



## Five Steps to Problem Solving

\*Provided by Raleigh Employee Assistance Program, Inc.  
Revised from September, 2004 issue of **REAP the benefits**

Often times we have conflicts within our work group, family, or other personal relationships. A certain amount of conflict is natural and not always bad. Many times working through conflicts can help us gain a better understanding of others, as well as improve our ways of doing things!

Whether these conflicts occur with our coworkers, customers, family or friends, [we can use a systematic approach to resolve conflict through problem solving.](#)



**The components of problem solving include five steps.**

- 1. Identify the problem.** You cannot solve a problem until you can clearly state what it is.
- 2. Describe the alternatives for dealing with the problem.** View ideas from different perspectives, especially those perspectives of the person/s you are in conflict with. Be creative and brainstorm as many alternatives as possible.
- 3. Evaluate the alternatives.** Think about what could happen if you were to implement your ideas. Then, assess if the potential outcomes are worth the risk. Agree on what seems the better option.
- 4. Act on your solution.** Implement your chosen alternative and establish a trial period.
- 5. Evaluate changes to determine whether the results are satisfactory.** If so, the process is complete! If not, go back and modify or try another alternative following the same format.



**Being able to solve a problem or resolve a conflict can be very rewarding.** If you need extra help, do not hesitate to call REAP for some additional brainstorming ideas.