



Communicating FOR RESULTS

MOVING FROM CONFLICT TO COOPERATION

Over the years, AMM Education Workshops have focused on communication in one form or another; from communicating when strangling isn't an option to communicating with the media and your constituents (ratepayers).

The February 8 workshop, *Communicating for Results – Moving from Conflict to Cooperation* allowed participants to gain knowledge and awareness about conflict and learn the processes to move more effectively from conflict to cooperation in various situations.

Priti Shah, of PRAXIS Conflict Consulting, facilitated the workshop and after outlining of objectives for the day, participants were asked to list their perception and underlying beliefs about conflict. From there, the dozen flipcharts around the room filled quickly with the suggested sources of conflict. Finances, personal family issues, habits of response, assumptions, change, semantics and issues in the professional environment were but a few of the items that came up.

"Conflict is the result of difference, not the cause of differences."

A study of the conflict cycle, the why and how conflict escalates and how to prevent it was the next segment of the workshop. The assumptions and attitudes that lead to conflict fuel our response where generally unpleasant consequences occur, leading right back to beliefs that fuelled the conflict. Where we can directly break the cycle of conflict is in our responsible reaction. By adjusting our attitude, and being open to other beliefs and not being assumptive, we can also break the cycle of conflict.

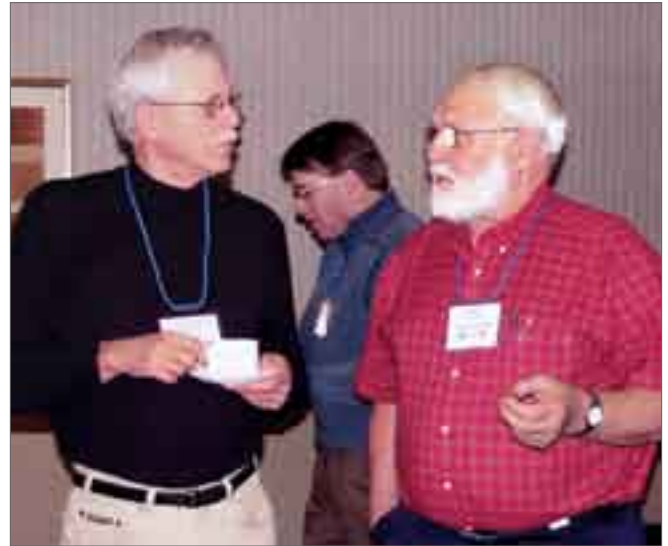
Priti noted, "Managing conflict is something we all do, but may not be aware of. The key to confronting differences and resolving conflict is the process of dealing with differences, rather than the differences themselves. The key to conflict management is the belief that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of life, and the realization that it is our reaction or response to the conflict that makes a conflict situation constructive or destructive."

A lengthy exercise identified participants' conflict management styles; competitor, avoider, collaborator, accommodator and compromiser/negotiator. No one style is necessarily better than another and often, the style you use depends on the conflict situation. Participants were encouraged to define the styles of their environment (colleagues and family).

The workshop concluded with participants completing a personal contract for change which acknowledged their individual levels of communication skills when it comes to conflict. Conflict is normally looked upon as unpleasant; but in reality, conflict is sometimes necessary and even beneficial. By identifying our own reactions to conflict, we can plan on how to react before we are involved in conflict.

The AMM would like to thank those who were able to attend the rescheduled date of the workshop and congratulates the following draw winners:

- **Gus Wruk**, Councillor, RM of Lac du Bonnet - Complimentary registration for the April 18 workshop plus a \$150 Canad Inns gift card
- **Paul Verrier**, Building Inspector, RM of Ritchot - Complimentary registration for the October 3 workshop plus a \$150 Canad Inns gift card



(L-R) Councillor Ewen Mosby of the RM of Cameron and Councillor Gus Wruk of the RM of Lac du Bonnet compare notes.



Priti Shah of PRAXIS Conflict Consulting facilitated the February 8 workshop.

- **Brigitte Doerksen**, CAO, Town of Morris - *Leather portfolio*, presented by Priti Shah

Municipal officials are reminded to take advantage of the date and location of the next AMM Education Workshop. Following the Municipal Officials Seminar at the Keystone Centre, on Friday, April 18, Barbara Bowes of BowesHR will facilitate the leadership component of the Program with *High Integrity Political Tactics for Effective Council Relationships*.

Please visit the AMM website at www.amm.mb.ca for workshop information and to register online.