questions

| Open-Ended Questions | • Avoid asking questions that imply a solution to the matter or that seek the correct or "right" answer.<br>• Do not begin with "Why…" It may seem *open* but leading with *why* tends to close-off dialogue. |
|---|---|

**CLOSED:** Did you get cost estimates?
**CLOSED:** Why did you ask Brandon for the program budget?

**OPEN:** What information might we need to decide how this could fit into our college budget?

# Understanding Intent vs. Impact

▶ **Intent** (n): **"The act or fact of intending or purposing**; intention, purpose (formed in the mind). Formerly also, in more general sense, **will, inclination."** (Oxford Dictionary)

▶ Interpersonal matters: **what you meant to say or do.**

▶ **Impact** (n): **"The effective action of one thing or person upon another**; the **effect** of such action; **influence; impression."** (Oxford Dictionary)

▶ Interpersonal matters: what someone thinks of or feels about your words or behavior; **how someone perceives or reacts to their understanding of your words / actions.**

# Intent versus Impact
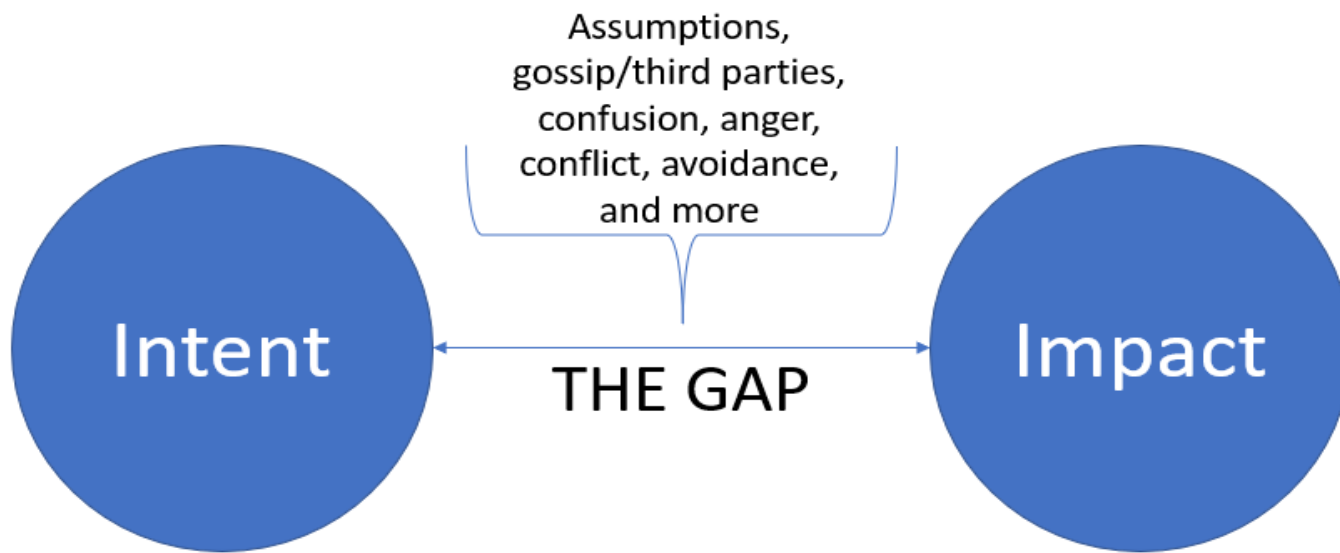
# Reducing the GAP:
# The Role of Active Listening

1. **Powerful questions** are critical!

2. **"In our leadership we operate with great intentions**, but..."

   - Failure to consider **unintended IMPACT creates** opportunities for conflict.

   - **Leaders need to consider their own impact** and the impact of others.

   - **Solicit feedback** from all involved parties and stakeholders to minimize the **GAP**.

3. **Stating our intent can mitigate unintended impact.**

4. **Active Listening** – your greatest tool in reducing the intent-impact **GAP**.

   ▶ When you listen and ask questions, you can learn how someone was impacted, and you can then respond with empathy and compassion.
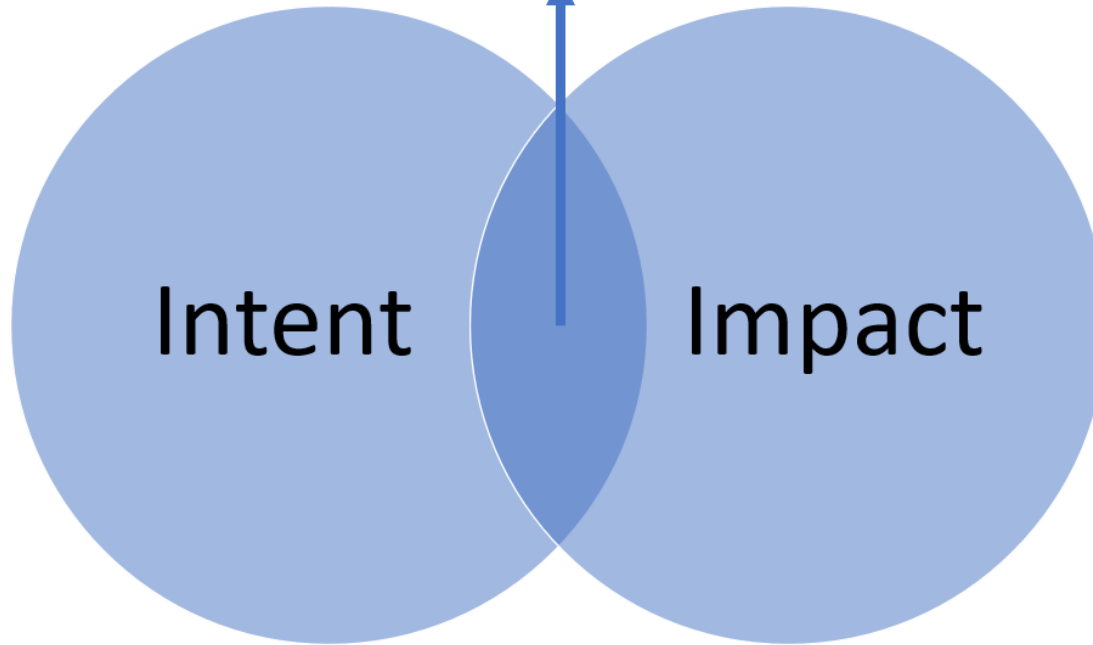
# Responding to a Negative Impact

- **A simple apology can change the dynamic**.
- Two types of apologies
  - *"I'm sorry I did . . ."*
  - *"I'm sorry about the impact this had on you." or "I'm sorry about how this has affected you." or "I regret this has affected you this way…"*
- Components of an effective apology
  - **Acknowledge or Own the harm <u>regardless of intent</u>**.
  - **Show empathy**, kindness, and compassion.
  - Offer solutions if warranted. *"Can we start again?"* or *"Might it work if we did this instead?"*

# Let's practice

▶ A student employee of yours has been on the job for one week and is shadowing another student employee regarding daily tasks. This is the first job for this student and they seem to not understand the flow of the job: not showing up on time consistently, on their phone, and not completing tasks when left alone. The lead student (the one being shadowed) is frustrated and is now upset with both the new student employee and you – they feel like they are carrying more responsibility than they should. You are about to have a 1on1 meeting with this student.

▶ Practice:

  ▶ What powerful questions can you ask?

  ▶ How can you focus on the impact for this student employee?

# Best Practices for Student Employees

- Setting **expectations** early, revisiting regularly:
  - Individual employee
  - Team
- Goals – establish them early, revisit/revise as needed
- Performance feedback – evaluations that are:
  - Regular (timeframe communicated actively to employees)
  - No surprises (opportunities to improve should be communicated as soon as possible, giving the opportunity for the employee to improve/show that improvement)
- Transparency in processes (hiring, evaluation, job needs)
  - Including the needs of the role, which may evolve (share this up front)
- Other best practices to share that help create a culture ready to address conflict productively?

# You Have Options

Conflict Resolution Resources for UC Santa Cruz
Students, Staff, and Academic Employees

## Emergency Response

Emergency response is for immediate needs, including after hours needs. The offices not listed as emergency response units, are not staffed for 24/7 response and may take one or more business days to respond to outreach.

**UCSC POLICE DEPARTMENT**
STUDENTS, STAFF & ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES
TEL: 9-1-1 (emergency) or (831) 459-2231 (non-emergency)

**CAMPUS MOBILE CRISIS TEAM**
STUDENTS
(AFTER HOURS)
TEL: (831) 502-9988

## Confidential Resources

UC Santa Cruz strives to have a "no wrong door" policy and will provide a warm hand-off to the appropriate office. These resources will not share information they receive without permission, and are a great first step for anyone unsure of where to go with an issue or concern

**CARE OFFICE: CAMPUS ADVOCATE**
STUDENTS, STAFF & ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES
In response to sexual violence, assault & harassment
TEL: (831) 502-2273   WEB: care.ucsc.edu
24/7 TEL: (888) 900-4232

**COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS)**
STUDENTS
TEL: (831) 459-2628

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**
STAFF & ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES
24/7 TEL: (831) 459-2628

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS**
STUDENTS, STAFF & ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES
TEL: (831) 459-5856 (business hours)
WEB: ombuds.ucsc.edu

## Informal Conflict Resolution Services

SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, STAFF, ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES, PROFESSORS, RAS, TAS

The best conflict resolution method is to address the conflict early. Start with the people closest to the situation. Reach out to informal resources when needed.

**BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION TEAM (BIT)**
if perceived danger to self or others. For an emergency response, call 9-1-1
EMAIL: bit@ucsc.edu
WEB: riskandsafety.ucsc.edu/programs/bit

**OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT & CONFLICT EDUCATION**
EMAIL: conduct@ucsc.edu
TEL: (831) 459-4377

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDS**
STUDENTS, STAFF & ACADEMIC EMPLOYEES
TEL: (831) 459-5856 (business hours)
WEB: ombuds.ucsc.edu

**SCAN HERE FOR RESOURCES**

| Reporting & Complaints (formal & informal) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ACADEMIC PERSONNEL**<br>TEL: (831) 459-4300<br>WEB: apo.ucsc.edu | **BIAS RESPONSE PROCESS**<br>STUDENTS<br>to report an incident of hate or bias<br>WEB: biasresponse.ucsc.edu | **HR/EMPLOYEE & LABOR RELATIONS**<br>contact your local SHR team member or union<br>WEB: shr.ucsc.edu/contact/locate_team | **OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT & CONFLICT EDUCATION**<br>EMAIL: conduct@ucsc.edu<br>TEL: (831) 459-4377 |
| **OFFICE OF EQUITY AND EQUAL PROTECTION**<br>EMAIL: equity@ucsc.edu<br>WEB: equity.ucsc.edu | **LOCALLY DESIGNATED OFFICER/ WHISTLEBLOWER**<br>TEL: 1-800-403-4744<br>EMAIL: wbreport@ucsc.edu<br><br>**TITLE IX OFFICE**<br>EMAIL: titleix@ucsc.edu<br>WEB: titleix.ucsc.edu | **ABUSIVE CONDUCT**<br>EMAIL: reportabusiveconduct@ucsc.edu<br>WEB: shr.ucsc.edu/elr/abusive_conduct_in_the-workplace | **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS**<br>EMAIL: deanofstudents@ucsc.edu<br>WEB: studentsuccess.ucsc.edu/ecosystem-of-care/student_grievance resources<br><br>Updated 9/2023 |

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