



Unit: Group Skills  
**Skill 40: Mediation and Negotiation**  
**Activity A: Ground Rules for Fighting Fair**

**Activity Skills:**

Group discussion, writing, critical thinking, brainstorming.

**Leadership Skills:**

Creating ground rules for a negotiation.

**Suggested Level:**

Beginning

**Time:**

45 min

**Supplies needed:**

- Pens or pencils to write
- Paper

**Do Ahead:**

- Make copies of worksheet

**Source:**

Developed by:  
 Andrea Grant  
 AmeriCorps VISTA

**BACKGROUND:**

Negotiations can be described as

- The bargaining process between a buyer and a seller: real estate, vehicles, etc.
- A two-way process whereby the owner through the services rendered by the architect contests the offer made by the contractor to obtain more favorable terms that better match the proposed construction intent and the owner's budget.
- The face to face process used by local unions and the employer to exchange their views on those matters involving personnel policies and practices or other matters affecting the working conditions of employees in the unit and reduced to a written binding agreement.
- The process of bargaining that precedes an agreement.
- The process of two or more people working together to resolve a problem.

**WHAT TO DO:**

Ask the group "What is negotiation?" Negotiation is a strategy for resolving disagreements through discussion and compromise. It is essential to identify some ground rules prior to a negotiation. Ground rules are the rules of conduct that govern the interactions of group members; expectations regarding interpersonal behavior.

- Divide the group into small work teams. Ask each team to write some ground rules. Write each rule on a separate piece of paper. Do not number the pages. Allow groups to work for 20 minutes
- After the designated time is up, allow each group to share the all the rules they created. Each rule will be put into a collective list. Display all rules. The entire group will then create a single list of rules using input from all the groups. Rules that are repeated or similar can be revised to include every the idea shared.

Hand out a copy of the Fighting Fair handout and begin discussion.

**TALK IT OVER:****Reflect:**

- Did we miss something? Or was our list more in depth?
- Why is it important to include every idea shared?
- Who should create the ground rules for a negotiation?
- Why are ground rules necessary?

## Skill 40: Mediation and Negotiation

### Activity A: Ground Rules for Fighting Fair

**Notes:**

**Apply:**

- How would you help a group create ground rules?
- How can you ensure that the group will actually follow the ground rules during a negotiation?
- What else should be done prior to a negotiation?

**BEYOND THE BOX:**

**Optional Homework:**

**Soap Opera Skits**

Who here has ever watched a soap opera? They are often full of really serious, dramatic conflicts. We're going to make our own soap opera skits.

- Have everyone brainstorm possible soap opera conflicts, and write these on the board. Come up with about five – be quick. Examples: one girl steals another girl's boyfriend; one man poisons another man's wife; one woman steals another woman's baby...
- Assign a small work groups to each conflict. In these small groups, participants should come up with a dialogue that negotiates a solution to the conflict. Remember to follow the Ground Rules established in the previous activity.
- Have each group perform their solution.

**Resources and Web Links:**

Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In by Roger Fisher, William Ury & Bruce Patton (ed.). Penguin, 1991.