

Chapter 19

Building Trust through Transparent Communication in Conflict Management

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Introduction

Conflict is an inevitable part of human life and existence. It is one aspect of human life that seems to be inexcusable. This implies that there is bound to be conflict in every facet of organisational dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and group interactions. Conflict refers to disagreement in the way and manner events are expected to be carried out or are carried out. It implies a state of incompatibility or opposition between two or more parties, individuals or groups with differing interests or goals. In other words, conflicts arise when there is a difference in the interests or objectives of individuals. Conflicts can be of various kinds such as interpersonal, intrapersonal, group, social, cultural, economic, religious and political. Conflict, is, in fact, one common denominator across various groups and organisations. It can be as low as a gentle disagreement between friends or colleagues or as high and dangerous as inter-communal wars. Mayer (2022) however posits that one benefit of conflict is that it leads to a better understanding of the parties involved, depending on how the conflict was managed. This implies that appropriate conflict management can yield positive outcomes.

Conflict management refers to strategies used to handle conflicts and prevent them from escalating. It refers to methods that are devoted towards resolving conflicts amicably in such a way that makes the parties to the conflict have a better understanding of each other or one another, the issue causing the conflict as well as workable alternatives. Conflict management is a critical aspect of conflict resolution. This is because it ensures a sustainable settlement of disagreements and issues of dispute. Lewicki, Tomlinson, and Gillespie (2016) noted that one essential element of conflict management is communication. Communication has been identified as an effective means of resolving disputes and restoring harmony when conflicts arise. This is because through communication parties to the conflict can air their view about the challenge, which according to Diwe (2022), is the first step to a peaceful resolution of conflict.

Communication in conflict management and resolution holds a key position because it fosters trust, encourages collaboration, and ensures that all parties feel heard and respected. According to Mayer (2022), the length of time any

relationship can last is dependent on the level of trust it has which can be developed through honest and open communication. Without communication, misunderstandings and misinterpretations can escalate conflicts, leading to further tension, distrust or loss of confidence in the process.

Trust is very essential in the process of conflict resolution. It acts as a bridge that allows conflicting parties to engage openly and work towards a mutually beneficial solution. Lewicki, Tomlinson, and Gillespie (2016) demonstrate that trust is a key determinant of the willingness to cooperate in conflict situations. In environments where communication is not transparent, the level of trust diminishes, making it harder to manage disputes effectively. Trust ensures that parties involved in conflict are more likely to seek constructive solutions rather than adopting defensive or combative stances. This emphasises the importance of transparent communication, which allows individuals to express their concerns, emotions, and perspectives without fear of manipulation or hidden agendas.

Transparent communication involves sharing information openly, honestly, and timely, ensuring that all those involved in the dispute have access to the same information and content. Gelfand, Brett, Gunia, Imai, Huang, and Hsu (2020) noted that transparent communication minimizes the chances of misunderstandings and misinformation, which are often at the root of conflict escalation. When parties in conflict have equal access to accurate and detailed information, it becomes possible for them to make informed choices. Furthermore, transparent communication encourages accountability, as parties are aware that their actions and statements can be scrutinized by others involved in the conflict. This openness fosters a sense of fairness and integrity, which are essential components of trust-building (Robinson, 2016).

Moreover, transparent communication helps to leads to acknowledgement of the emotions and perspectives of all parties involved. This explains why Fisher, Ury, and Patton (2017) stated that conflicts are often emotionally charged, and the failure to acknowledge and address these emotions can hinder resolution efforts. Encouraging transparent communication therefore, allows for the expression of feelings, negotiators that can create an environment of empathy and mutual understanding, which is conducive to trust-building.

In addition, transparent communication plays a vital role in preventing the recurrence of conflicts. When parties trust that communication channels are open and that they can express their grievances without fear of retaliation, they are more likely to address issues early before they develop into larger disputes. There is, therefore, no doubt that building trust through transparent communication is a critical aspect of conflict management. By fostering open and honest dialogue, ensuring that information is shared equitably, and addressing the emotional dimensions of conflicts, transparent communication helps to de-escalate disputes

and build lasting trust between parties. As organizations and individuals seek to resolve conflicts, prioritizing transparency in their communication strategies can lead to more effective, fair, and sustainable outcomes.

Transparent Communication

Communication is unnaturally concerned with the transfer of information from one reality to another. According to Ntara (2023), communication is the practicable transfer of information from one person, group, or place to another by writing, speaking, or using a medium that provides a means of understanding. It's seen as the process of sharing and understanding meaningful information between individuals or groups. This means for communication to take place, the parties involved in the process of communication must have a proper understanding of the information being participated. This implies that while information sharing can be seen as an important aspect of communication, understanding the information being collected is much more important. It encompasses a wide range of styles, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual forms. It's a dynamic process that involves several crucial factors and stages. The term originates from the Latin verb *communicare*, meaning "to partake" or "to make common".

Effective communication is essential in all aspects of life — particularly connections, business relations, and social engagements — because it facilitates understanding and cooperation among people. Every communication consists of a minimum of one sender, a receiver, and a communication. The transmission of communication from sender to philanthropist is affected by numerous effects because communication impacts how people interact. These include the position, medium used to communicate, the artistic situation, and the feelings involved. still, communication helps people to interact and partake in colourful aspects of life. further than just participating colorful aspects of life, communication also helps in settling controversies or grievances. Hence, Raksha (2022) posited that communication is the transfer of data, information, ideas, suggestions, orders, requests, grievances etc. from one person to another so as to conduct a complete understanding of the subject matter of communication to the philanthropist thereof. This implies that indeed for controversies to be settled amicably, it has to, first and foremost, be made known by the displeased to the raider or a third party. This implies that similar communication must be wholistic, honest and open. This is suggestive of transparent communication

Transparent communication refers to the open, honest, and clear exchange of information between individual or associations. It involves participating in applicable information with delicacy, ensuring that nothing important is withheld, and communicating in a way that's fluently understood. In both particular and professional surroundings, translucency in communication fosters trust encourages collaboration, and helps avoid misconstructions or conflicts. This practice is essential in ensuring collective respect and clear prospects between

parties.

Transparent communication involves participating in information openly, actually, and without deception. It's a practice that allows individuals and associations to make informed opinions, fostering a culture of responsibility. Transparent communication is vital in conflict situations because it provides clarity, reduces misconstructions, and promotes alignment.

In the Nigerian environment, translucency in communication is particularly essential, given the high position of ethnical diversity and the eventuality of misapprehension of intentions. Oshodi (2020) notes that transparent communication involves three main aspects honesty, thickness, and punctuality. Honesty requires that parties partake in the full environment of an issue without withholding material details, while thickness helps maintain credibility by ensuring that dispatches are coherent over time. Eventually, punctuality in communication prevents misinformation, as detainments can lead to enterprise, rumours, and further mistrust. By rehearsing transparent communication, parties involved in a conflict can reduce inscrutability and make their intentions clear, thereby fostering trust.

Key Elements of Transparent Communication

Clarity: Messages should be delivered in a clear, unequivocal way to avoid confusion. This involves using simple language that the receiver can understand, as well as avoiding specializedslang that may obscure the communication.

Honesty: Honest communication means that the speaker or pen doesn't withhold critical information or distort data. translucency involves participating in both positive and negative information actually.

Openness: Translucency requires an amenability to be open about intentions, opinions, and the reasons behind them. This includes admitting miscalculations and being responsible for one's conduct.

Consistency: harmonious messaging builds trust and ensures that donors don't admitclashing information, which could lead to confusion. Keeping the communication livery across all communication channels is crucial.

Availability: Transparent communication ensures that information is accessible to all applicable stakeholders. This may involve furnishing multiple ways to pierce the information (e.g., verbal, written, or digital formats) so that it reaches everyone who needs it.

Punctuality: Furnishing information instantly is pivotal in transparent communication. Participating in information too late can lead to rumours,

misinformation, or distrust, as people may feel that critical details were designedly withheld.

Transparent communication is vital in various settings, especially in organisations, educational institutions, and personal relationships.

Builds Trust and Credibility: translucency fosters trust, as individuals and brigades are morelikely to trust someone who openly shares both successes and challenges. Research suggests that associations that exercise transparent communication are morelikely to gain hand and stakeholder trust (Murphy & Carson, 2023).

Enhances Responsibility: By openly communicating intentions and opinions, translucency helps hold individuals and associations responsible for their conduct. This can ameliorate ethical practices and produce a culture of responsibility (Klein, 2021).

Improves Collaboration: Transparent communication helps ensure that everyone has the same understanding of pretensions, places, and liabilities. In brigades, this can lead to further effectivecollaboration, as it reduces the threat of misconstructions or hidden dockets.

Reduces Conflict and Misconstructions: By participating in clear and harmonious information, transparent communication can help misconstructions and reduceconflicts caused by misinformation or a lack of clarity.

Facilitates Decision-Making: When information is openly participated, decision-makershave all the necessarydetails to forminformed opinions. Transparent communication ensures that all partiesinvolved in a decision are apprehensive of the implicit impacts and can contribute meaningfully to the decision-makingprocess (Rogers, 2022).

An illustration of transparent communication in a business setting could involve a company witnessing organizational restructuring. A transparent leader would communicate easily with workers about the reasons behind the restructuring, the anticipated issues, and how the changes would affect them. They would also give timely updates as new information becomes available and offer openings for workers to ask questions and seek explanation. This approach would help reduce anxiety and make trust within the platoon.

Transparent communication is a critical practice for erecting trust, enhancing responsibility, and perfecting collaboration in any setting. Whether in exploration, associations, or particular connections, open and honest communication fosters

credibility and reduces misconstructions. Its significance can not be exaggerated, particularly in surroundings where ethical decision- timber and trust are essential.

Meaning of Conflict

Conflict is a normal and indeed healthy part of our connections. After all, two people can not be anticipated to agree on everything at all times so we need to change the way we understand the word conflict. Conflict can be negative (destructive) which leads to unhealthy relationship or positive(formative) which leads to healthy relationship. Since relationship conflicts are ineluctable, learning to deal with them in a healthy way is pivotal. When conflict is misruled, it can harm the relationship. But when handled in a regardful and positive way, conflict provides an occasion for growth, eventually strengthening the bond between two or further people. By learning the chops, you need for successful conflict resolution, you can keep your particular and professional connections strong and growing.

Conflict arises from differences which if not duly handled will produce sharp disagreement and occasionally violent clashes. It occurs whenever people differ over their values, provocations, comprehensions, ideas, or solicitations. Occasionally these differences look trivial, but when a conflict triggers strong passions, a deep particular and relational need is at the core of the problem — a need to feel safe and secure or a need to feel reputed and valued. Conflict also occurs when you have disagreement, disagreement or contestation in ideas or shoes substantially held by two or further individual groups; still you can have disagreement within yourself, when there are further than one motives or studies clashing within you. There are times when you know that commodity is wrong but you feel like doing it, at similar times you'll notice the conflict within you, you'll feel unhappy if you do n't do what you feel like doing, but if you do what you feel like doing, you'll begin to suffer from the guilt of doing what you know is wrong. When you unleash violence on notoriety it generally leads to conflict, and when such a conflict isn't resolved beforehand, it'll lead to further violence.

Deutsch (2019) views conflict as an action, which prevents, obstructs, interferes with, injures or renders ineffective another action with which it's inharmonious. Raksha (2022) looks at conflict, as an occasion to change. This means that conflict is neither negative nor positive. What determine the way conflicts go are our own stations; how we were brought up (our backgrounds) and the information we have. These factors frequently mandate the way we manage any conflict. thus it isn't so much the words that were said to you or the conduct done against you, but the person who said it (whether aged or youngish), your mood at the time it was said, the relationship you have with the person who said it, and your particular disposition (sanguine, irascible, apathetic or melancholic). Diwe (2022) defines conflict as the contemporaneous circumstance of two or further mutually negative impulses or motives. It is a struggle involving ideas, values, and limited

coffers. Dokun (2015) believes that conflict is frequently embedded in people's beliefs and comprehensions about pretensions as opposed to objective data. He went ahead to itemize unhealthy and helpful approaches to conflict.

Conflict occurs among different classes of people and produces different kinds of results. We will consider only four types of conflicts that are based on where the conflict happens and two types of conflicts based on the kind of effect the conflicts produce.

A. Conflicts based on Location

Intrapersonal Conflict: This occurs within a person as he decides on the use of time, choice of mate, moral issues, pretensions etc. This is able to produce anxiety and pressure within the person going through this kind of conflict.

Interpersonal Conflict: This is a conflict that occurs between two or more individuals. It may be affected from differences in opinion, motives and conduct. This kind of conflict is what's seen when two people are having disagreement among themselves.

Intragroup Conflict: This may occur between individuals within a group. This is analogous to interpersonal conflicts except that it occurs within a particular group. This kind of conflict can be seen when for illustration two members of the chorus are disagreeing about a commodity which has to do with the chorus.

Intergroup Conflict: This is a conflict that occurs between groups of people similar as solidarity groups, exertion groups and church appellations. This kind of conflict occurs when for illustration members of the chorus are in disagreement with members of the Ushering platoon or one country at war with another country.

B. Conflicts based on the Effects

Functional or Constructive Conflict: This kind of conflict improves the quality of opinions, stimulates creativity and invention through which problems can be vented and pressures released. This kind of conflict is also appertained to as positive conflict because it's a conflict that helps the people involve to ameliorate their relationship for good. An illustration of this kind of conflict is when people argue from different points of view on the same matter with an open mind, they end up arriving at a new position which is an enhancement on their former myopic views. This kind of conflict helps you understand the perceptivity of the other person on a particular issue, which will help you avoid conflicts in similar matters in the future.

Dysfunctional or Destructive Conflict: This type of conflict leads to retarded communication, reduction in group cohesiveness and a submission of pretensions to primacy of in- fighting among members. This kind of conflict produces

bitterness, covetousness, wrathfulness and unforgiveness. This type of conflict is generally prolonged with no immediate and endless result at sight. For utmost people, when you mention the word conflict, what comes to their minds is the dysfunctional or destructive type of conflict. nonetheless we now know that there are formative and destructive types of conflict but the choice of which to exercise is entirely dependent on you. Let us also do to study different ways to manage our conflicts.

Conflict Management

Conflict management refers to the long- term operation of intractable conflicts involving institutionalized vittles and regulative procedures for dealing with conflicts whenever they do. It describes the way we respond to and deal with conflicts before, during and after it has passed. It's the marker for the variety of ways by which people handle grievances — standing up for what they consider to be right and against what they consider to be wrong. Compactly stated, conflict management is about using directorial tactics to contain a conflict, to put a lid on it, and control the terrain. Conflict management is frequently considered to be distinct from conflict resolution. Because numerous conflicts cannot be really resolved, we use the term conflict management rather than conflict resolution. Good conflict management enables parties to co-occur amicably and deal with their controversies without inescapably resolving the underpinning conflict.

Conflict management consists in dealing with the conflict in a way that brings the conflict to a check, an end, a resolution that will please either parties or one of the parties in conflict. But the conflict management and conflict resolution approaches are now bypassed by a new approach called conflict metamorphosis. The ultimate approach readily suits the process of followership and Christ-likeness more. Conflict management strategies and not conflict resolution strategies will be demanded in a situation where two people have resembling opinions on an issue, that is, their opinions cannot be conformed and none of the parties involved is willing to give up his opinion for there to be progress. Conflict management involves the control, but not resolution of a long- term or deep-confirmed conflict. This is the approach taken when complete resolution seems to be insolvable, yet commodity needs to be done. In cases of resolution- resistant or indeed intractable conflict, it's possible to manage the situation in ways that make it more formative and less destructive.

Conflict management is the process of mediating in ways that make the ongoing conflict more salutary and less dangerous to all sides. For example, transferring peacekeeping forces into a region netted in strife may help calm the situation and limit casualties. Still, peacekeeping operations won't resolve the conflict. In some cases, where non-negotiable mortal requirements are at stake, conflict management is the most doable step. Management specialists have proposed several ways of dealing with the process of conflict management. To explain the

modalities of engagement in conflict, the Blake and Mouton's grid cited in Oachesu (2016), is recommended and proposed. The author established the typical responses of individuals in dealing with conflicts which include the avoidance struggle, adaption, collaboration or concession.

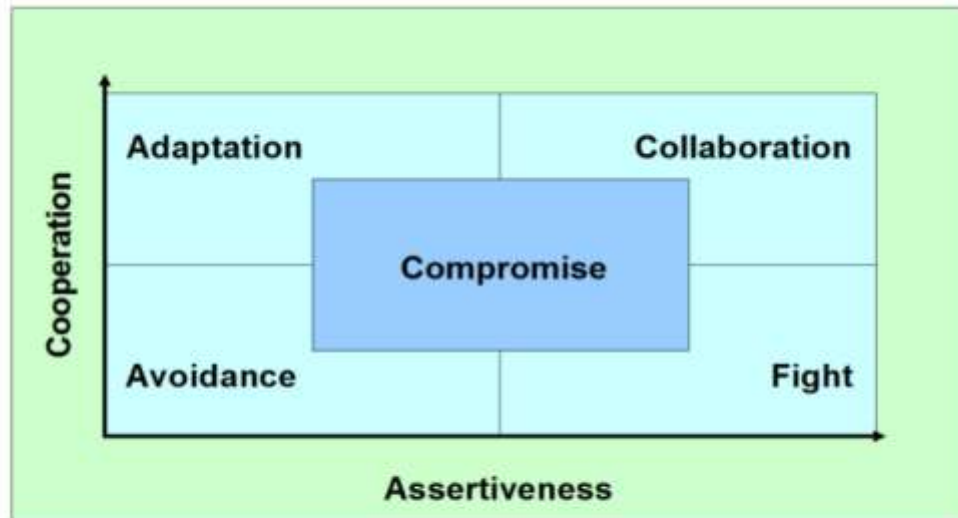


Figure 1 Conflict management methods

Each of these modes can be characterized in two axes, namely assertiveness and cooperation. Specialists believe that the implementation of any of these models is wrong, there is only appropriate or inappropriate times to use each of them. In conclusion, it is important that managers know how to discern the appropriate type of conflict management means depending on its status and values and entities involved. The fight is a conflict management model based on a high degree of assertiveness and a very low level of cooperation. It is recommended that the management of conflicts by fighting, is to be applied in situations requiring urgent action when necessary to adopt unpopular measures. In adopting such methods of conflict management, it is necessary for the manager to have skills, such as: argumentation and debate, exploitation of rank or position, proper evaluation of options or feelings, keeping calm and clear expression of the position (Rogers, 2022)

How to deal with conflict by avoiding assertiveness is characterized by both a low and a high degree of cooperation. In many cases, people tend to avoid conflict for fear of engaging in a tense situation or because they lack sufficient confidence in their ability to manage conflicts. This method of conflict management is appropriate when dealing with minor conflict situations in order to reduce tensions or to gain time, or when the person in the position to manage the conflict is in an inferior position in terms of hierarchy. Avoiding conflicts requires the

ability to withdraw, the ability to avoid tensions and the sense of planning in terms of time (Donohue, & Kolt, 2022).

Adaptation involves low assertiveness and a high availability for cooperation. It is recommended to establish arrangements for managing conflicts by adapting when necessary the expression of reasonable attitudes, performance development, maintaining a state of good understanding and peace. Adaptation involves altruism, obedience to orders, sometimes bliss, in their own interests (Edewor, 2019). The compromise involves a moderate level of assertiveness and cooperation. Some people define compromise as the "disposal of more than they're willing", while others believe that both sides benefit. Handling a conflict by compromise is suitable if important issues are at stake, moderate when people in the conflict have a similar hierarchical level or where there is a strong desire to resolve the issue. The compromise can also be used as a temporary solution, when there are time constraints. According to Baro, Robert (2022), skills necessary for conflict management are adopted by the negotiated compromise that the art of finding the middle way is the ability to assess situations and to make concessions

The management of conflicts through collaboration is characterized by high levels of assertiveness and cooperation. Collaboration is the joining of ideas in order to achieve the best solutions of a conflict. The best solution in the words of Edewor (2019), is a creative resolution of the conflict, a solution that is not generated by a single person. Given this positive resolution of conflicts, one might consider that managing conflicts through cooperation is the best method

Building Trust through Transparent Communication in Conflict Management

Trust is a abecedarian element of healthy connections and functional associations. According to Edewor (2019), trust fosters open communication, commitment, and cooperation among parties involved in a conflict. It represents the belief that another party will act fairly, actually, and reliably. In conflict managements, trust underpins a positive resolution by encouraging open dialogue and reducing protective stations. Trust builds a terrain where parties feel secure enough to express their enterprises openly without fear of counterreaction or manipulation. Also, Diwe (2022) emphasizes that trust is central to the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies. When trust is present, individuals are more likely to approach conflict with a collaborative mindset, easing palm-palm issues. In discrepancy, lack of trust leads to protective posturing, miscommunication, and rising pressures. Diwe argues that the significance of trust is especially critical in the Nigerian environment, where socio-political and ethical complications frequently magnify conflicts.

Trust helps ground these divides, fostering formative relations and escalating implicit issues. Structure trust through transparent communication in conflict

managements entails several processes, as stressed by Eke (2022). First, translucency establishes a foundation for participated understanding, reducing the liability of miscommunication. By openly participating with information about their perspectives, stakeholders demonstrate respect for each other's shoes. This openness helps parties empathize with each other, easing collective respect and trust. Transparent communication also fosters responsibility, which strengthens trust further. When parties are open about their intentions and limitations, they commit to acting within agreed-upon boundaries. Nigerian communities, as bandied by Raksha (2022), frequently struggle with issues of responsibility due to hierarchical structures and artistic factors that discourage direct battle.

Transparent communication mitigates these challenges by creating a terrain where all parties feel safe in expressing their enterprises and grievances. In situations where stakeholders may have contending interests, translucency serves as a levelling ground, precluding any party from feeling left out or misinformed. As noted by Diwe (2022), power imbalances can complicate conflicts, especially in Nigerian institutions where hierarchical authority is prominent. Transparent communication helps to alleviate these power dynamics by furnishing all parties with equal access to applicable information. Diwe further posits that equal access to information empowers all stakeholders, leading to more balanced relations and buttressing trust among disagreeing parties.

Practical Strategies for Transparent Communication in Conflict Management

Effective transparent communication in conflict managements requires purposeful strategies to foster trust. Fadeyi (2020) identifies several approaches, including regular updates, harmonious feedback mechanisms, and inclusive dialogue. Regular updates give all stakeholders timely information, reducing queries and anxiety. By keeping everyone informed of developments, parties feel included and conceded, which strengthens trust. Specific strategies for effective transparent communication in conflict management include:

Engage All Stakeholders: Involving all applicable parties in the dialogue ensures that multiple perspectives are considered. Adebayo (2019) notes that engaging stakeholders beforehand in the conflict resolution process prevents passion of rejection, which could else lead to resistance.

Use Clear and Accessible Language: Communication should be in a language that all parties understand. This might involve rephrasing crucial information into original languages to ensure inclusivity and clarity.

Regular Updates and Feedback Mechanisms: furnishing nonstop updates on the conflict resolution process allows for adaptations and prevents passion of neglect among the involved parties. Feedback mechanisms also empower community

members to state their opinions and enterprises, enhancing the sense of participated responsibility.

Empathy and Active Listening: Empathy and active listening are crucial to establishing fellowship and understanding. Compassionate communication encourages openness, as people feel valued and understood, which fosters trust.

Transparent Decision-Making: Processed opinions should be transparent and should include apologies that are accessible to all parties. Explaining the explanation behind opinions helps reduce reservations and promotes acceptance among stakeholders.

Benefits of Transparent Communication in Nigerian Organisations

Transparent communication in conflict management yields significant benefits for Nigerian communities. One notable benefit, as argued by Ibe (2021), is the reduction of tension and anxiety. When parties have access to clear and consistent information, they are less likely to make assumptions that could escalate conflicts. Specifically, transparent communication in conflict management helps to:

Reduce Misunderstandings: Miscommunication and lack of information are common causes of conflict escalation. By fostering transparency, community leaders can provide accurate information that reduces the spread of rumours and misconceptions (Eze, 2022).

Enhance Accountability: Transparent communication encourages accountability as community leaders are expected to provide clear explanations for their actions. Accountability in turn reinforces trust among community members.

Promote Inclusiveness: Transparent communication ensures that all voices are heard, regardless of their social or economic status. According to Agwu (2022), when every community member feels included, they are more likely to trust the process and respect the outcomes of the conflict resolution efforts.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Building trust through transparent communication in conflict managements is an essential strategy for fostering effective and sustainable judgments. In the Nigerian environment, where social and artistic diversity frequently intensifies conflicts, translucency is particularly vital. By promoting open, honest, and inclusive communication, parties can reduce misconstructions, demonstrate respect, and take responsibility. Eventually, transparent communication serves as an important tool for erecting trust, enabling Nigerian associations and individuals

to manage conflicts constructively. Given this, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Communities should produce structured fabrics for communication that prioritize translucency. These fabrics can outline how the information will be collected, the frequency of updates, and channels for feedback. enforcing similar fabrics provides thickness and trust in communication, which in turn fosters trust.
2. Community leaders should be trained in active listening, empathy, and translucency- concentrated communication.
3. Engaging experts in agreement can help ensure that communication is handled professionally and transparently. Experts trained in conflict resolution, especially those with experience in culturally different communities, can bridge communication gaps and foster understanding.
4. Technology can prop in transparent communication by furnishing a platform for real-time updates, discussion forums, and participating applicable documents.
5. Regularly assessing communication practices helps ensure that translucency remains a precedence. Community leaders can gather feedback to assess whether stakeholders feel that communication is clear and secure, making necessary adaptations as demanded.
6. Communities should be empowered to initiate conflict resolution practices themselves. By involving locals in the planning and perpetration of these practices, trust is fostered as the process feels more authentic and inclusive.

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