

*Tips for when*

By Mason Atkin,  
SCRC Staff

# DISCUSSION TURNS INTO CONFLICT

Whether we're discussing where we want to hold an event or how we should prioritize money spending, it's common for a discussion to turn into conflict. Clues you are in conflict are that people are committed to a particular choice and get defensive or aggressive when others have different opinions. Luckily, there are some pretty clear steps to move forward with everyone on the same page.

## WHEN DISCUSSION TURNS INTO CONFLICT, YOUR GOALS IS: REACH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

---

### Step 1: Identify positive intent

It's easy to assume your teammates are derailing the conversation because they're thoughtless, selfish and generally don't care about the work like you do. Assume that their intentions are good. Figure out what their intentions by asking questions and then give them credit for caring.

### Step 2: Identify highly valued criteria

You need to figure out why people are locked into their positions by discovering the *interests* behind their positions. Ask questions like "why is that the best option to you?" If Stacy is fighting to have a barn dance and the rest of the team wants something more formal, find out why Stacy thinks it's a good option. Maybe she thinks line dancing is a great way to build community. If that's the case, adding cha-cha slide or cupid shuffle to the playlist at the ball might solve the conflict.

Need some help with a disagreement? Want more tips?

Contact us: [scrc@uoregon.edu](mailto:scrc@uoregon.edu) | [scrc.uoregon.edu](http://scrc.uoregon.edu) | @UOSCR