

What can we do?

Solving disputes as a group

This is a basic model for solving problems using a facilitator, adapted from a model provided by the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.

The facilitator should write each of the five steps as a heading on butcher's paper and then help the group complete each sentence.

Five steps	Notes on each step
The problem we are trying to solve is ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group defines the problem. • Each person should describe how they see the problem. • This is an opportunity for people to get things off their chest. • The facilitator should summarise the discussion clearly and briefly.
We'll know a solution is a good one if ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group agrees on criteria for evaluating the possible solutions. • This should focus later discussion and validate the selected option. • Answers could include "It is in the best interests of the corporation/community", "It will last" and/or "It is consistent with the Act and Rules ..."
There are a lot of options, like ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group brainstorms solutions to the problem. • Ideas should be encouraged. • Options should not be criticised or judges at this stage.
The best option is ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group applies the criteria from the second to each option. This is where most of the discussion takes place. • Everyone should get a say. • If things need to cool down, the facilitator should focus the discussion on testing a single option against each criterion.
We agree to ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group records agreed actions. • The group should have selected an action or a combination of actions. • It is important to record who is going to do what and by when, to make sure the action is carried out.