

Make a Change Now

One of the biggest lessons that the IPI Committee members have learned is that you must be willing to change out people when things aren't working. Of course you want to try to see if you can make things better, but too often people let the conflict fester and grow until the entire project is damaged and every issue gets pulled into the conflict.

Here are some ideas for helping (in order of how you might implement each):

1. **Hold a one-on-one partnering session(s) between those in conflict**

This has proven to be very helpful when the two (or more) folks in conflict take time to listen to each other and make commitments on how they might improve their working relationship. Once the commitments are made, they must be held accountable by the facilitator, you as the supervisor and of course by one another.

2. **Shift the decision making power to someone else**

If your superintendent is currently unable to resolve issues, changing the decision-maker will begin to shift the dynamics of how issues are dealt with. Teams have often done this by elevating the decision-making up a level or even two. In order for this to work, your superintendent needs to be on board, so they are not working against you. The newly appointed decision-maker will also need to be more available and active on the job.

3. **Offer professional coaching for each person in conflict**

Of course you can work to mentor your superintendent, but we've seen where the use of a professional coach has helped even those who were "voted off the island" to become a welcomed member of the team. The magic of coaching is that the coach can help your superintendent to develop new strategies and practice them until they have changed the way they interact. Given time, perceptions of the superintendent will change.

4. **Change Out the Person/People In Conflict**

When you have tried all that you can think of and things have not changed enough for the project to gain the momentum needed for success, it is time to change out your superintendent. Often we hear people resisting this - they don't think it is fair that they have to change and the other side doesn't. But to keep someone in place and watch the project implode is not in the best interest of anyone. It is never easy to change out people, but it is often just what is needed for the project to succeed.

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