



Conflict Resolution on the Event Frontier

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Owner & Attorney





About The Company

We provide comprehensive law and business strategy consulting to help mission-driven organizations adapt, grow, and maximize their impact. Whether you're a nonprofit, mutual aid group, wellness business, or social enterprise, we guide you through challenges with expert legal and strategic insight.

Our Approach:

- 📌 Mission-Aligned Growth – Develop strategies that align with your values while ensuring sustainability.
- 📌 Risk Management & Compliance – Navigate legal complexities to protect your organization.
- 📌 Conflict Resolution & Mediation – Resolve disputes efficiently while preserving relationships.
- 📌 Impact & Sustainability Planning – Build long-term strategies that support both legal and financial health AND community impact.

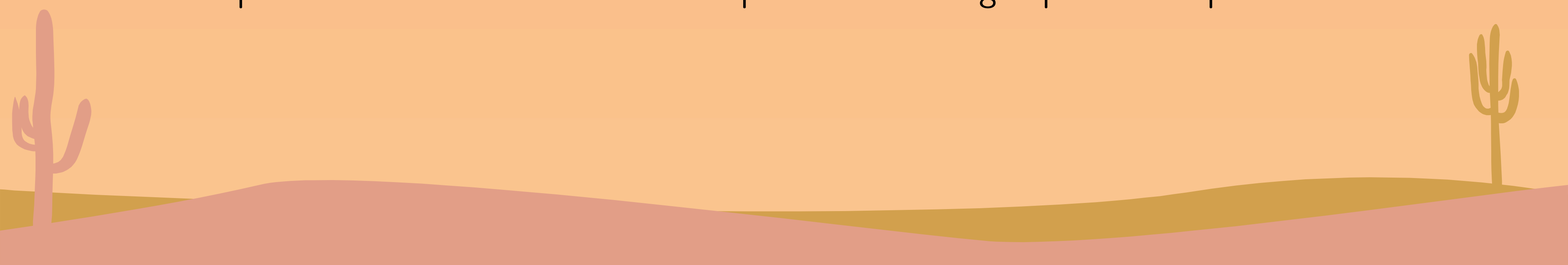
“Helping mission-driven organizations navigate ever-changing waters to maximize social impact.”

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Introduction & Objectives

Engagement Question: “What are some event related conflicts you’ve witnessed or experienced?”


Objectives:

- Understand why conflict happens in event management.
 - Learn the 5 conflict styles and when to use them.
 - Explore real-time de-escalation techniques for high-stakes moments.
 - Implement mediation clauses and expectation-setting to prevent disputes.
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- The bottom of the slide features a decorative landscape with rolling hills in shades of orange and yellow. Two stylized cacti are present: a larger one on the left and a smaller one on the right.



The Nature of Conflict in Event Planning

Why Events Are High-Risk for Conflict:

- Fast-paced, high-stakes environments lead to pressure and miscommunication.
 - Common Conflict Sources:
 - a. Vendor disputes (cancellations, contract disagreements)
 - b. Internal team friction (overlapping roles, burnout)
 - c. Partnership misalignments (sponsors, stakeholders)
 - d. Attendee concerns (expectations, accessibility, disruptions)
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The 5 Conflict Styles

Which style do you default to?

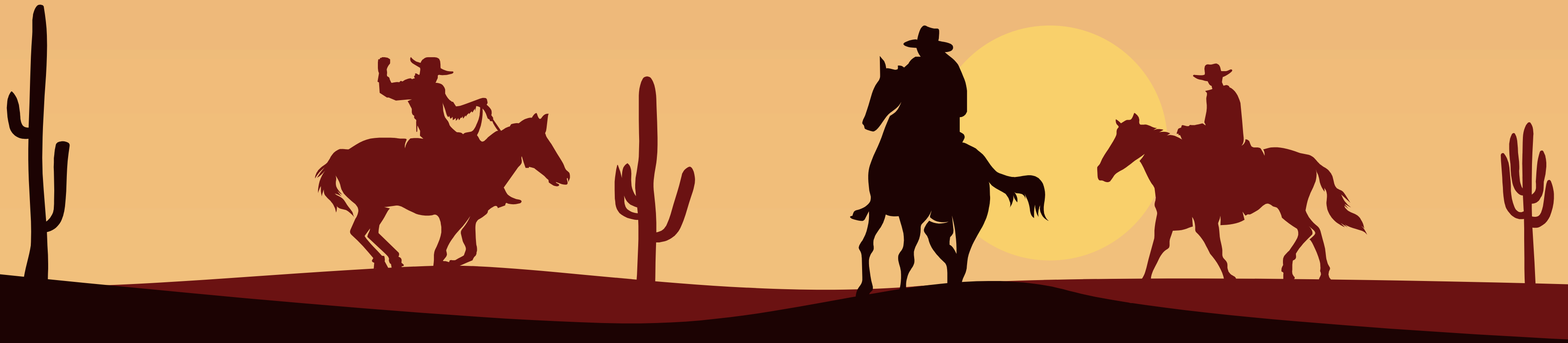
1. Avoiding – Ignoring the conflict (useful when minor but risky long-term).
2. Accommodating – Giving in to maintain harmony (good for relationships but shouldn't be overused).
3. Competing – Asserting authority to win (effective in emergencies but can escalate tension).
4. Compromising – Finding middle ground (useful when time is limited).
5. Collaborating – Seeking a win-win solution (best for long-term partnerships).



Identifying Conflict Early

Red Flags:

- Passive-aggressive emails or unclear communication.
- Tension in meetings (people avoiding eye contact, short responses).
- Rumors or negative talk about decisions or people.
- Rule of Thumb: "If you feel tension, the conflict has already started."





Real Time Conflict Resolution Techniques

De-Escalation Tools:

1. The LEAP Method

- Listen without interrupting.
- Empathize with frustration.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Paraphrase to confirm understanding.

2. Using “I” Statements Instead of “You” Blame

- “You didn’t provide the correct materials!”
- “I was expecting different materials—can we clarify the requirements?”

3. Public vs. Private Conflict Resolution

- Public conflicts: Stay calm, defuse tension, move discussion to a private setting.
 - Private conflicts: Address constructively and promptly.
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Conflict Resolution in Different Event Scenarios

☀ Scenario 1: Vendor Miscommunication

- Problem: AV company installs incorrect setup last-minute.
- Best Approach: Compromise or Collaborate.
- Solution: Prioritize quick fixes over assigning blame.

☀ Scenario 2: Team Burnout & Friction

- Problem: Staff arguing due to overwhelming workload.
- Best Approach: Accommodate short-term → Collaborate long-term.
- Solution: Reassign tasks, allow breaks, improve planning.

☀ Scenario 3: Difficult Attendee or Sponsor

- Problem: VIP guest is rude to staff.
- Best Approach: Avoid (if minor), Compete (if needed), or Collaborate.
- Solution: Set boundaries while maintaining professionalism.

Litigation, Negotiation, Mediation, and Arbitration: What's the Difference?

Understanding Dispute Resolution Methods:

- Litigation – Taking a dispute to court. Expensive, public, and time-consuming.
- Negotiation – Parties work out a resolution directly. Flexible but requires cooperation.
- Mediation – A neutral third party facilitates a resolution. Confidential, cost-effective, and non-binding.
- Arbitration – A neutral arbitrator makes a binding decision. Faster than litigation but still formal.

Why Mediation?

- ✓ Preserves relationships – Encourages collaboration instead of hostility.
- ✓ Cost-effective – Cheaper than litigation and arbitration.
- ✓ Confidential – Keeps disputes private.
- ✓ Quicker resolution – Helps resolve issues before they escalate.

Where to Include Mediation Clauses

- ✓ Vendor Contracts – Avoids disputes over deliverables.
- ✓ Employee & Contractor Agreements – Encourages structured resolution.
- ✓ Sponsorship & Partnership Agreements – Maintains long-term relationships.

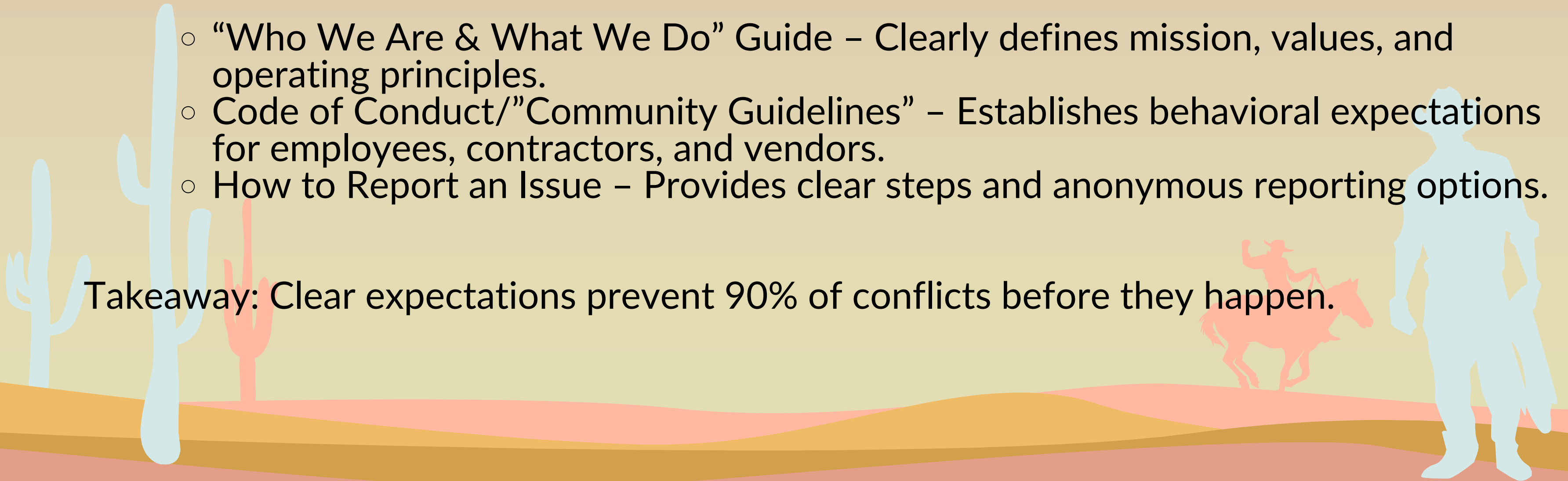
 Sample Mediation Clause:

"In the event of a dispute, both parties agree to engage in mediation before pursuing litigation. The mediator shall be mutually selected, and both parties shall act in good faith to reach a resolution."

Setting Clear Expectations to Prevent Conflict

- Expectation-setting prevents most conflicts.
- Key Documents to Introduce Your Organization's Culture:
 - "Who We Are & What We Do" Guide – Clearly defines mission, values, and operating principles.
 - Code of Conduct/"Community Guidelines" – Establishes behavioral expectations for employees, contractors, and vendors.
 - How to Report an Issue – Provides clear steps and anonymous reporting options.

Takeaway: Clear expectations prevent 90% of conflicts before they happen.

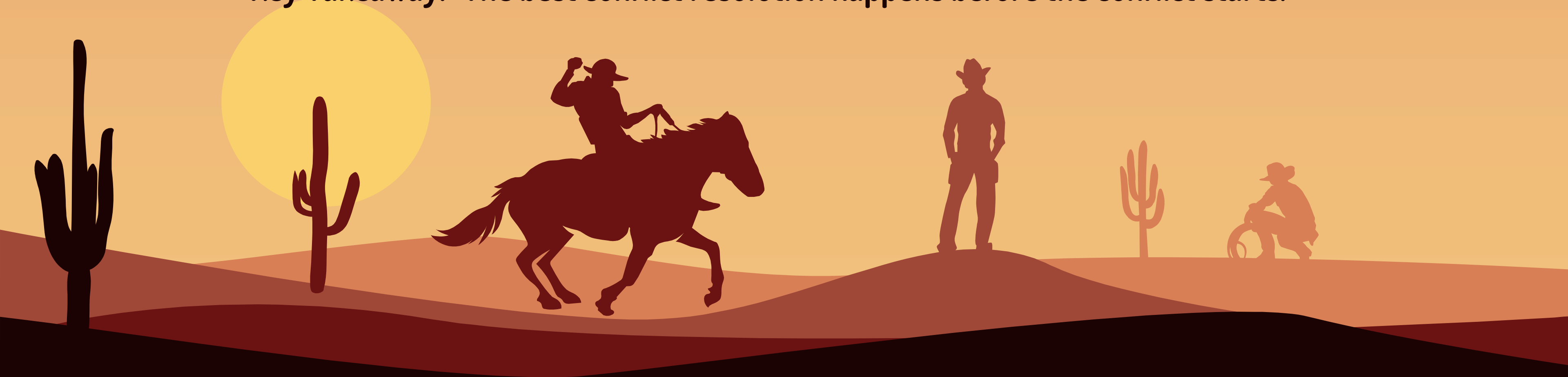


Preventing Future Conflict with Strong Policies

Proactive Strategies:

- ✓ Contracts with Clear Terms – Avoid vendor disputes.
- ✓ Pre-Event Check-ins – Address concerns before the event.
- ✓ Conflict-Resilient Culture – Train teams in mediation techniques.
- ✓ Debriefing Post-Event – Identify lessons learned.

Key Takeaway: "The best conflict resolution happens before the conflict starts."



Q&A



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