

# Collaborative Problem Solving Approach

# Positional Bargaining

- Positional bargaining is a *battle of wills*
- Positional bargaining is *hard on relationships*
- Positional bargaining *produces unwise agreements*
- Win-lose usually becomes  
*LOSE-LOSE*

# Positions Versus Interests

- Can't ask people to set aside their interests
- Can ask people to suspend their positions while participating in process
- Intent of collaborative problem solving is to articulate and understand stakeholders' interests so best solution can be crafted

# Collaborative Problem Solving Approach

1. Develop a common definition of the problem
2. Develop objective criteria for evaluating the potential solution
3. Generate alternative solutions based on the problem definition
4. Evaluate alternatives using objective criteria
5. Seek consensus on alternative(s) that best meet criteria



# Ground Rules of Collaborative Problem Solving

- Everyone's perspective is valued
- Listen to understand, not to debate
- Be hard on the issues – soft on the people
- Avoid right-wrong paradigms
- Everyone should have an equal opportunity to participate
- What's past is past – focus on the future

# Outcomes of Collaborative Problem Solving

- Gain mutual respect for each other's interests
- Develop alternatives that respect everyone's interests
- Not uncommon to develop solutions that no one has imagined yet