

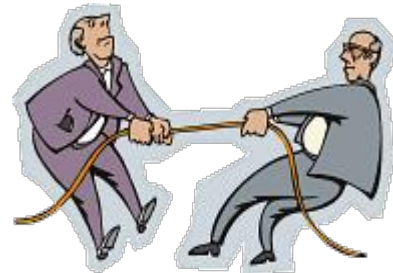


## Creating Win-Win Situations

Phil Kolbuc

Win / Lose situations pervade our society and culture in North America. It is exemplified throughout our educational system, and supported throughout our organizations and political systems. Terms such as, "winning edge", "top of the class", "sharp wit", "getting ready for a good fight", "we have to win over the opposition", and "beat the other side", are not uncommon terms. Win / Lose is further esteemed in sports and the media. You don't play to lose. No body remembers who came in second.

Win / Lose has its place. Every organization in fact is trying to beat out their competition. We don't want to "lose out" to the competition, nor do we want to play a game to lose (unless we are trying to win something else). And, winning and losing certainly is the basic element of all our entertainment. We like to see "winners" and we like to see "losers".



However, as soon as we carry a win / lose way of thinking into an organization that by its very nature need people to work together collectively and collaboratively, then win-lose situations and outcomes can have disastrous effects and results. Since everyone wants to be a "winner", as soon as someone finds himself or herself in a losing position, they will want to find other ways to make themselves "winners".

To prevent win / lose situations from occurring within an organization, one first needs to recognize behaviors that may cause win / lose situations. Statements such as: "Can't you do anything right", or "I should have known you would find some way to foul things up". What have you heard people say and do that create win / lose situations which may cause others to feel angry or upset?

When people (Employees / Managers) find themselves in win / lose situations they invariably want to get even. Getting even usually means everyone loses.

Another way of looking at this is to think of potential consequences of win / lose situations e.g.) People may stop giving they're input or opt out of decision-making. "You're the BOSS". Usually win / lose situations continue to escalate until both parties involved lose something and it ends in lose / lose results. So, the question becomes, how do we prevent or minimize win / lose situations? And what do we mean when we say win / win?



# Kolbuc & Associates Resources

[www.humanresourcestraining.ca](http://www.humanresourcestraining.ca)

Win / Win means that both / all parties are able to seek solutions that are beneficial to all concerned. Ideally, all parties are mutually satisfied with the outcome. For that to happen both / all sides, no doubt will win a little and lose a little, but it will be seen as mutually beneficial, and as fair and equitable for all involved.

One of the common foundation blocks for creating win / win situations is to have common goals and objectives that are clearly stated and agreed upon. Every organization has a purpose, whether it is providing a product and / or service. It is important for all concerned that they be mindful of that common purpose. What is our Goal? What is our objective? Why did we come into work this morning?

When parties come into conflict with each other and a potential for win / lose occurs then ask the question: "Is our discussion and how we are treating one another moving us closer to fulfilling / meeting our common goals and objectives or, is it moving us away from it? Another key component to creating win / win situations is Trust and Respect. If I don't trust and respect you, I am not likely to want to create "mutually satisfying outcomes".

Trust and Respect are key foundations for creating Win / Win situations and need to be worked on constantly. We show respect by listening to the ideas and opinions of others, without being judgmental. We build respect when we involve others in decision making that may effect what they do or are doing. We show respect by being direct with others, in terms of our thoughts and feelings and we show respect by taking a personal interest in another's professional and personal well-being.

When we show Respect, we build **TRUST**. And, when others **TRUST US**, they are more inclined to want to work together cooperatively for mutually beneficial and satisfying outcomes.