



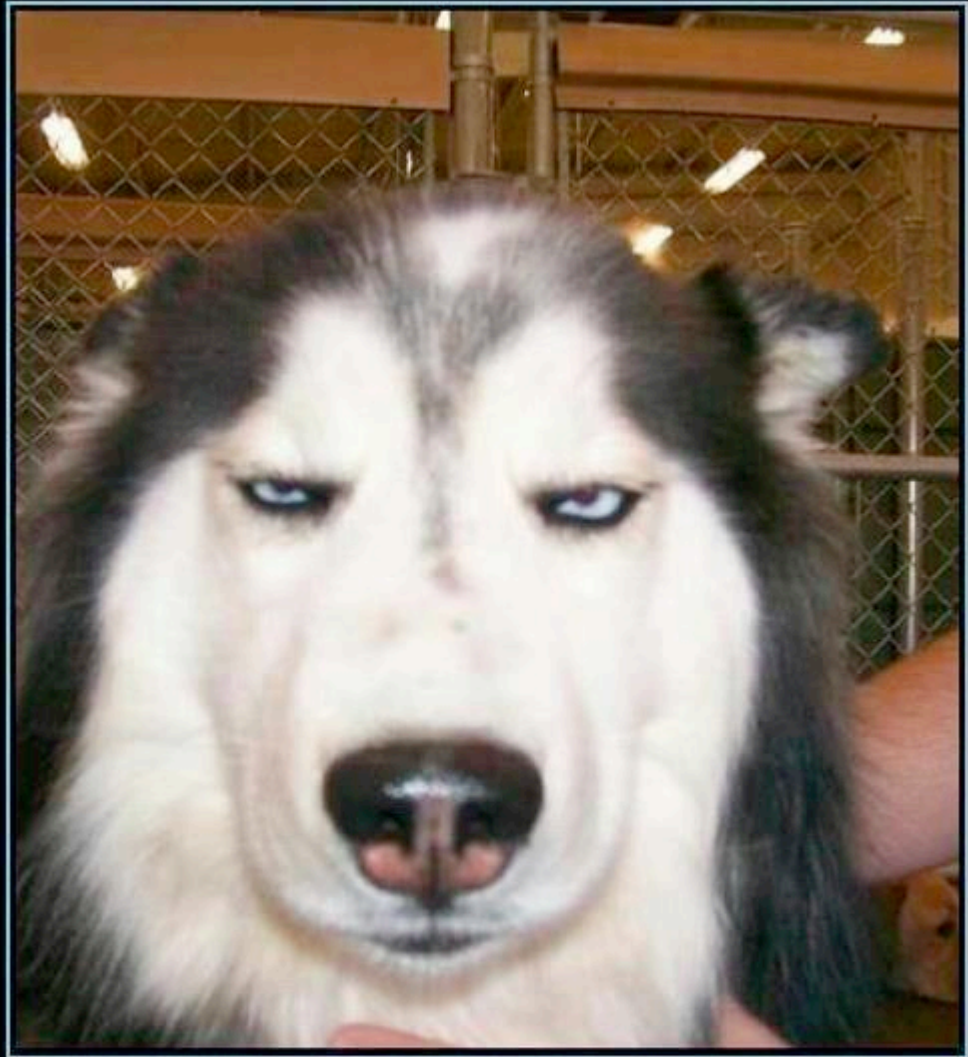
CSSE 372 Software Project Management: Conflict Management

Shawn Bohner
Office: Moench Room F212
Phone: (812) 877-8685
Email: bohner@rose-hulman.edu



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We are talking about Conflict today... you know, that thing that can even come between best friends.



YOU THREW THE BALL

Except you didn't. You only pretended to throw it. You let me chase after absolutely nothing for five hundred feet. Or fifty feet. Or five miles. I don't know. I'm not good at judging distances. I'm a dog. My point here is that YOU sir, are a ROYAL TWIT!

Learning Outcomes: Teams



Formulate software project teams in terms of roles & responsibilities

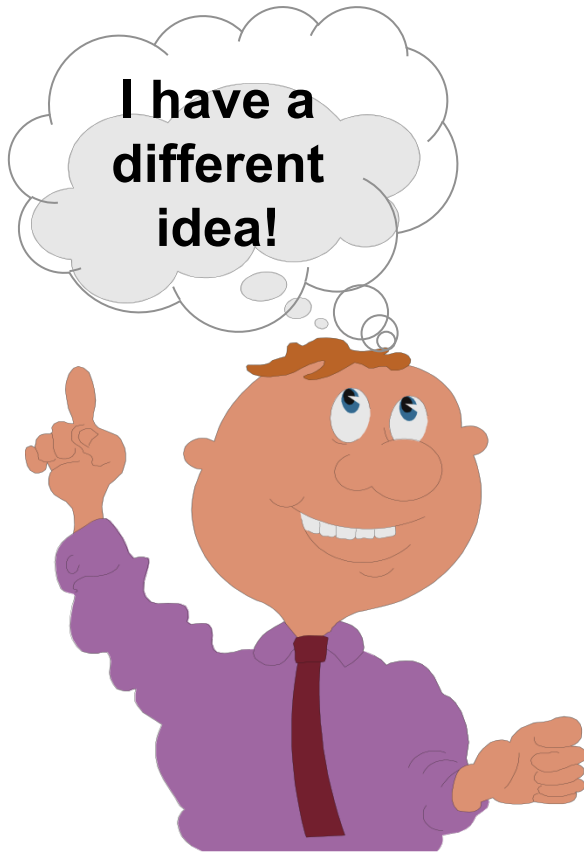
- **Examine conflicts**
- **Discuss resolution approaches**
- **Apply conflict resolution strategies in exercises**

When you have conflict with someone on your project team, is this always bad?

- Think for 15 seconds...
- Turn to a neighbor and discuss it for a minute



Good and Bad Conflict



Conflict is good.

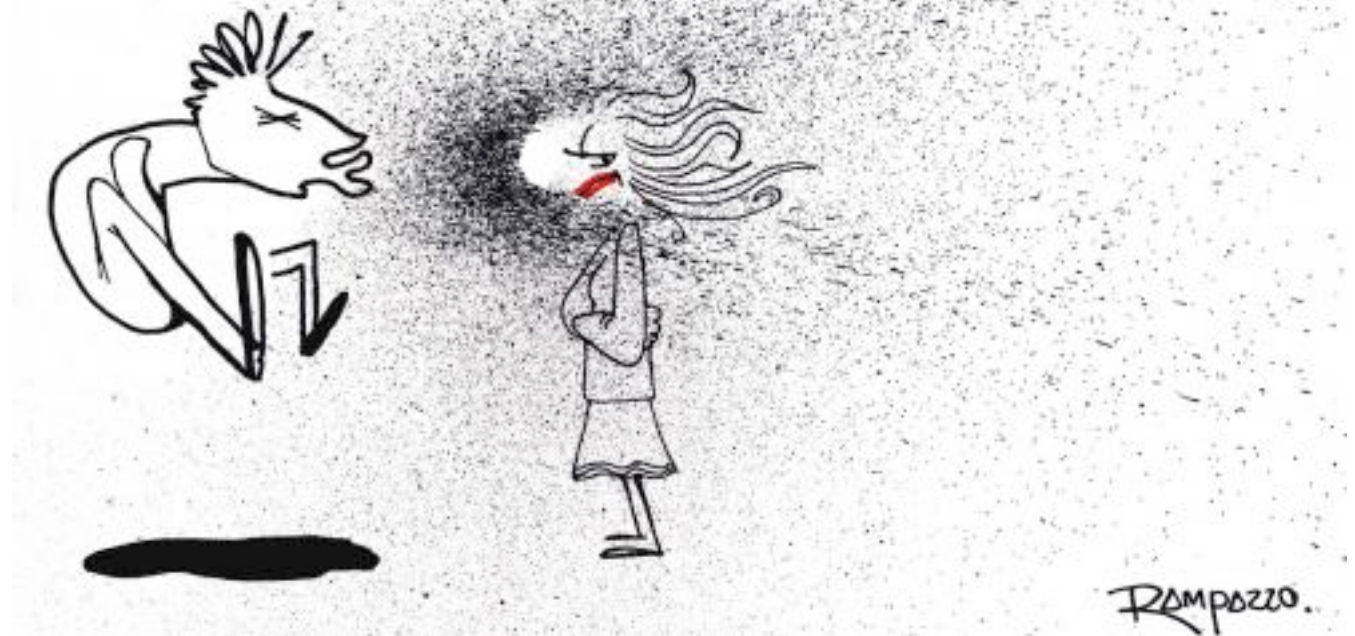


Conflict is bad.

Paper: Conscious Conflict by Karen Mackey

The author says conflict is like a sneeze, it may be suppressed, but it will be expressed some way or another.

What does timing have to do with it?



Bohnerizm #1: Leave the “Buts” Behind

- Use the “buts” in our language sparingly
 - Every time you say “but” in a sentence, you negate the first part of the sentence...
- Try saying “and” instead!
 - Brainstorming
 - Advice



Three Key Styles of Resolving Conflict

Win-Lose

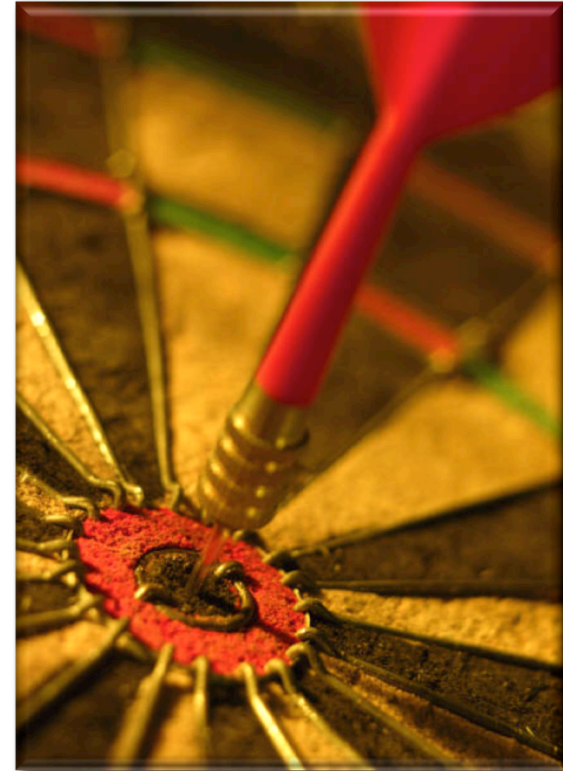
- ❖ Strategies used are power, **dominance**, force

Lose-Lose

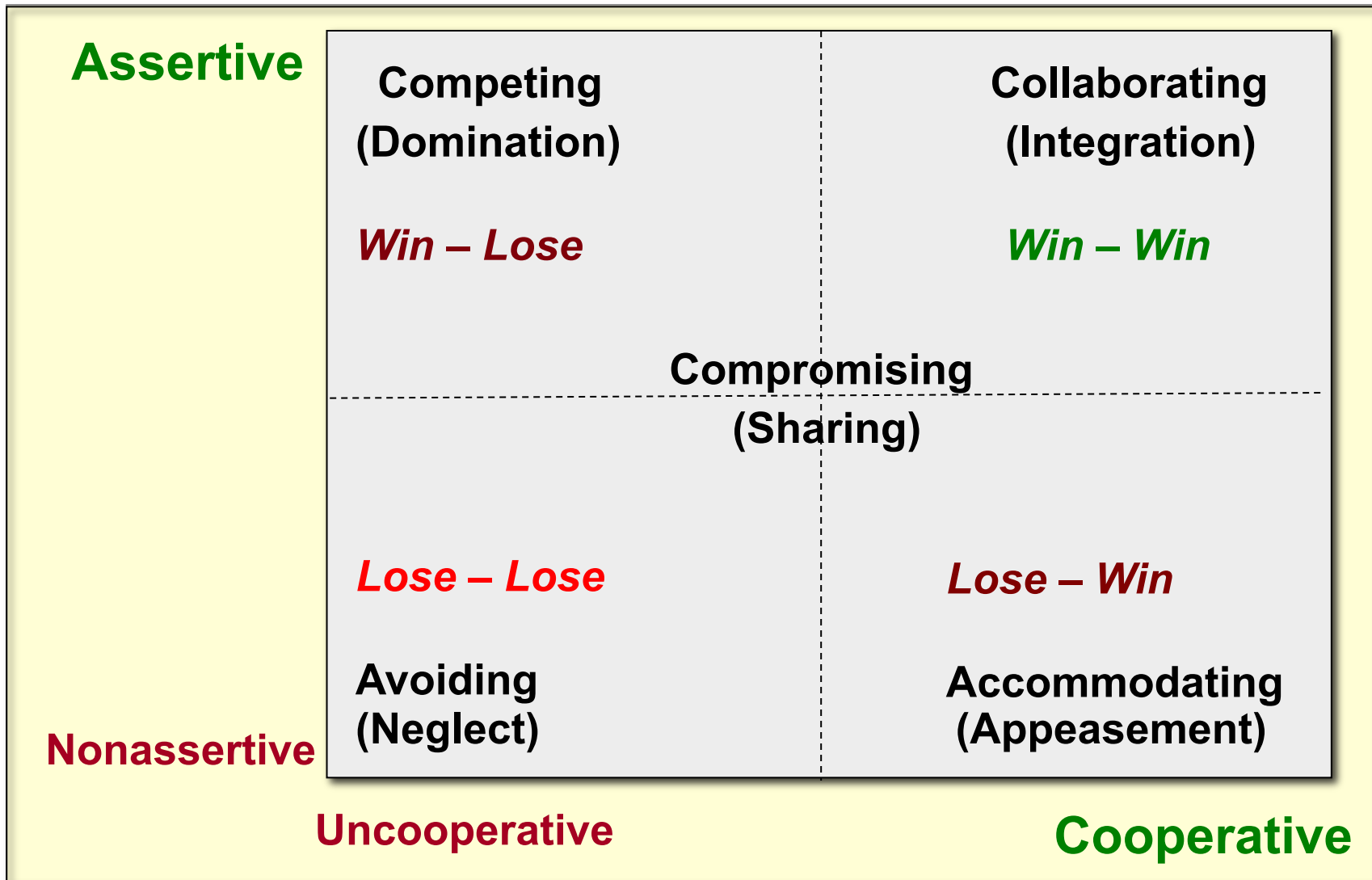
- ❖ Common strategy used is **compromise**

Win-Win

- ❖ Strategies used are **integration, collaboration, problem-solving**



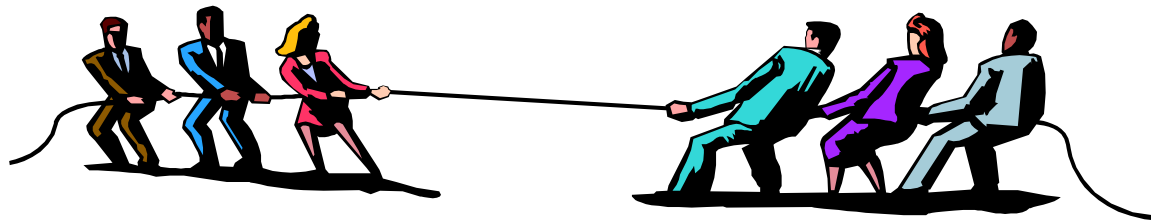
Range of Conflict Resolution



Resolving Conflicts:

Level 1 – Preventing Escalation

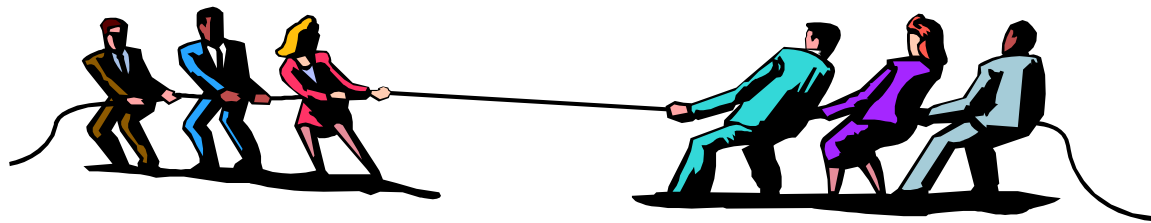
- Monitor groups for early signs of conflict
- Intervene early with a strategy
- Group evaluations - individuals plus process
- Encourage spontaneous oral feedback



Resolving Conflicts:

Level 2 – Empowering Team Members

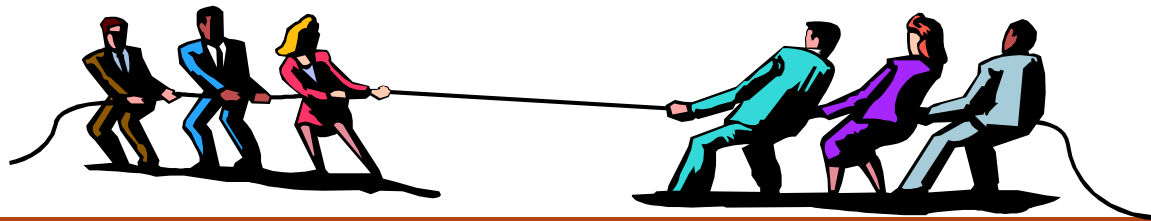
- Listen to team member concerns
(hear all viewpoints without judgment)
- Encourage team members to resolve the conflict themselves
- Coach team members on possible resolution strategies



Resolving Conflicts:

Level 3 – Serve as Mediator

- Establish ground rules
- Ask each team member to present point of view while others listen
- Ask each member to define ideal outcome
- Review group ground rules
- Facilitate discussion of possible outcomes



Resolving Conflicts:

Level 4 - Intervention

- You have just ensnared yourself in the conflict
 - Give rationale for intervention
- Treat parties with respect and appropriate concern
- Make decisions soberly and fairly
- Plan to manage damage control
- Goal is for resolution for all concerned and doing the right thing



What are the conflict resolution options?

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
<u>By-Stander</u> - Ignore or take a watchful waiting approach	May resolve itself if there is enough trust	May fester, get worst. Costs increase. Anger may be expressed.
<u>Boss</u> - order one or both to comply	Okay in crisis, until work is done. Only short term solution.	Temporarily reduces overt conflict. Hostilities still exist. Often needs follow-up.
<u>Referee</u> - Separate the parties	Resolves conflict when it is possible	Workflow may be disrupted. Information exchange diminishes.
<u>Counselor</u> - Counsel each party separately	Temporarily eases tensions	Inhibits parties from owning the solution. May ensnare you in conflict.
<u>Coach</u> - help parties to work it out themselves	Allows them to save "face"	If not successful, risks further entrenchment.
<u>Mediator</u> - Mediate between the parties to arrive at acceptable solution for everyone	Reduces anger, allows ownership of solutions, & resumes productive teamwork	Requires some time investment

Exercise #1: Team Interaction

- The Technical and Quality Assurance Leads get “into it” allegedly over an interpretation of a testing policy
 - Technical Lead insists that integration testing be done by project staff, because the time to bring an independent tester up to speed is prohibitive in light of tight schedule
 - QA Lead insists that the policy of independent testing be respected fully in this situation
- They come to you, the Project Manager, to resolve their very public disagreement



What would you do?

Exercise #1: What's at stake?

- Does somebody loose “face”?
- Is it a dispute between equals?
- Is it professional or personal?
- What would be the fallout if it is not resolved?



Exercise #1: What are the Politics?

- It is between “equals” → easier

- By-Stander
- Boss,
- Coach,
- Mediator or ???

- Between Junior/Senior staff

- More difficult - Why?

- Will you have management and client support regarding your decision in this situation?



Conflicted Conflict Management

- Dilemma lies in balancing between the: concerns of team members, project welfare, and client's needs ...while at the same time championing the values of the project team
- Often there is no clear-cut answer
 - Clash of wills or bona fide trade-off
- Earnestness, patience in listening, careful consideration, and action are needed

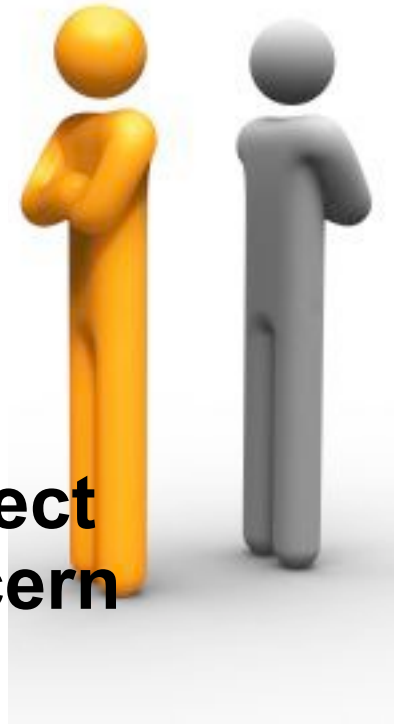


The Rework Dilemma



Exercise #2: Disgruntled Team Member

- Orville, a team member, shows little progress in his tasks or interest in the project goals
 - He is repeatedly late and unresponsive to other team members
 - He believes that the project is doomed to fail and has given up trying
 - Team members are ignoring him and trying to do his work
- Team members come to you, the Project Manager, to resolve their private concern



What would you do?

Exercise #2: What's at stake?

- **Does somebody loose “face”?**
- **Is it a dispute between equals?**
- **Is it professional or personal?**
- **What would be the fallout if it is not resolved?**



Exercise #2: What are the Politics?

- Between “equals,” but this time it is the team against an individual
- So, what is the better strategy?
 - By-Stander
 - Boss,
 - Coach,
 - Mediator or ???
- Will you have management and client support regarding your decision in this situation?



Bohner'izm #2: Focus Forward

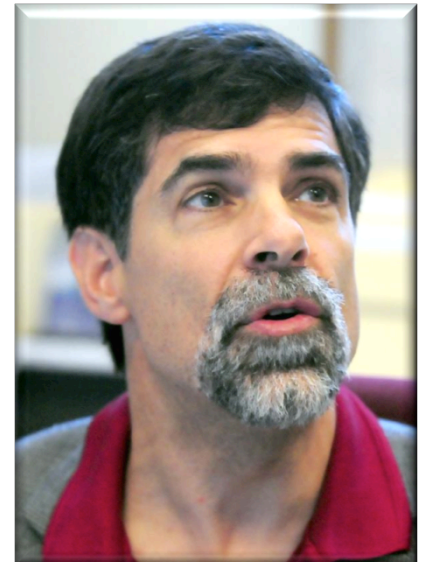
- **I have a conflict and I want it resolved - my way!
I must win!!!**
- **All too often, we lament the past
at the expense of the the future.
Yet, seldom can we go back!**
 - **E.g., have you ever said something
to someone you regretted later?**
 - **Can you un-ring that bell? Nope...**
 - **You can diminish the “Clang” with what you do now**



Bohner'izm #2: Focus Forward

- Here are some “easy to say, hard to do” tips for better project relations

- 1. Let go of the past...
- 2. Listen to suggestions without judging
- 3. Learn as much as you can
- 4. Help as much as you can
- 5. Be a great project manager who resolves conflicts!





Homework and Reading Reminders

- Read Chapter 10

- Final Project – SW Proj. Mgt. Plan (SPMP)
 - Completed by team...
 - Due by 11:55pm, Friday, November 2nd, 2012.
 - No late days –review swap with another team