



This essay documents the Foresight Wiki content development guidelines. It is a generally accepted standard that all members should attempt to follow these guidelines, even though it is best to use common sense while doing so. In order to avoid substantive edit, the page has been protected.

Resolution of Conflicts is the FORwiki guideline for settling disputes between members of the FORwiki Community.

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Avoid conflict

The most common form of conflict on websites such as FORwiki is the *edit war*. An edit war is the confrontational, combative, non-productive use of editing to try to win or stall a discussion, or force a given stance on a page. Edit wars are conducted aggressively, and are aimed at exhausting the opposition, rather than seeking constructive consensus. Typically, people involved in edit wars ignore the FORwiki policies and guidelines for style, formatting, and content development. Faced with disagreement, members of the FORwiki community should discuss the issue calmly and respectfully on the Discussion page, seek third party input if the matter cannot be resolved, or agree to seek a decision from the Committee for Arbitration.

A variety of positive approaches to editing are recommended, in order to prevent conflict or help to positively resolve disputes:

- Focus on content, and not on editors. When you find a passage in an article that you find biased or inaccurate, improve it if you can. But if you disagree with a point of view expressed in an article, don't just delete it. Rather, balance it with what you think is neutral, and explain your changes in the edit summary. Also, add a section in the Discussion page.
- Give both yourself and the other party some time. Don't act on impulse.
- Take the other editor's perspective into account, and assume that an editor is acting in good faith until it's absolutely clear that they're not.
- Consider negotiating a compromise.

Ask for assistance

The following guidelines should be respected by members of the FORwiki community:

- When in doubt, ask for assistance from someone experienced, who could provide you one-on-one advice and feedback. Assistants can also help you find the best way to resolve your dispute or issue.
- When in dispute, ask the opinion of a third member.
- Ask for explanations about a FORwiki policy on the policy's Discussion page.
- Alert the Administrator in case of uncivil behavior.

Mediation of Conflicts

Mediation is an activity in which a neutral third party guides and regulates a structured discussion with the objective to facilitate reaching consensus on a conflicted issue. The result of a mediation process is the mediated agreement, described as the consensus of the parties on a proposal that has been developed with the help of the mediator. Mediation is intended to achieve a way for people to keep working together and build better articles, and it is best suited for people who are genuinely interested in resolving their dispute.

Informal mediation

When a conflict is about to burst, the Administrator may ask a member to look in and help out. Sometimes members who provide third opinions may be willing to help mediate a dispute, if it is requested.

Formal mediation

Mediation cannot take place if all parties are not willing to take part. If the informal mediation was not enough to close the conflict, the Administrator will appoint a mediator. The mediator is a neutral person works with the parties to a dispute. The mediator helps guide the parties into reaching an agreement that can be acceptable to everyone. When requesting formal mediation, a member should be prepared to show that all informal pathways for solving the conflict are exhausted.

Conduct a survey

In order to clarify the issue that generated a conflict and facilitate a mediated solution, the Administrator, the mediator or even one of the members involved in the conflict may consider conducting a survey of opinion. A survey cannot generate consensus, but is helpful for understanding it, and also the balance of opinions and reasons for those opinions on a given dispute. The survey will be created on a different page, with an internal link from the page whose content is surveyed.

The FORwiki type of survey is the straw poll. Straw polls are tools for probing opinions especially outside of article content discussions, so that one knows who to talk with to obtain a negotiated consensus. Straw polls typically don't have opening and closing times. Instead, they give members a chance to give indications of their opinion, together with a short summary of the reasoning that corresponds to that opinion. A call for a straw poll may trigger discussions instead, which is what the poll set out to determine in the first place

A straw poll is not a binding vote, or a way to beat dissenters over the head with the will of the majority. If a large number of people support one option but some don't, this doesn't mean that that's the "outcome". It means some people are disagreeing, and those people's objections need to be addressed! Members considering an article-related straw poll must remember that polling should be used with care, and should not invoke straw polls prematurely.

Arbitration

Arbitration is the final step in the Foresight Wiki's process for conflict resolution. The Committee for Arbitration considers requests to open new Arbitration cases and to review previous decisions.

Committee for arbitration

The arbitration process within the FORwiki community exists to impose binding solutions to disputes that neither communal discussion, administrators, nor mediation have been able to resolve. Arbitration matters are handled by a panel of experienced members, the Committee for Arbitration. As well as hearing disputes, the Committee also handles issues where exceptional factors such as privacy or the modification of FORwiki Policies and Guidelines are in case. The Committee has considerable autonomy to address such issues, within the broad scope of this policy.

The initial membership of the Committee for Arbitration:



A new Committee for Arbitration is elected every two years.

Request for arbitration

The Arbitration process is initiated by a member of the FORwiki community who submits a request for Arbitration. The Administrator will inform the members of the Committee for Arbitration that a request was submitted. In the request for Arbitration, a member tries to show the arbitrators that there is a dispute requiring their intervention as well as the steps already attempted to resolve it. A short and factual statement of 500 words or less should be written, to illustrate specific instances of the problem.

The Request should be posted on an evidence page - a FORwiki page dedicated to the request for arbitration. The arbitrators' verdict will be posted on the same page. A majority is required for the decision.

All the requests for arbitration will be listed on this policy page by the Administrator, together with internal links to the respective pages.