

Conflict Resolution/Team Building Training for the Philadelphia Prison System



Evaluation Report

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Evaluation Report

Conflict Resolution for the Philadelphia Prison System

Each workshop participant was asked to fill out a workshop evaluation questionnaire and a work environment questionnaire. The results of the evaluation questionnaires show that nearly all participants rated the quality of the material and the quality of the presentation as excellent or good and most expected to use what they have learned in dealing with others. The results of the work environment questionnaire show that there is room for improvement in a number of areas. Although a statistically significant improvement was found in several areas during the first year, this trend did not continue during the second year. During the first year, a follow-up questionnaire was sent to workshop participants. These results were also positive, showing that the participants have been using the skills learned in the training in the workplace and at home.

Workshop Evaluation Questionnaire Results

1127 workshop evaluation questionnaires were received and analyzed. Figure One shows that most respondents rated the quality of the material presented in the workshop as excellent. 96.1 percent rated the workshop as excellent or good.

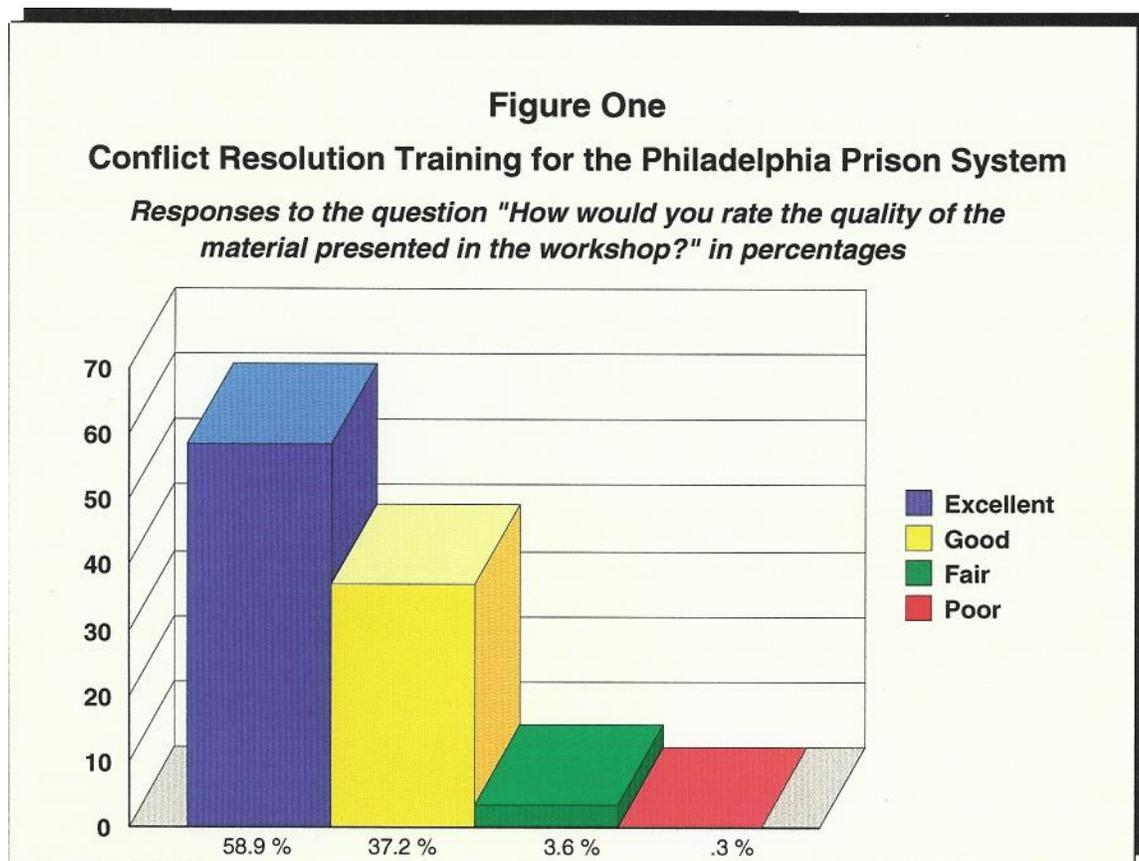
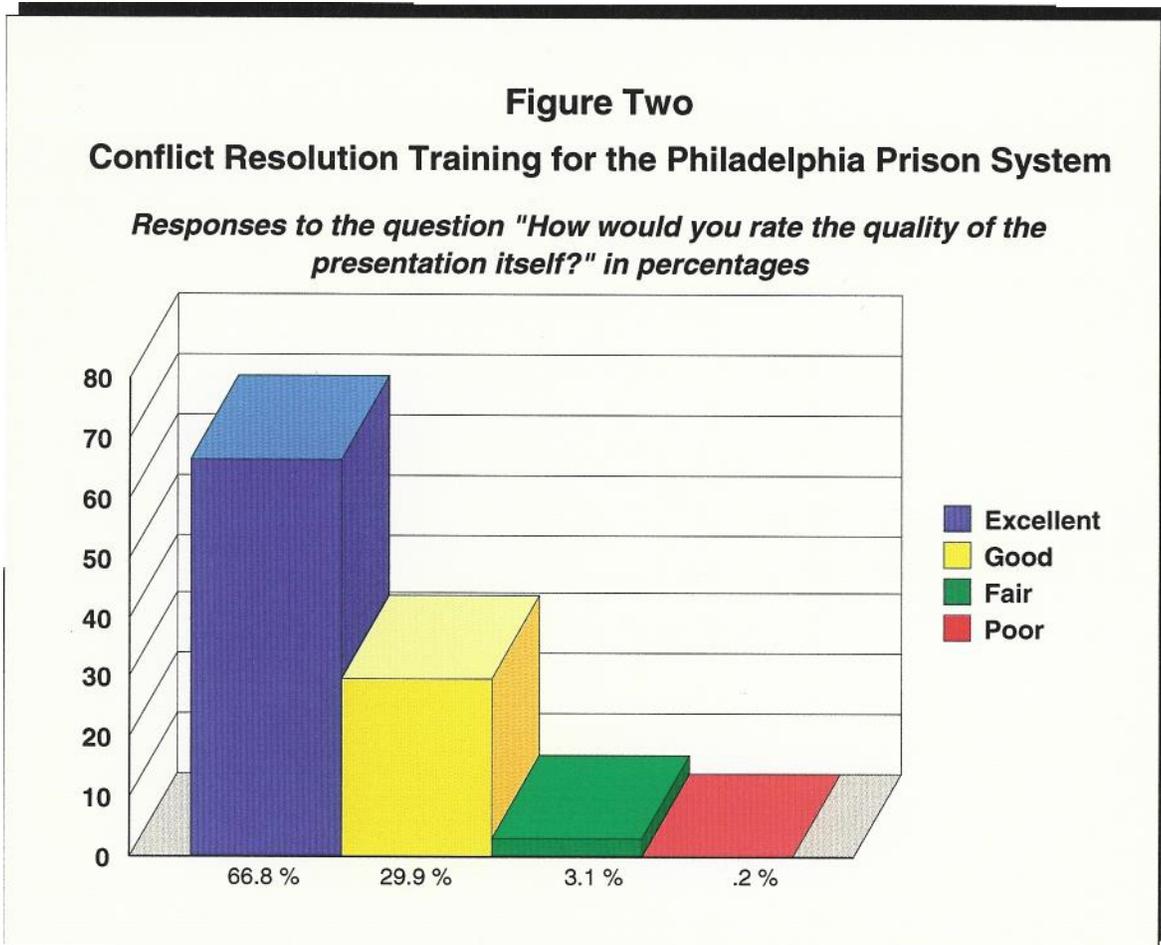


Figure Two shows that most respondents rated the quality of the presentation of the workshop as excellent. 96.7 percent rated the workshop as excellent or good.



The next set of questions asks respondents whether they expect what they learned in the workshops to help them in both their work and personal lives.

The results, which are presented in Figures Three through Six on the following two pages, clearly show that participants do expect the knowledge and skills gained in the workshops to be helpful at work and at home. Respondents indicated that they most strongly agreed that they expected to use what they have learned with family and friends.

In summary, the respondents clearly valued the workshops and expected them to be useful in the future.

Figure Five

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Distribution of responses to the statement "I expect to be able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with superiors."

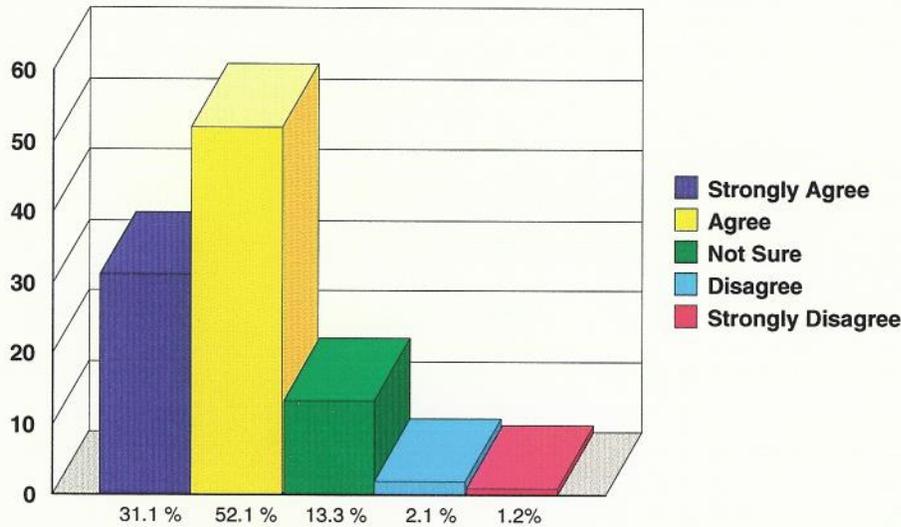
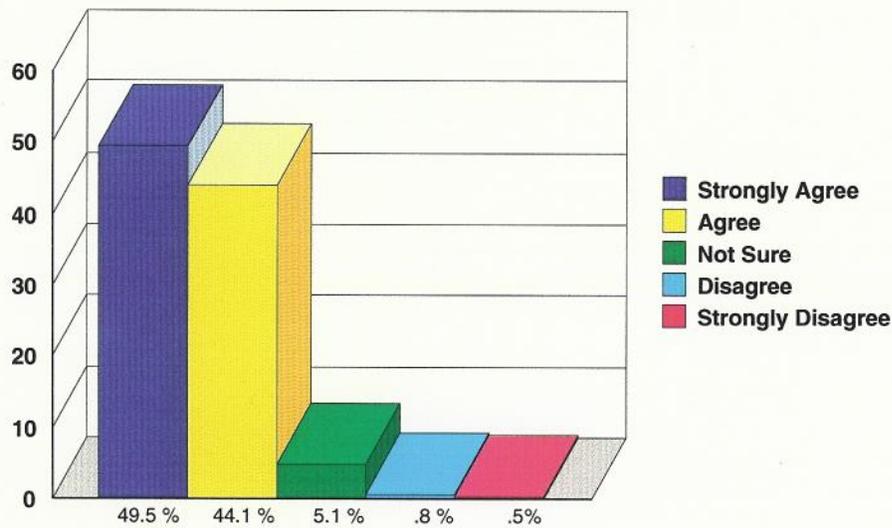


Figure Six

Conflict Resolution Training for the Philadelphia Prison System

Distribution of responses to the statement "I expect to be able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with family & friends."



Participants were asked to write-in what they specifically liked about the workshop. More than one response could be given. The most common responses center on the theme of teamwork and group feeling. "I liked the group interaction because it showed that no matter how diverse the group was we were still able to arrive at a common goal." The games and exercises were frequently cited as helpful and enjoyable. "I liked the light and lively or interactive activities as they really serve to build cohesiveness in a short period of time." A significant number of respondents commended the instructors. "I never had an instructor as helpful, honest, or that participated with the group as much which made it a lot easier to learn."

One respondent wrote, "I liked the fact that strangers and people of different jobs and ranks could work together and show teamwork and accomplish different tasks." Wrote another, "If we envision change, a positive change for a brighter tomorrow, we must communicate, listen, and try to reach a solution through teamwork, especially through the six points [for problem-solving]." Another wrote that the most liked aspects were, "The trust that was built up in the group, the hope that maybe this will better the environment in the PPS."

Another respondent wrote, "I feel more valued by the system as an individual by being given the opportunity to participate for three entire days in a workshop that focused on the essential elements of working together as people. My personal as well as professional life has been enhanced. I enjoyed the fun interaction we had and feel this was a very effective way to learn the concepts of conflict resolution."

Participants were also asked to suggest changes for improving the workshop. Overall, the responses showed that participants valued the training. Many respondents commented that no changes were needed or suggested extending the training sessions, or adding follow-up sessions. One respondent wrote, "I wouldn't change a thing." Another wrote, "Make it an ongoing program and bring the length of it to five days."

There were a variety of suggestions for improvement. A significant number of people requested that administrators also attend or that all ranks be combined within a workshop. Some suggested a change in the timing of breaks. Others requested more corrections-related material. Most of the suggestions, however, were highly individual.

Participants were given space to make additional comments.

One respondent commented, "This was the best class I have attended since becoming a CO." Another commented, "This was ideal for bring staff together and helping to uplift morale." Another wrote, "I believe that people as a whole just want to know that they are loved, that their opinions mean something, and that they count."

A participant wrote, "The workshop was excellent. The information was well presented; the instructor was warm and knowledgeable of the subject matter. I would love this workshop to somehow be incorporated in the training process of the new recruits at the academy. The workshop really impressed and inspired me and now gives me a whole new way to solve problems."

Another wrote, "It was very useful, very helpful as a method of stress management. Often the #1 complaint on the job is stress and it is my opinion that much of the stress is actually caused by conflict. By learning better ways to handle disagreements, stress will be reduced."

Follow-up Questionnaire Results

In addition to the workshop evaluations and work environment questionnaires, workshop participants were surveyed several months later to assess whether they had been able to put in practice what they had learned in the workshop. Respondents were asked if they had been able to use the knowledge and skills gained in the workshop in dealing with inmates, coworkers, superiors, and family and friends.

247 follow-up questionnaires were received. The results are favorable, showing that respondents have been able to use the knowledge and skills gained from the workshop at work and at home.

More than eighty percent reported that they had been able use what they had learned from the workshop with family and friends as well as with coworkers. Close to seventy percent reported that they had been able to use what they had learned with inmates and superiors.

Figures Seven through Ten show the results.

Figure Seven

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Distribution of responses to the follow-up statement "I have been able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with inmates."

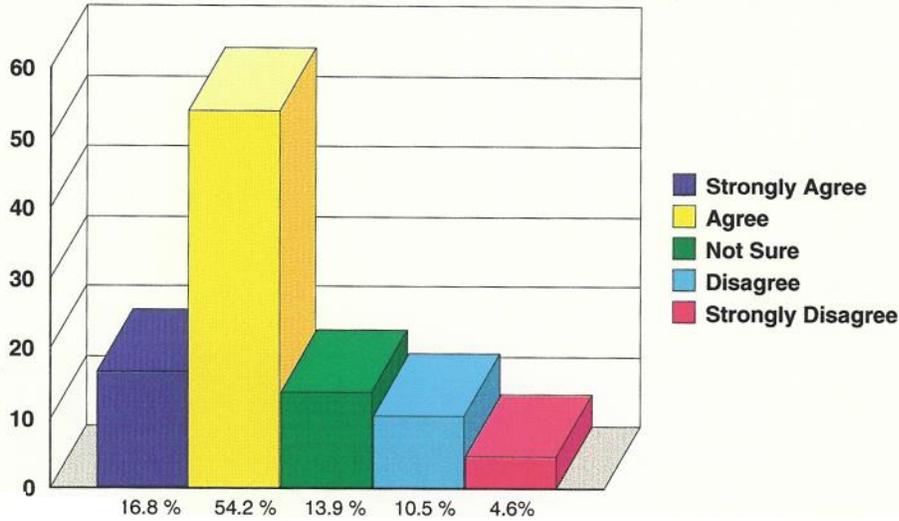


Figure Eight

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Distribution of responses to the follow-up statement "I have been able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with coworkers."

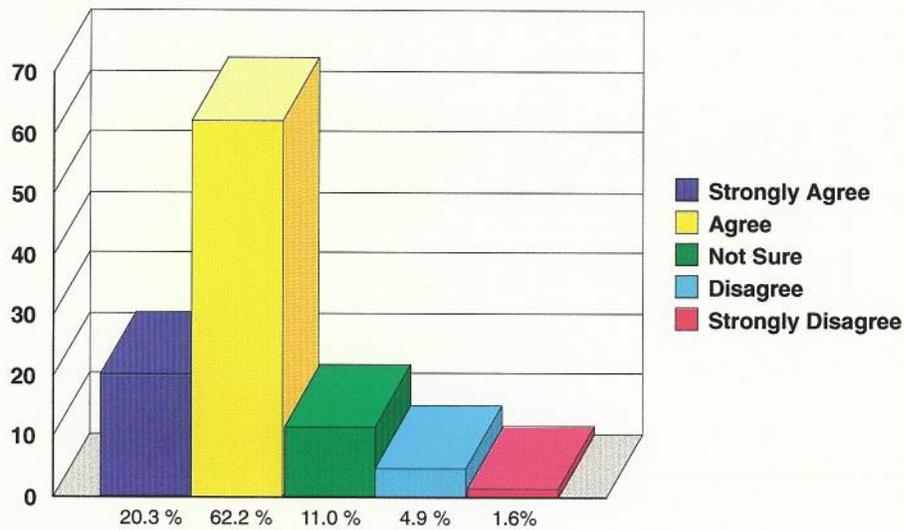


Figure Nine

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Distribution of responses to the follow-up statement "I have been able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with superiors."

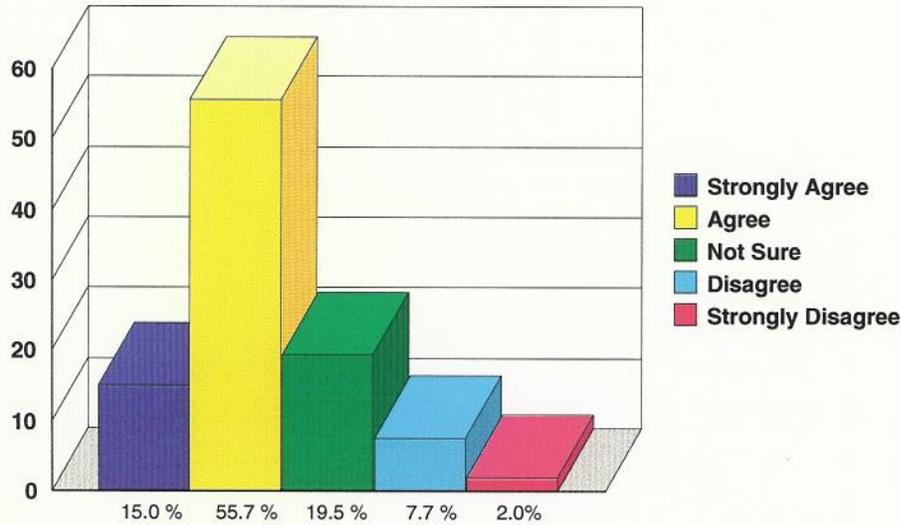
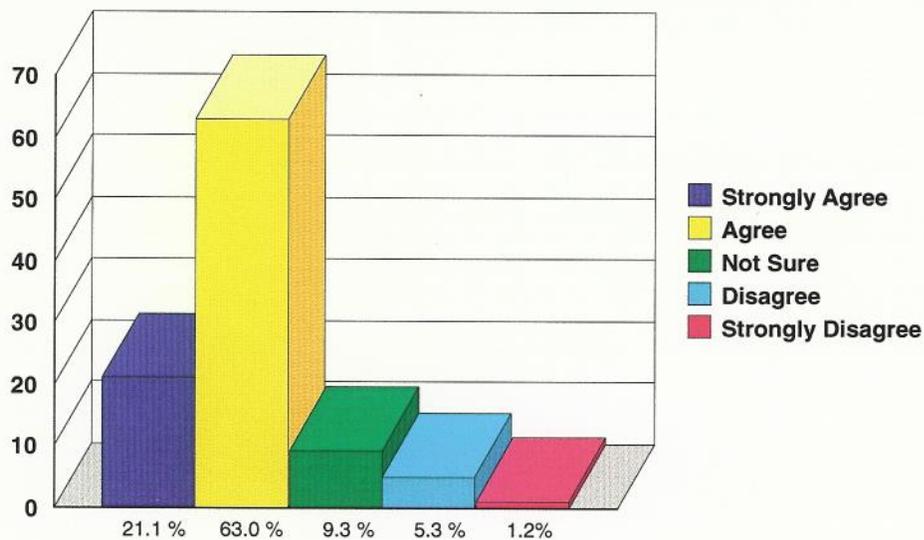


Figure Ten

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Distribution of responses to the follow-up statement "I have been able to use what I have learned in the workshop in dealing with family & friends."



Although the percentages who agreed with each statement were comparable at the end of the workshop with the percentages who agreed in the follow-up questionnaire, there was movement away from the category 'strongly agree' toward the category 'agree.'

In summary, the initial feedback from workshop participants was favorable. Nearly all respondents rated both the workshop material and its presentation as excellent or good and a majority reported that they expect to use the knowledge and skills gained in the workshop in their work and personal lives.

Follow-up responses showed that most participants continued to be positive about the workshop months later. Most reported that they had been able to use what they had learned in dealing with inmates, coworkers, superiors, and family and friends. A somewhat higher percentage of respondents reported that they were able to use their knowledge and skills about conflict resolution with coworkers and family and friends than the percentage who reported using what they had learned with inmates and superiors.