

## 10.3 OBSERVATIONAL EXERCISE

### Handling Conflict

#### Purpose

1. To become aware of the dimensions of interpersonal conflict
2. To explore how to use Fisher and Ury's (1981) method of principled negotiation to address actual conflict

#### Directions

1. For this exercise, you are being asked to observe an actual conflict. Attend a public meeting at which a conflict is being addressed. For example, you could attend a meeting of the campus planning board, which has on its agenda changes in student parking fees.
2. Take notes on the meeting, highlighting the positions and interests of all the people who participated in the meeting.

#### Questions

1. How did the participants at the meeting frame their arguments? What *positions* did individuals take at the meeting?
2. Identify and describe the interests of each of the participants at the meeting.
3. Discuss whether the participants were able to be objective in their approaches to the problem. Describe how the people involved were able to separate themselves from the problem.
4. In what ways did the participants seek to find mutually beneficial solutions to their conflict?