

## **TIP SHEET: Communication Skills for Resolving Conflicts**

From *Dealing with Challenge and Conflict* by **Clark Reed / Netgain Partners Inc.**  
(Cultural Careers Council Ontario and Cultural Human Resources Council, 2003).

Most conflicts provide less than ideal conditions for using good communication skills. When an opening night is approaching, a major exhibition is going up, or new production, everyone may be stressed and preoccupied.

1. Take the time to consciously build and maintain a supportive atmosphere, regardless of the complexity and frustration of the situation.
2. Stay assertive regardless of temptations to behave otherwise. This means being clear about your own needs at the same time as being considerate of the other person's needs.
3. Make every effort, both verbally and non-verbally, to let the other person know that you are listening and interested in what they are saying.
4. Probe as much as possible to make sure that you have all the necessary information you need about the other person, so you clearly understand their position.
5. Be very sensitive to the range of nonverbal behaviours that the other person is consciously or unconsciously sending you. Those clues may tell you much more than what they are saying and help you move towards resolving the conflict.