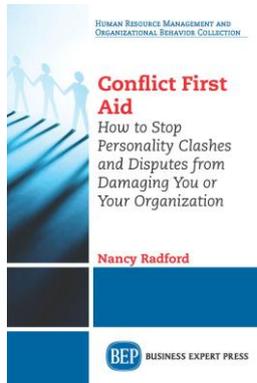


## PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Conflict First Aid: How to Stop Personality Clashes and Disputes from Damaging You or Your Organization***

Author: **Nancy Radford**

Publisher: Business Expert Press

List Price: \$34.95      Format: Softcover, 150 pages

Publication Date: December 2011      ISBN: 978-163157-973-8

Reviewer: **Calvin Flemmings, PMP**      Review Date: May 2018

### Introduction

As a leader and manager of project teams comprised of stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds with often conflicting priorities and agendas, I was intrigued by “*Conflict First Aid How to Stop Personality Clashes and Disputes from Damaging You or Your Organization*” as a possible source of tools and techniques for managing the personality conflicts that often occur and potentially create risks to project and/or organization objectives if they persist.

Nancy Radford's book provides excellent examples of how to effectively manage disputes and personality clashes before they get out of control and damage organizations and relationships. Nancy uses a detailed, structured process that helps you to understand and empathize with antagonists, provides tools and tactics for understanding motives, triggers, and communication styles, and methods for handling the inevitable difficult conversations and falling outs. The book consists of 12 well-written chapters that examine Understanding Conflict, Controlling Emotions, deciding whether to Speak up or Remain Silent in the face of conflict, managing conflict when it occurs (Getting Ready to Take the Plunge), Difficult Conversations, Improving Communication, Ambushes and Problems, refereeing (“When Good People Fall Out”), and Prevention. The final chapter is a source of useful tools and techniques.

### Overview of Book’s Structure

*Conflict First Aid* is a well-written and structured guide that shows the reader how to handle the unavoidable conflicts, disputes, and personality clashes that occur among individuals within a project team or organization.

As a specialist in early conflict resolution and civil and commercial mediation, Nancy draws from her experiences and includes real-world examples and case-study excerpts. Nancy provides real-world examples and stresses the importance of listening carefully, fairness, and empathy. She provides useful tools (often delivered as acronyms), quotes from luminaries, and practical exercises. Each chapter ends with a short "Check Understanding" section to remind the reader of the major points covered.

## Highlights

Leading a project team involves not only managing stakeholders' expectations of a project's deliverables but also managing stakeholders' interpersonal relationships. When a team is comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds, priorities, and agendas, conflict and personality clashes are sometimes inevitable. The ability to manage conflict and personality clashes before they become serious risks to relationships and business objectives in a calm, fair, and effective manner is a critical skill.

## Highlights: What I liked!

Nancy has taken time to explain the causes and costs of conflict and the effect of the flight/fight response on one's thought processes. She takes the reader through steps to control your emotions, empathize with others, know when to speak up or remain silent; when and how to have the difficult conversations, how to handle "ambushes" and "blindsiding", how to avoid taking sides, improving communications, how to hopefully prevent a clash, how to say "yes" and "no", and how to leverage lessons learned. She provides useful acronyms, examples, and case studies that make the subject interesting and easy to understand. The final "Resources" chapter is a trove of useful conflict management tools and techniques. My copy is well-marked and highlighted for future reference.

## Who might benefit from the Book?

Anyone who leads in any capacity would will benefit from this book. The book is targeted to managers; however, anyone who works in a team environment can benefit from the conflict management tools and techniques provided in this book, especially the Resources provided in the last chapter

## Conclusion

*"Conflict First Aid How to Stop Personality Clashes and Disputes from Damaging You or Your Organization"* is a motivational and useful book. It helps you understand the causes of conflict, step back and think through personality clashes, empathize with participants, be fair, act when necessary, and prevent conflict when possible. It provides useful tools for leading people and projects. The acronyms, inspirational quotes, examples, case studies, and the tools and techniques in the "Resources" provide a useful handbook for a project manager.

For more about this book, go to: <http://www.businessexpertpress.com/books/conflict-first-aid-how-to-stop-personality-clashes-and-disputes-from-damaging-you-or-your-organization/>

*Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Silver Spring Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Silver Spring Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Silver Spring Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published. Chapter members are generally mid-career professionals, the audience for most project management books. If you are an author or publisher of a project management-related book, and would like the book reviewed through this program, please contact [editor@peworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.net).*

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## About the Reviewer



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Calvin Flemmings, PMP is a Project Manager and Oracle EBS Specialist with over 20 years of Information Technology (IT) experience and a proven record of successfully managing complex ERP Financial Systems implementations, upgrades, and support. A respected leader, manager, and coach, Calvin is adept at assembling and motivating diverse teams of up to 25+ IT professionals and maintaining stakeholders' confidence. Calvin serves as a trusted advisor to clients while delivering effective and efficient integrated solutions for federal state and local government agencies as well as communications, financial services, banking, media, insurance, REIT, and energy clients. Calvin is passionate about giving back to his areas of expertise and encouraging young people to work in Information Technology and Project Management.

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