

# [Resolving workplace conflict](https://assignbuster.com/resolving-workplace-conflict/)

[Psychology](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/psychology/)

Resolving Workplace Conflict Conflict can occur in any company or organization, no matter how large or small. The key is not in avoidance of conflict at all costs. It is in effective management
of disputes and disagreements among various work groups or teams. Facilitation of
open discussion, establishing of rules or guidelines, creating an environment of mutual
respect and stressing the importance of working toward a common goal are all methods
that limit and effectively handle conflict. Validation of each team’s ideas is also essential
in reducing conflict.
Open discussion includes the sharing of ideas, by two or more employees in
regularly scheduled meetings or work sessions. It also includes sharing of progress or
keeping other groups updated. Lack of communication by co-workers can be viewed
as secretive or uncooperative behavior, causing others to feel threatened. Rules set
down prior to the beginning of projects that prohibit discussion of each others
shortcomings, personal lives and other attributes are vital. Creating a more level
playing field in which all employees are equal. It also encourages cohesiveness or unity.
Working toward a common goal should be stressed as a new project is outlined.
Goals should be described in detail, with periods for question and answer sessions
available to all staff. Employees whose skills most closely match the various tasks or
roles required should be identified. A study by Fortune Magazine in which several
CEO’s failures were studied, revealed the “ in seven out of ten cases, the leading cause of
the executive’s downfall was the failure to put the right people in the right jobs, and the
related failure to fix people problems in time” (Experience Based Learning). Such
failures can also lead to conflict as co-workers attempt to work around each other’s
shortcomings.
Global corporations with employees in several locations worldwide can experience
conflict due to differences in work habits, cultural beliefs and language barriers. Conflict
can arise among managers, due to different management and leadership styles. Many
individuals can experience conflict for many reasons. Differences in ideas, work
habits, skill levels and many other factors can lead to conflict. Symptoms of conflict
include withdraw or avoidance of work duties or tasks that require interaction with
particular employees. Employees taking on roles as peace keepers should indicate
hostility or opposition somewhere in the ranks.

The most respected leaders of highly successful organizations are faced with conflict.
Conflict is viewed by some managers as necessary, though it may feel awkward to many
Employees. When Bill Marvin was hired to manage foodservice for the U. S. Olympic
Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado, he had no idea that conflict had become
so serious that cooks were waving knives at each other. Marvin was able to recognize
the incident as a symptom, rather than a problem. Marvin scheduled a meeting of the
kitchen crew and learned that many were not getting enough hours to make ends meet.
He revised many schedules and let some staff go. Interestingly, the two involved in the
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knife altercation became two of the most productive employees. The Olympic
foodservice began receiving compliments. Marvin’s actions show that listening to
employees needs and resolving issues quickly can make a difference in profits and
reputation. “ Marvin took a near-violent conflict and managed it into a net gain for the
facility” (Moomaw, 1996).
Organizations must be able to quickly and accurately identify areas or subjects of
conflict among all employees and departments. They must develop and implement
conflict resolution policies, following them with each situation that arises. Ultimately,
the organization that handles conflict quickly and successfully will out-perform its
competitors in productivity, in attracting talented new employees and in reducing costs of
health benefits by reducing workplace stress. Simply stated, effective conflict resolution
has a cost benefit that any size organization can appreciate.
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