Case Study #1 -

Scott is the event coordinator for the organization's operations department, which oversees volunteer activity. His supervisor asked him to plan a recognition event for a group of volunteers who recently served on a specific project. Scott was slow in getting started on this project, due to other demands placed on his time. As a result, he found himself on a very tight schedule to get things coordinated and prepared, requiring him to make some decisions quickly, and without much in-put from others.

On Monday, Scott went to schedule a room for the event, and realized that Dave's department had already scheduled the room. Scott couldn't find Dave, so he did some checking and determined that there was another room that would work for Dave's meeting and made the necessary changes on the schedule and sent Dave an email. When Dave learned of the change, he became very upset, and complained to others in his department about Scott's lack of consideration and presumption of what Dave needed and how the change would impact him. Dave responded to Scott with a strongly worded e-mail. Scott received the e-mail and replied; copying several other team members, with a terse email admonishing Dave for his inappropriate e-mail.

Dave & Scott have now been asked to serve on a committee to plan another event effecting both of their departments. Neither wants to work with the other. They find themselves in a meeting room, for a planned meeting, and realize they need to address the conflict between them.

Case Study #2 –
Scott has been having a conflict with one of the long-term volunteers of the organization. Scott has asked the volunteer to change their schedule and level of involvement in a particular project because Scott has determined that the volunteer is having a negative impact on the other volunteers, by trying to do too much. Scott and the volunteer have had a couple discussions, which have amounted to Scott telling the volunteer what he wants to change, and the volunteer telling Scott he is unwilling to change anything, because he is serving for the benefit of the organization and the people they are helping, not the other volunteers.

Yesterday, Scott told the volunteer that this was no longer a request, if he did not agree to the changes; his involvement on the volunteer team would be terminated. The volunteer angrily told Scott he couldn't terminate him (he is a volunteer), and that he was going to go to the President of the organization and "get this straightened out".

Scott has had this type of situation arise before, and is very anxious about having to address this with the organization's leadership again, but also is adamant that his perceptions are right and his decision was the right one. He has come to you as another employee in the department, complaining to you about the volunteer and how

unreasonable the volunteer is. He has also told you that he is really at a loss of what to do about this, and feels trapped between meeting his responsibilities and also keeping the volunteer and the President happy. You realize this is an opportunity to help Scott think about the conflict and consider how he should respond.

Case Study # 3 –

John is responsible for handling the accounts payables for the organization. This requires him to be responsible for knowing what bills and invoices need to be paid at specific payment dates during the month, and being able to make sure the invoices paid are properly documented for auditing purposes. Sue is in charge of the marketing department and is responsible for making sure that the organization is properly and aggressively presented to the public, both for purposes of letting the donor public know what is happening so donations remain at a necessary level, and to ensure that people needing their services are aware of their availability.

Sue often has to make quick decisions on what steps to take to market and/or publicize events and needs. This requires her to sometimes spend money without following all of the rules and processes John has developed, but she always makes sure she is not spending more than what she understands her budget allows. Sue recently had to cover some unexpected expenses out of her own pocket, and just realized that she had not submitted with a purchase order in advance, or timely submitted a request for re-imbursement after the event. She now has to pay her personal credit card, and needs to be reimbursed within the next 48 hours to cover the credit card payment. She submitted a reimbursement request to John, leaving it on his desk. John discovered the request the next morning, and became upset about the "continued lack of following process" and complained to his supervisor. John's supervisor, Bill, was busy and decided to not say anything to anyone, because he needed to focus on his own deadlines, and figured it would eventually get worked out.

Sue, when she did not get her check when it was needed, became very upset and sent John a "nasty gram" in the form of e-mail. She also began talking to several other employees within her department and the accounting department, asking is John's position was really justified and explaining why she had done what she had done.

What would you say to Sue (John) (Bill) if you were coaching them in an effort to help them understand how they are responding to the conflict, and how it is impacting the relationships and ability to resolve the issue?

Case Study #4 –

Jeff heads up one of the departments, which provided training during the recent conference for the Organization. John's responsibility is to coordinate and over-see the work of the event coordinators who are responsible for organizing the training (a three-day event) including assigning participants to the right teaching event, preparing materials for the participants and instructors, assisting the instructors prepare and present,

and making sure the facilities are properly prepared and attended to during the training. The training did not go well, with several participants complaining that they did not receive materials, instructors complaining they received teaching materials late, preventing them from preparing, and complaints that the snacks during the training were poorly prepared and insufficient in quantity.

Karen is the event coordinator responsible for the above training. Karen is aware of some of the complaints, but not the full detail. Robin, Jeff's supervisor, received so many negative comments, she has told Jeff he needs to figure out what went wrong, and "not let this happen again".

Karen and Jeff met for about two hours, with the meeting ending when Karen excused herself because she "simply could not deal with any more negative comments".

You have been asked to meet with Karen to encourage her to return to the meeting with Jeff and complete the debrief so they can develop appropriate steps to correct the mistakes.

Secret-Facts for Karen - She believes that she has been unfairly criticized for others mistakes by other people in the organization. She sees herself as a frequent scapegoat for others. She believes her inability to provide the materials to the participants and instructors was due to another department not giving her the materials in sufficient time for her to reproduce them and get them delivered. She very concerned that if she does not prevail in proving her case, that she was not the reason for the mistakes; she will likely lose her job. She sees Jeff as uncaring for her and the consequences to her.

Case Study # 5 –

Bill & Fred are divisional directors for the organization. Bill is in charge of marketing and strategy, and Fred is in charge of the training division. Bill's mandate is to expand the ministry of the organization by introducing as many people to the resources and benefits of the organization as possible. Fred understands his mandate to prepare and provide high quality training to individuals outside the ministry, to carry on the work of the ministry on a volunteer basis, at a cost, which is as economical as possible, without sacrificing excellence.

Bill recently made some decisions on how to market both the services of the ministry and the need for volunteers, and the need for training. Bill has done an excellent job of making the marketing for the need for volunteers very compelling, as well as promoting the need for the training and quality of the training provided.

Bill did not spend much time reviewing his marketing with Fred, or confirming when it should be distributed. Bill believes he has served Fred well, providing a very positive image of the training, and creating a potential for a lot of volunteers wanting to be trained.

Fred just saw the marketing pieces and learned that they have already been distributed. Bill recently saw Fred at the end of a meeting, and asked Fred if he was pleased with the marketing effort. Fred is very upset with the timing of the marketing and the promises made, because no one, especially Bill, asked him whether he was able to provide the promised training. Fred is very concerned that he does not have enough instructors to meet the demand, that he will not be able to provide the training at a "promised affordable rate for volunteers", or that he can have the training materials prepared timely in the quality he thinks is necessary. Although Fred had not shared these concerns with Bill, he responded to Bill's question with a very terse "Thank you" and walked away. Fred then proceeded to complain to two other divisional directors about Bill's failure to consult with anyone else, stating that Bill always thinks he is running the show and no one else has anything to contribute.

These comments have gotten back to Bill. You each realize that you need to talk this issue over, and have each wronged the other.

Case Study # 6

The organization you work for employs 42 paid staff members. A recent initiative has taken much focus in the way of time and resources, including your regular volunteer and supervisor. You felt you had to work 6 of the last 8 Saturday afternoons in order to feel 'caught up.' Additionally, you have several questions/concerns which have not been addressed because your supervisor is in meetings the majority of the day and then working –admittedly frantically – to stay on top of other matters.

At Thursday's staff meeting, the Executive Vice President gives accolades to the team who has worked so hard on the imitative, talking about the long hours and the great product which will result. The Marketing Director picks up with individual recognition for some of the team members who have contributed and continues to talk about the future impact of the initiative and the future involvement of the team members.

No mention is made of your division – either how it will contribute overall to the imitative, how you have picked up the slack of those on the initiative, or the impact (which is obvious to you)_the initiative will have on your responsibilities.

This has happened before. The first time you raised a question in the staff meeting – asking how the obvious additional responsibilities would be handled – and you were 'shut down' by being told not to worry about that – it would be addressed. The second time you raised the question to your supervisor, she arranged for a volunteer to be dedicated to you so that you were better able to process the additional work. This is the volunteer who is now working on the new initiative.

After the meeting, you talk with a couple of other employees, some from your division and some from other divisions. They agree with your assessment and feel the same way. You are seen as a leader by those co-workers, as well as others in the organization., because you have spoken up in the past (corporately and with small groups) and have been with the organization through several initiatives.

Who should you talk with first?
What will you say?
How will you say it?
If you were coaching the person, what would you focus on, how would you help the person prepare. How would you use the PAUSE principle?