

CONFLICT SOLUTIONS

Expert Advice to Resolve Workplace Discord

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Resolve Rather Than Judge

As a leader trying to keep your team mission-focused, productive, and harmonious, what do you think about employees who become entangled with each other and descend into disruptive conflict? We sometimes hear from management that these colleagues appear unskilled, blame-worthy, or even immature. The following will help you reconsider such judgments and improve your resolution skills.

Let's test the negative labels we ascribe to people in conflict with a wild thought experiment. Imagine the day when Arnold comes into the office and swoops Gregg off his feet to swing him around by his heels. Of course, Arnold would be culpable for his outlandish behavior. But what about Gregg? Would you invoice him for the broken lamps and smashed computer screens caused by his flailing arms and well-aimed head? Certainly not; he was just a passenger on an uncomfortable ride.

Here's how this relates to the nature of conflict. You know from experience that disputes tend to grow. A misinterpreted slight begets a counter-move so that, in just a few short cycles, conflict sweeps its

protagonists along with it. The expanding shock wave carries people toward increasingly belligerent, negligent, and destructive behaviors. In other words, many of their unsavory actions are merely symptoms of what discord has caused them to do. We might use the name "Arnold" as a synonym for the conflict cycle.

None of this absolves people of responsibility. Just because they are caught up in these dynamics, they are not at liberty to act like rampaging baboons with no regard for consequences. However, to become a more successful dispute resolution manager, it is helpful to reconsider your judgments about people who have become derailed by discord. Instead, allow for the possibility that in many situations, the conflict dynamic triggers

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WORKPLACE CONFLICT



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MOST REQUESTED TRAINING PROGRAMS

(Delivered in-person or online)

- 1. Resolving Conflict: Skills for Leaders.**
This hands-on training helps leaders build competency to confidently and productively manage discord among others.
- 2. Constructive Workplace Conflict.**
This workshop equips you with the mindset and skills to handle inevitable people problems. You will develop more comfort and success when dealing with workplace disputes.
- 3. Communicating Under Stress.**
This program will help you avoid escalation by providing you with enhanced confidence and communication skills. You'll gain specific tools to ask effective questions, engage in deep listening, and convey your points more artfully.

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statements and behaviors that are incongruent with how they typically think and act. This liberating way of understanding the phenomenon of conflict frees you from vainly trying to determine right and wrong or taking a side. Ultimately, you can be more helpful when you are focused on fixing the conflict dynamic itself, rather than punishing or trying to repair the people who are being swung around by a giant they can't readily control.

Perspective:

A teaspoon of neutron star weighs 6 billion tons.

