Advanced Conflict Resolution in Scientific Teams Training Course

Professional Development Training Course Outline

Category	Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Development	**Duration**	10 Days
Base Fee	$4,000 USD	**Delivery Mode**	Online / On-site Hybrid

Course Introduction

The pursuit of Scientific Innovation demands intense Collaboration and Critical Discourse, making conflict not just inevitable, but often essential for Breakthroughs. However, when disagreements over data, methodology, authorship, or resource allocation escalate from productive Task Conflict to destructive Relationship Conflict, the results are Stalled Projects, Research Misconduct, and high Talent Attrition. This advanced training moves beyond basic communication skills to provide a Strategic Framework for managing the complex, High-Stakes Disputes unique to R&D, Clinical Trials, and Academic Research environments.

Advanced Conflict Resolution in Scientific Teams Training Course is engineered for high-level Science Leadership and Principal Investigators (PIs) who must navigate Interdisciplinary Dynamics, power imbalances, and Cross Cultural Communication within their labs and project groups. Participants will master Mediative Interventions, Root Cause Analysis, and Systemic Dispute Resolution protocols, transforming conflict from a vulnerability into a catalyst for Organizational Resilience and Ethical Research Practices. The focus is on building Psychological Safety and a Conflict-Resilient Culture that supports Data Integrity and accelerates the path from hypothesis to publication.

Programme Curriculum

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Introduction

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Course Duration

10 days

Course Objectives

Upon completion, participants will be able to:

1. De-escalate high-tension disagreements using Emotional Intelligence and Non-Violent Communication (NVC) techniques.
2. Perform Root Cause Analysis to distinguish between Task Conflict and Relationship Conflict
3. Implement Interest-Based Negotiation (IBN) to move scientific teams beyond fixed Positions to mutually beneficial Interests and Win-Win Outcomes.
4. Apply a structured Mediation Framework to resolve Authorship Disputes and Data Ownership disagreements ethically.
5. Navigate Interdisciplinary Dynamics and Cross-Functional communication barriers between different scientific groups
6. Identify and manage the conflict implications of Power Imbalances to ensure Procedural Justice.
7. Develop team protocols to ensure Psychological Safety and encourage Productive Disagreement without fear of reprisal.
8. Utilize Advanced Questioning Techniques to uncover hidden agendas and Systemic Issues.
9. Address Implicit Bias and Cultural Differences that manifest as interpersonal friction within diverse global research teams.
10. Establish Conflict Resolution Systems (CRS) and Early Warning Sign monitoring for Research & Development (R&D) environments.
11. Coach team members through a personalized Conflict Style Assessment to improve self-awareness and situational adaptation.
12. Transform historical Conflict Trauma and lingering resentment into opportunities for Organizational Learning and Team Cohesion.
13. Apply the principles of Restorative Justice to address breaches of trust and rebuild damaged professional relationships.

Target Audience

1. Principal Investigators.
2. R&D Project Managers.
3. Senior Research Scientists/Engineers.
4. Clinical Trial Coordinators.

5. HR Business Partners & Legal Counsel.
6. Postdoctoral Researchers.
7. Department Heads & Deans.
8. Technology Transfer Officers.

Course Modules

Module 1: The Scientific Conflict Landscape

- Differentiating productive Task Conflict from destructive Relationship Conflict
- The Understanding the roots of conflict in Scarcity and Certainty.
- Mapping the stages of conflict from latent disagreement to destructive crisis
- Identifying subtle, early warning signs
- Case Study: The Stalled Phase I Trial: A PI avoids mediating a methodological dispute between two senior biostatisticians, causing a 6-month delay and regulatory penalties.

Module 2: Advanced Emotional Intelligence & Self-Regulation

- Using Self-Awareness to identify personal conflict triggers and habitual response patterns
- Techniques for managing the Amygdala Hijack to maintain a neutral facilitation presence.
- Assertive communication strategies for maintaining professional boundaries without sacrificing empathy.
- Reading and managing body language, tone, and vocal pace to lower group tension.
- Case Study: The Hostile Review: A Postdoc reacts defensively and personally to an anonymous negative peer review, and the PI must intervene to reframe the criticism objectively.

Module 3: Root Cause Analysis (RCA) in Research

- Using the "5 Whys" and Fishbone Diagrams to uncover the Systemic and underlying causes of recurring friction.
- Analyzing conflict rooted in organizational design: unclear RACI matrices, overlapping jurisdictions, and flawed incentives.
- Investigating conflicts stemming from data-handling practices, Methodological Disagreement, and interpretation differences.
- Identifying conflicts based on deeply held, often unspoken, professional or ethical values
- Case Study: The Duplicated Effort: Two lab teams repeatedly clash over resource scheduling; RCA reveals an organizational failure to update the equipment sharing protocol after a merger.

Module 4: The Interest-Based Negotiation (IBN) Framework

- Shifting the conversation from what parties Demand to what they Need
- Techniques for "Enlarging the Pie" generating creative options that satisfy the core interests of both sides
- Establishing fair, independent standards to evaluate options.
- Assessing the Best/Worst Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement to anchor the discussion to reality.
- Case Study: The IP Standoff: Two university professors dispute ownership of a software algorithm. IBN helps them move from a fixed 50/50 split to a tiered-royalty arrangement tied to their respective departments' future use and funding.

Module 5: Principles of Ethical Authorship Resolution

- Deep dive into the four criteria for authorship as the Objective Criteria.
- Developing a Living Authorship Agreement at the start of a project, not the end.

- Using weighted contribution models to assign proportional credit and resolve disputes before publication.
- How to communicate authorship decisions clearly and respond to challenges with defensible evidence.
- Case Study: The Missing Middle Author: A senior lab manager is excluded from a high-profile paper despite significant effort; the mediator uses ICMJE to enforce an objective addition.

Module 6: Mediation and Facilitation in the Lab

- Establishing Impartiality and Confidentiality to build trust in a high-stakes setting.
- Utilizing a multi-stage mediation process to control the flow of communication.
- Transforming accusatory or negative language into neutral, constructive, and forward-looking statements.
- Strategies for two facilitators to handle particularly volatile or complex Systemic Disputes.
- Case Study: The Equipment Sabotage: An accusation of deliberate damage is brought forward; a mediated process uncovers a deep-seated feeling of exclusion and lack of access, leading to a new communal scheduling policy.

Module 7: Navigating Interdisciplinary and Cross-Functional Conflicts

- Understanding how different scientific disciplines have distinct values and 'languages' that breed conflict.
- Techniques for translating technical jargon and differing Epistemologies to ensure mutual understanding.
- Identifying all formal and informal power brokers in a multi-departmental project and addressing their unique interests.
- Resolving disagreements over project priorities, conflicting deadlines, and resource allocation between departments.
- Case Study: The Software-Hardware Divide: A software team and a hardware team clash over design specs, with each viewing the other's standards as "unrealistic"; the intervention focuses on creating a shared, integrated design document.

Module 8: Managing Power and Hierarchy-Based Disputes

- Analyzing the four types of power and their role in conflict escalation.
- Structured, non-confrontational strategies for PIs to address disruptive, aggressive, or Microaggressive behavior from powerful colleagues.
- Creating alternative, confidential reporting channels for junior staff to raise issues without fear of career harm.
- Ensuring transparency and consistency in all conflict handling to build a sense of fairness across the hierarchy.
- Case Study: The Silent Postdoc: A postdoc is visibly distressed but refuses to speak up against a senior PI's abusive criticism; the HR partner uses a confidential survey to validate the systemic issue.

Module 9: The Role of Culture and Implicit Bias

- Understanding how high-context vs. low-context cultures approach disagreement and Face-Saving.
- Recognizing and mitigating the impact of unconscious bias on performance evaluations and conflict interpretation.
- Strategies for synchronizing communication and establishing Equity when working across multiple time zones and cultures.
- Designing team rituals and communication norms that actively include and validate diverse perspectives.
- Case Study: The Quiet Contributor: A brilliant scientist from a collectivist culture is perceived as "unassertive" and "disinterested" by an individualistic PI, leading to overlooked contributions and conflict over credit.

Module 10: Systemic Conflict Resolution (CRS) Design

- Conducting an organizational assessment to map recurring conflict types, hotspots, and current ineffective resolution channels.
- Developing a multi-door approach: coaching, informal dialogue, mediation, and formal grievance matching the forum to the issue.
- Selecting and training internal Conflict Coaches and Ombuds to handle low-level issues informally.
- Integrating lessons learned from past conflicts into new policy, onboarding, and project planning.
- Case Study: The Grievance Backlog: A research institute with a high volume of formal grievances redesigns its CRS to push 80% of issues to early, confidential mediation, significantly clearing the backlog.

Module 11: Repairing Trust and Relationship Restoration

- Understanding the difference between competence-based trust and integrity-based trust, and how conflict damages both.
- Teaching the four components of a meaningful apology: acknowledgement, responsibility, remorse, and repair.
- Facilitating a structured conversation where the harmed party is able to express impact and the responsible party is held accountable for repair.
- Establishing clear, measurable action plans post-resolution to ensure sustained behavioral change and rebuild relationships.
- Case Study: The Data Breach: A junior researcher accidentally leaks confidential preliminary results; the focus moves from punishment to restorative dialogue and the implementation of a new double-check protocol.

Module 12: Advanced Coaching for Conflict Competence

- Using the GROW model to coach an individual in preparing for a difficult conversation.
- Utilizing High-Fidelity Simulations to practice negotiation and de-escalation scripts in a safe environment.
- Teaching individuals to frame a conflict as a neutral, third-party narrative before attempting resolution.
- Strategies for shifting an individual's mindset from conflict avoidance to Conflict Engagement.
- Case Study: The Avoidant Manager: A department manager continually delegates conflict; the course coaches them on how to own the process and facilitate a crucial team meeting.

Module 13: Conflict in the Future of Science

- Preparing for conflicts arising from the adoption of AI in data analysis and Automation in the lab
- Navigating the ethical debates and Stakeholder Conflicts surrounding new, disruptive technologies
- Addressing the unique communication gaps, isolation, and lack of non-verbal cues in remote or hybrid scientific teams.
- Developing a protocol for communicating team-related conflict and resolution efforts to external funding bodies and institutional leadership.
- Case Study: The AI Disagreement: A new AI-driven model contradicts years of human-analyzed data; the team must constructively resolve the conflict between human expertise and algorithmic output.

Module 14: Measuring and Sustaining Conflict Competence

- Identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) for conflict health: grievance reduction, turnover rates, Psychological Safety Scores.
- Strategies for embedding conflict resolution tools into daily team workflows.

- Designing lightweight, recurring training exercises to sustain learned behaviors.
- Ensuring senior leaders visibly and consistently apply the learned principles to institutional and personal disputes.
- Case Study: The Culture Shift: A division tracks its Psychological Safety score, noting a 20% increase one year after implementing the new training and a departmental conflict ombudsman.

Module 15: Final Simulation and Action Planning

- A comprehensive, multi-layered role-play involving Authorship, Resource Allocation, and a Personality Clash demanding full-spectrum intervention.
- Participants develop a concrete, 90-day plan to implement a key resolution strategy in their own team or lab.
- Group work where participants provide coached advice on a real-life, non-confidential conflict challenge brought by a peer.
- Building a personal digital Conflict Toolkit including templates for mediation notes, IBN worksheets, and communication scripts.
- Course Feedback: Structured feedback session to ensure the course design meets the high standards of the scientific community.

Training Methodology

This **Advanced Conflict Resolution** course employs a highly **Experiential** and **Adult Learning** approach, moving far beyond traditional lectures.

- High-Fidelity Role-Playing & Simulations.
- Interactive Case Studies.
- Structured Dialogue & Coaching.
- Applied Toolkits.
- Personalized Assessment.

Register as a group from 3 participants for a Discount

Send us an email: info@fineskilltrainingcenter.org or call +254769199797

Certification

Upon successful completion of this training, participants will be issued with a globally- recognized certificate.

Tailor-Made Course

We also offer tailor-made courses based on your needs.

Key Notes

a. The participant must be conversant with English.

b. Upon completion of training the participant will be issued with an Authorized Training Certificate

c. Course duration is flexible and the contents can be modified to fit any number of days.

d. The course fee includes facilitation training materials, 2 coffee breaks, buffet lunch and A Certificate upon successful completion of Training.

e. One-year post-training support Consultation and Coaching provided after the course.

f. Payment should be done at least a week before commence of the training, to Fineskill Training Center account, as indicated in the invoice so as to enable us prepare better for you.

Upcoming Scheduled Sessions

Start Date	End Date	Location	Price
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Online	$2,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$3,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$6,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$9,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000
23 Nov 2026	04 Dec 2026	Physical	$12,000

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