

## Crisis, Conflict, and Civility

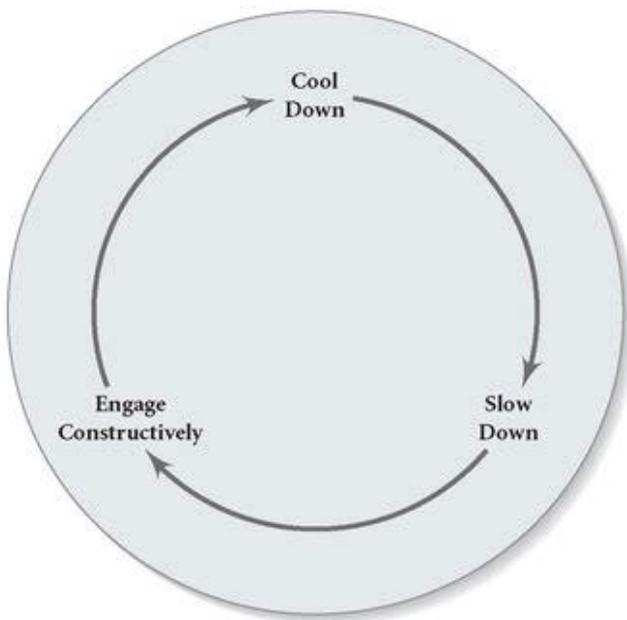
We all recognize these are unprecedented circumstances in our lifetime. The COVID-19 pandemic is a catastrophic challenge to our society. Feelings of angst and fear in each of us are understandable.

Uncertainty impacts us in ways that extend beyond our self-awareness and can lead to substantial conflict in our relationships and communications with others.

The Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of the Ombudsman reminds *all members of our institution* of the importance of remaining civil and respectful with one another – during times of crisis, as well as in times of normalcy.

There are many definitions of civility, however, most of these incorporate elements of courtesy, politeness, tolerance, and working together toward common goals. Principles of civility acknowledge that persons may disagree at times, however, any disagreement must remain respectful. We ask all members of the Health Sciences Campus to display their professionalism and prevent the escalation of disagreement into discord and other forms of interpersonal conflict.

If you find yourself in an interaction that is escalating in intensity, emotion or behavior, please consider the following tool:



Runde C, Flanagan T. *Becoming a Conflict Competent Leader: How You and Your Organization Can Manage Conflict Effectively*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass; 2013.

- **Cool Down**

- Take time to reflect and think about all perspectives in the conflict
- Reflect on your own thoughts and emotions, as well as others'
- Resist jumping to judgment(s)
- Remember everyone is doing the best they can

- **Slow Down**

- Notice that emotions are running high
- Consider a pause in the communication to allow emotions to lower
- Practice centering, breathing, and mindfulness

- **Engage Constructively**

- Look for opportunities to re-engage in communication
- Before speaking, consider Does it need to be said? Is it helpful? Is it kind?
- Use active listening - speak and hear in equal measure, respect
- Look for common goals and mutual solutions

Each situation may present unique circumstances. In some instances it may be more appropriate to utilize Slow Down tools prior to Cool Down tools.

If you experience an escalating conflict, please reach out to Academic Affairs and Ombudsman for additional assistance:

Office of Academic Affairs: <https://medicine.utah.edu/academic-affairs/>

Office of the Ombudsman: [https://medicine.utah.edu/academic-affairs-faculty-](https://medicine.utah.edu/academic-affairs-faculty-dev/ombudsman/ombudsman.php)

[dev/ombudsman/ombudsman.php](https://medicine.utah.edu/academic-affairs-faculty-dev/ombudsman/ombudsman.php)

[facultyombudsman@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:facultyombudsman@hsc.utah.edu)