

CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN WORK FROM HOME SCENARIO

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Abstract:

Effective conflict resolution improves individual and organisational performance. Although the negative aspects of conflicts are commonly discussed, very few studies examine the relevance of constructive conflict in an organisation. COVID19 has been severely affecting work and employment. Control, monitoring, and resistance are part of the present economic crisis. Conflict resolution skill is a leadership quality that can be developed right from childhood. The researcher here tries to identify how productivity can be improved through constructive conflict management.

Keywords: Conflict management, Constructive Conflict, Covid-19, Work From Home (WFH)

INTRODUCTION

Constructive conflict is a type of conflict that aims to bring various ideas and viewpoints together. The combination of the two terms may seem illogical. The word "conflict" has a negative connotation, particularly in the workplace, where leaders are more concerned with preventing conflict than promoting it. Nonetheless, not all confrontation is harmful; in certain cases, it is even required. (Weingart & Jehn, 2017). When it comes to encouraging conflict, it all relies on what kind of conflict is being promoted.

A good example is a constructive conflict, which has effectively encouraged team members to open their eyes to alternative realities and points of view. Promoting constructive conflict in a remote work helps teams challenge each other to think out of the box. (*Managing Conflict in Software Testing*, n.d.)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Any time two or more people actively disagree over anything, it is what we mean by the term "conflict." It is the form of dispute that promotes the acceptance of a wide range of ideas and worldviews. Teams regularly have significant disputes when working on a project or something important to the organisation. Leaders that know how to handle disagreement turn it into a healthy and intelligent conversation about how to improve their organisation. (Van de et al., 1997). Constructive conflict allows teams to be open and honest about their opinions on a particular issue (Amason & Sapienza, 1997). Conflict occurs when a group has friction, disagreement, or discord. Conflict can arise when people perceive resistance to their ideas, values, or opinions. Various meetings are designed to encourage constructive conflict, in which participants discuss their disagreements openly and respectfully to understand each other's perspectives and find the optimal solution. Facilitators of meetings are trained to distinguish between constructive and destructive conflict and to assist groups in keeping the conversation constructive. (Härtel et al., n.d.)

Characteristics of a healthy, mutually beneficial disagreement

- Issues are emphasised.
- Cooperation
- Commitment to find a solution to the present issue.
- Respect others by paying attention to and respecting the opinions of those on the team.
- Honesty and openness in communication

- It encourages everyone touched by the situation to speak out.

Conflict Resolution Through Collaboration in the Workplace

In the case of a software development team with divergent views on project execution, the team leader may choose to scold them and threaten dismissal for incompetence. Additionally, the group must select a leader and always follow their orders which will be a competitively destructive decision. However, once everyone has had the opportunity to speak, the leader will highlight areas of agreement and disagreement. Everyone understands the situation better, and the discussion concludes with a more precise plan to resolve the conflict effectively. The first scenario depicts a negative workplace dispute, while the second depicts a positive one. (Svensson & Höst, 2005). Effective team management allows members to express their diverse viewpoints and develop new ideas and tactics.

Fostering constructive conflict in a business that is conducted via the Internet

The age of remote work has arrived. Numerous traditional businesses have been compelled to reorganise to survive the pandemic. Employees today are increasingly interested in working from home. (Absalyamova & Absalyamov, 2015). Companies like TCS have disclosed that no more than 25 per cent of their employees will be working from their office and will not be spending more than 25 per cent of their time in the office. 83% of employers now say that shift to remote work has been successful for their company, compared to 73% in the June 2020 survey of PwC.

Although there are numerous advantages to leading a geographically scattered team, the conflict will always develop, and leaders must be prepared to deal with it effectively. (Siebdrat et al., 2015). Fostering diversity and creating areas where teams may listen to one another are two ways to generate constructive conflict in a remote setting. "Leaders need to be able to handle disagreement in a manner that allows everyone the opportunity to express their views while respecting the perspectives of others" (Rahim, 2017)

Even a conflict situation in a remote workplace can be productive using constructive methods. (Shastri et al., 2021) In a virtual meeting, a manager should not overlook signs of team issues. Some leaders think ignoring them will help, but it worsens the situation. Promote open dialogue, diverse viewpoints, and professionalism. If necessary, plan one-on-one meetings to get everyone's perspective. Remote teams need regular feedback. Since you do not meet your team in person, some may feel lonely or excluded. If someone is rude or closed-minded, a one-on-one conversation may help them see their mistake. The feedback meeting is to tell employees how they are doing, which involves pointing out their mistakes and offering advice to avoid repeating them.

Similarly, any accomplishments should be encouraged. Virtual meetings are a place to listen, find out what others are doing, and ask for support. Debates and brainstorming sessions can help gather project feedback. Everyone's input can improve meeting productivity. Diversity in a remote workplace does not always require hiring people from different cultures and countries. It involves multiple perspectives. Diversity helps employees feel valued and heard. Creating a diverse workforce requires fostering innovation and creativity. Many people fear disagreement and do not take advantage of its opportunities. When teams are connected, conflict can be easily resolved. When teams are disconnected and only communicate when they need something, they do not try to understand each other's perspectives. Remote working can be difficult if teams do not communicate well. Gaming nights, virtual coffee (or happy hours), and simple chats can help in this situation. (Hacker et al., 2020)

Conclusion and Suggestions

The major elements to encourage constructive conflict in a remote business environment are addressing the problem, providing feedback, conducting review meetings and team-building activities, and encouraging a diverse environment.

The author suggests that educating the employees about conflict management styles and conflict resolution can improve productivity. Also, proper conflict resolution training is required in this modern era to equip the employees.

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