

# Conflict resolution team dynamics essay sample



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Modern management practice emphasizes the need for effective conflict resolution practices and conflict management. The task for managers is therefore not just to resolve or suppress all conflict, but to manage it so as to reduce its harmful effects and benefit from its good effects. The problem solving skills is a conflict resolution technique which helps to reduce conflict situations and find the best solution that satisfies the needs of everyone involved. **Thesis** : Conflict Resolution can be de-escalated through problem solving, communication, negotiation, mediation and finally infusion and implementation

### **Communication to De-Escalate Conflict**

1. a) Communication is the most important process which helps employees to exchange information and ideas regarding current problems. If there is good communication between all team members, any conflict can be managed within the team with minimal disruption. If the project team are involved and can contribute to the way they work they are more likely to develop into an effective team (LaFasto, Larsen, 2001).
2. Communication process is based on four main stages: 1) message is sent, (2) message is received, (3) feedback, and (4) another message is sent (Armstrong, 2001). In teams, this process is more complex because there are several receivers of the message and several feedbacks. In this situation, conflict resolution can be de-escalated through effective communication between team members which helps to overcome negative emotions and misunderstanding (Stacey, 1996).

3. b) The main problem faced by teams in conflict resolution is misunderstanding. Clearly if the parties can agree on mutual objectives then the problem is far easier to resolve than if they have conflicting objectless and personal agendas. By keeping the objectives in mind and always looking for ways in which both parties can work together to achieve their common objectives, it should be easier to reach a mutually acceptable compromise.
4. One very simple approach of achieving this is to consider a position taken by the other party and ask why they would want something and why they would not want to agree to propositions. By applying this simple approach to a list of points associated with the issue a speedy resolution can be achieved (Gleason, 1997). If the group or team lacks understanding, the decision-making will fail to fulfill its aim. Each member of the team contributes something different, but they must all contribute towards a common goal.
5. c) Listening practices is one of the most important principles of communication and conflict resolution. Listening practices imply mutual respect and confidence needed for successful conflict resolution. Subjects to be discussed should be clearly stated. For instance, if members of the team are not open and attentive, they fail to perform effectively and solve current problems. Their efforts must all pull in the same direction, and their contributions must fit together to produce a whole - without gaps, without friction, without unnecessary duplication of effort (Goris, *et al*/ 2000)

### **Solving Conflicts**

1. **a)** The sources of organizational conflict have a great influence on problem solving skills and can be applied to conflict between individuals, and between individuals and groups. “ People may not enjoy or look forward to conflict, but they cannot avoid dealing with conflict” (Gleason, 1997: 111). Working in teams is beneficial for conflict resolution, because it is likely to involve high degree of participation (Armstrong, 2001).
2. The all-channel network involves full discussion and participation which enhance performance in teams. This network appears to work best where a high level of interaction is required among all members of the team in order to solve complex problems. Routine tasks requiring a low level of skill are disappearing fast. Used in conjunction with flexible organizational policies problem solving skills help managers to have the potential to change employees perception and climate.
3. **b)** In general, the ‘ win-win’ approach is a generic term embracing a wide range of intervention strategies into the conflict resolution. The overriding driver is a ‘ win-win’ solution, a win for both parties and for the conflict. Following Nagel “ Thinking in terms of the goals to be achieved, rather than the alternatives to choose among, can stimulate ‘ win-win’ policies” (Nagel, 1995: 181). Taking into account these issues, the ‘ win-win’ approach is the best solution to meet the needs of parties involved helping to enhance team performance in the selected area.
4. Researchers define that “ The Win/Win Approach is about changing the conflict from adversarial attack and defense, to co-operation. It is a powerful shift of attitude that alters the whole course of

communication” (Win Win Approach, 2006). Working in teams is beneficial, because the ‘ win-win’ approach begins with the identification of a problem which requires consideration of all team members. If the issue is pursued then it needs to be defined and a fuller understanding of the nature of the issue needs to be gained. Analysis based on a partial understanding of the problem is likely to be flawed.

5. **c)** In order to create an effective problem solving approach, teams make use of a number of approaches or intervention strategies to problem-solving. Following Gleason (1997) “ the initial experience of many organizations as they shift to greater reliance on a team-based structure is increased disorganization and the emergence of new forms of conflict” (107).
6. Trying new styles teams can create action-oriented and tailored approaches to suit specific organizational needs, namely conflict resolution. By agreeing at the outset the objectives against which a proposed resolution would be assessed, the decision-making is far easier. Also, in changing environment, the use of technology requires new problem solving skills and the ability to interpret data.

### **Negotiation and Mediation**

1. **a)** In some teams , position and interests can vary greatly leaving no space for effective performance. In this situation, the most appropriate negotiation approach is that of principle-centered negotiation, where both parties set out to find a solution that is beneficial to each (Stacey, 1996). Principle-centered negotiation has four key requirements:

separate the people from the problem; focus on interests and not positions; search for solutions which can accommodate both interests; agree objective criteria.

2. There will be close relationships between members of the team and, while it is impossible to avoid the personal dimension, it is necessary to find ways of dealing with it (LaFasto, Larsen, 2001). Dealing with the personal issues and needs in any negotiation is both difficult and important. Working in teams is beneficial for conflict resolution, because, it helps to focus on the interests rather than the positions that the parties have taken. These approaches can help to de-escalate conflict in teams always looking for ways in which both parties can work together to achieve their common objectives.
3. b) Mediation or third party intervention is a very useful alternative form to the traditional conflict management. Mediator plays the core role here. Belonging to an independent part of the process he/she helps the parties of the conflicts being objective.
4. The ability of a third party to resolve conflict can influence the outcome of it (Armstrong, 2001). The task for mediators is therefore not just to resolve or suppress all conflict, but to manage it so as to reduce its harmful effects and benefit from its good effects. The need, therefore, is to understand the causes of conflict and to develop constructive measures to de-escalate conflict and use the energies released by conflict.
5. c) Creative questioning acts as a core for discussion , where common problems are discussed and measures considered to improve team productivity. Modern management practice emphasizes the need for

free expression and encourages creative initiative for continuing consultation and negotiation. Using this technique, researchers suggest to write down a key work and then write one hundred questions about the problem .

6. Answers will help to find the best solution for the problem. For instance, the full, potential benefits will only be realized if the team takes proper account of human and social factors they are faced with. In short, creative questioning approach can enhance performance through needs identification, description of the problem and needs, considering the other's point of view, etc. (LaFasto, Larsen, 2001).

### **Infusion and Implementation**

Infusion and implementation strategies determine overall success of conflict resolution. All team members should be involved in developing implementation plans but the nature of policies and plans set out by superiors will vary with each manager's authority. While senior executives plan the direction of the organization, managers at various levels prepare implementation strategies for their own section which are part of the overall aims of conflict-resolution.

The team needs to be willing to put in the appropriate effort to ensure that solution is correct and thereby reduce the amount of rework after implementation (Stacey, 1996). Successful implementation plan lies in responding to internal and external change which helps to de-escalate conflict. Infusion can enhance performance involving the clarification of objectives, the specification of problems, and the search for and implementation of solutions (Gleason, 1997).

## Conclusion

The manager must use working teams and be aware of their dynamics in order to achieve a high standard of work and improve organizational effectiveness. Conflict resolution is a part of the process of management which is concerned with the maintenance of human relationships and ensuring the physical well-being of employees so that they give the maximum contribution to efficient working. New approaches to conflict management and high level of participation are the main factors which help team members to overcome conflict situations.

## References

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