



Navigating Cultural Differences We Never Knew We Had

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By

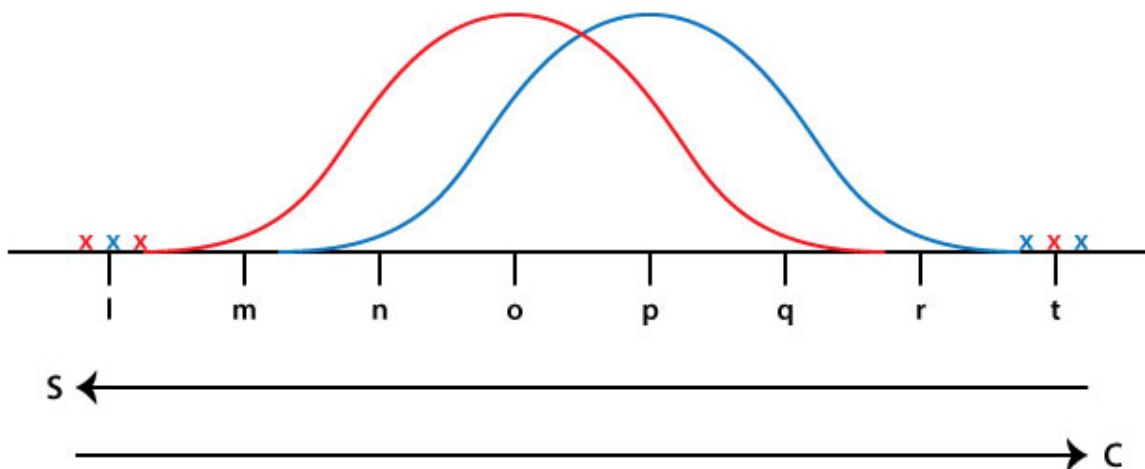
Margaret E. Anderson

Consensus Building System Thumbnail

- I. Tools for uncovering driving interests
- II. Walk-away alternatives
- III. Creating content for agreement
 - A. Developing creative win-win solutions
 - B. How to compromise reasonably, *when* necessary
- IV. Communication Skills
 - A. General
 - B. Communication diversity
 1. Temperament
 2. Culture
 3. Learning style
 4. Conflict-handling style
- V. Closure

The “You Can’t Lose Quiz” Answer Form

1. a. Would...
b. Could...
2. a. Relieved
b. Offended
c. Angry
3. a. “Hey, you’re not my boss.”
b. “No, I want to do Part I.”
c. “I’d sort of like to do Part I.”
4. a. Say, “Yes, thank you,” and take some butter.
b. Say, “No, thank you,” and continue eating.
c. Pass the butter to Roger, saying, “Please help yourself.”



Resources and Tips

Bridges to Consensus—in Congregations by Margaret E. Anderson

That's Not What I Meant by Dr. Deborah Tannen

Weekly blog at: www.persuasioncoach.com

When considering raising a subject that might offend another person, first ask open questions about the person's driving interests and priorities. Let their responses guide you in deciding whether, and how, to broach the subject.

Example: How do we want to come across? How do we want the governor to see us?

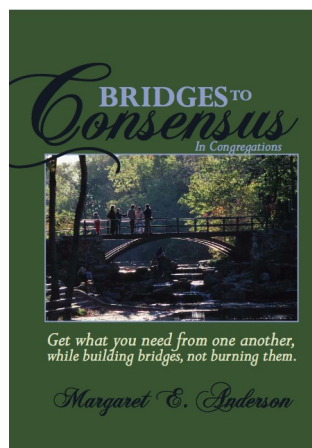
When someone offends you:

- Push the "Pause" button. Give your emotions a chance to settle down and your rational mind time to kick in.
- Remember that the other person may well reciprocate your feelings, i.e. also feel offended.
- It's hard for the other person to adopt your standards of politeness, just as it would be for you to adopt theirs.
 - "Just" doesn't belong in a sentence suggesting that one change.
- It rarely works for one person to make all the adjustments.

When you feel you have offended someone:

- "It seems I may have offended you. I didn't intend to. How would you like me to handle a similar situation in the future?"
 - Asking that question doesn't mean you are agreeing to do what she suggests. At this point, you're only gathering information to guide you in forming a plan that feels comfortable to you as well as to her.
- Plan the words to get a similar point across in the future without using the problematic language.

Remember Margaret's Silver Rule: To minimize resistance, minimize wrong making (contradiction or criticism).



Bridges to Consensus—In Congregations

This practical guide explains consensus-building skills in a way that *helps people get what they need from one another while building bridges, not burning them*. The book demonstrates its principles through detailed sample dialogues based on situations everyone can identify with. Parallel commentaries take you inside the speakers' heads to explain their choices and how they worked. "Try This" segments give the reader a chance to practice new ways of thinking and speaking. You'll find yourself using these skills not only in your congregation, but at home, work, anywhere thinking people think differently from one another.



Author Margaret E. Anderson brings to the table decades of actual use of the skills she teaches, as well as many years of teaching her own curricula in consensus building and communication. Trained by Drs. Roger Fisher and William Ury of the Harvard Negotiation Project, Margaret is also trained in general and church mediation. She designs and regularly teaches interpersonal persuasion courses for Rice University's Glasscock School of Continuing Studies and has lectured for the University of Houston and for Texas State University. Her training and consulting clients include religious congregations, corporations, professional organizations, and individual leaders and professionals. Margaret is a Unitarian Universalist residing in Houston, Texas.

Praise for Bridges to Consensus—In Congregations

My suggestion is that every religious leader needs to internalize the values in *Bridges* just as they internalize the beliefs of the *Koran*, *Bible*, *Tao Te Ching*, or whatever text of their faith.

- The Rev. Lillie Henlie, Unitarian Universalist

As someone who has held almost every office in my congregation, I discovered that I could integrate this system not only at my church, but also at home, at work, and in every human contact.

- Patricia Dwyer Kolodney, M.Ed., Educational Psychology, M.A. Marriage & Family Therapy, Congregational leader

Margaret Anderson has written a clear and helpful book, based on her own knowledge and experience. She contributes to the growing body of work in this area, including *I'm OK, You're OK* by Thomas Harris, *Parent (Teacher) Effectiveness Training* by Thomas Gordon and *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen. She is in good company.

- Christine Spong, Editor to the Rt. Rev. John Shelby Spong

Bridges to Consensus offers a set of practices to equip well-meaning leaders to also become well-differentiated leaders able to non-anxiously and diplomatically assert their own needs in ways another person can hear and respect while resisting the needless urge to be right or to declare the other wrong.

- The Rev. Paul Beedle, Unitarian Universalist

The parallel dialog/commentary sections are the heart and soul of Margaret's book. The dialogs are those encountered every day in the church setting and the running commentary reminds us of the power of thinking through every encounter.

- The Rev. James Liberatore, Episcopalian

**You can purchase *Bridges to Consensus* at wwwcreatespace.com/348046
Or "look inside" on Amazon.**



Services

Training Programs



Our training programs are true workshops with group activities that move participants beyond mere knowledge to hands-on skill. Many programs also include expert demonstrations applying these skills to realistic situations. Workshops provide safe environments to practice and experiment in hypothetical situations, so trainees feel confident using the skills in their own real lives.

Apply these skills to:

- Reach better decisions *more efficiently*
- Replace “lukewarm compromises” with creative breakthroughs
- Resolve differences before they turn into conflicts
- Deal with complaints and conflicts when they do occur
- Implement organizational changes such as Policy Governance
- Handle any situation in which thinking people think differently from one another

Excellent for:

- Boards, teams, committees, and working groups such as choirs and RE departments
- Leadership training—at congregational, district, regional or national level
- UUMA, LREDA and UUMN retreats and continuing education
- Extended adult RE programs
- Seminaries—student curriculum or continuing education
- Fundraisers

All programs are customized to individual client needs.

Other Services

Private Consulting and Coaching

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Contact

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