

MANAGING CONFLICT: TRAINING STRONG PEOPLE TO PULL TOGETHER IN THE SAME DIRECTION

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Destructive church conflict is a painful problem in many churches throughout the world, hindering unity, causing hurts, and spoiling mission and ministry. However, in many countries, pastors and leaders lack access to teaching, training, and tools that will assist them in understanding and managing church conflict productively. To provide those leaders with access to conflict management training, a degree-level Independent Study Textbook (IST) on Managing Conflict was developed for Global University, using Global's independent study methodology. (Global University specializes in long-distance education on multiple academic levels for international church leaders.) The target student in the writing of the course was a non-Western, 30-year-old married emerging church leader for whom English was a second language.

The textbook gives the Christian leader an overview of conflict and its management in the Church. The intention is to inform and refocus the Christian leader's thinking concerning the principles, actions, and creativity needed in conflict management. The leader will gain increased knowledge, improved thinking, and new skills to manage personal conflicts and build stronger relationships in the local church, small group, ministry team, or leadership group. In addition, the leader will be able to take insights from this course and train other church leaders in managing conflict within their teams, facilitating the development of relationships in the local church. Finally, the leader will be stimulated to take additional training, resulting in healthier managing of conflict in the church.