



Department of Employment Dispute Resolution

Workplace Conflict Management Skills

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EDR's Statutory Role

- **Separate Agency Established by Law**
- **Provides Neutral Services that Facilitate Dispute Resolution Between Employees and Management at the lowest level possible**
 - **Advice Line/Consultation**
 - **Training**
 - **Mediation**
 - **Grievance Procedure**



Workplace Conflict

Examples of extremely destructive behavior in the workplace:

- **Passive Aggressiveness**
- **Shunning**
- **Bullying**
- **Mobbing**
- **Polarization**



Definition of Conflict

Perceived differences between two or more people over needs, values or interests.

A violation of expectations.



Perception

Is the glass half full or half empty?

It's all depends on your perception of the glass
of water.

"We don't see things as they are, we see
things as we are." Anäis Nin



Perception

- Know thy self
 - Understand what informs your perception.
 - Be aware of the conflict management style you prefer and assess if it or another is needed now.

- Seek to understand the other person
 - Understand that other people may have different perceptions and needs/interests.
 - Understanding someone is not the same as agreeing with them.



Workplace Conflict

The Biggest Issues Identified in Workplace Conflicts are:

Trust

Respect

Communication



Communication

There are four essential components to communication.

A sender (the speaker)

A receiver (the listener)

A message

The mutual understanding of the message



Causes of Conflict

- Data
- Perceived or actual incompatible interests
- Structural factors
- Values
- Relationships/Personalities



Conflict Behavior Styles

- **Avoiding**
- **Accommodating**
- **Compromising**
- **Collaborating**
- **Competing**



Conflict Competency Scale

- Differences (lowest intensity level)
- Misunderstandings
- Disagreements
- Discord
- Polarization (highest intensity level)



Positions vs. Interests

Positions are the things that we decide that are right and wrong.

Interests are the reasons behind those decisions.

Use conflict as an opportunity to negotiate interests, not positions.



Negotiation

- **Positional Negotiation (Win-Lose):** Often used to determine substantive issues, i.e., buying /selling items.
- **Interest-based Negotiation (Win-Win):** Useful in developing and maintaining relationships.



Possible Outcomes of Conflict

- Conflict Settlement
- Conflict Management
- Conflict Resolution
- Conflict Transformation



Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Third-Party Interventions

- Mediation
- Facilitation
- Coaching
- Arbitration
- Training
- Program Evaluation
- Organizational Development



Dept. of Employment Dispute Resolution

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