**Conflict Management Approaches & Human Behaviors**

**Introduction**

Conflict in the workplace is a constant discussion amongst manager and leaders within organizations. Many factors contribute to how the conflict is handled and/or which theory may be most effective in creating productivity and less inter-personal conflict. This paper will discuss some of the various types and sources of conflict, along with the potential remedies to each situation.

**Part I**

**Sources and Types of Conflict**

Inter-personal conflict exists in most work places due to the nature of speed-and-stealth model that many organizations possess.Inter-personal is very closely related to another source, intra-organization conflict which focuses more on what “occurs” in the workplace (changes in resources, workload, etc.) versus how colleagues react. Employees are in a constant battle with their colleagues in attempts to achieve team goals, quotas, promotions and numerous other standards that coincide with the positions they possess. In an ever-changing, diversified business world, the pressure and competition will only increase as time moves forward.

Personalized conflict is one that many employees will encounter during their years of service with any organization. How someone chooses to handle their particular situation will immensely determine the direction it progresses in. Emotions are usually high in personalized conflict, causing disparities amongst the parties involved that could potentially worsen and most likely never come to a common ground. A survey conducted found that 1,400 workers found that more than half had lost time at work due to conflicts with 22% of them reducing their productivity (Guttman, 2009). The focus in these types of conflict are mostly can only usually be rectified by either distancing the parties involved or completely leaving the workplace once it surpasses a certain level.

**Chinese Setting Generalized to Our Workplace Environment**

The Chinese have a more cohesive style in their workplace environments, which, I believe could be generalized into our workplace as well. Organizations do not simply use one individual to succeed in business, therefore, it should not be so individualistic in the operation. Since the focus is primarily on a group of people, rather than a distinct employee in the Chinese workplace environments, inter-personal conflicts do not exist as much. China also maintains a market that is constantly growing and innovating, therefore, collectivism will only cultivate ideas to maintain those strides in the economy. In the western world, many organization are a breeding ground for personalized and inter-personal conflict as a result of people being motivated for their own selfish reasons, instead of for the betterment of the organization. Furthermore, achieving levels of power and privilege also manifest within the western world, consistently adding to the bad conflict.

China, on the other hand, is not all virtuous either. Although their style of management is more focused on a group of people, conflict occurs intra-organizationally, which also tends to allow managers to over-work their employees.“Companies in China operate in two time frames, executing today’s business while preparing to double in size in anywhere from three to five years. This involves not just adding resources but incubating new business models and launching new brands” (Hout & Michael, 2014). In the western world, there are labor laws that have been implemented to preventemployees from working too many hours without breaks and an increase in wages. Still, in China, employees work over 40 hours a week with little pay, while standing on their feet the entire shift. Apple opened a factory in Shenzhen, China where 18 employees had killed themselves(Cooper, 2013). How could Apple be one of the happiest places for employees to work in the West, but have multiple suicides at their site in China? This only leads us back to my original statement about the inter-organizational conflict causing employers to be more concerned with keeping up with rapidly changing markets.

**Management Resolution Remedies**

In the workplace, different projects cause for different approaches, just as the various methods will be altered depending on the personnel a manager may be dealing with. In related experiences, personality and desires have a major constituent in the resolution remedy a manager elects to apply.

Managers must understand that employees possess different temperaments and drivers for what they may deem as successful, a nuisance or just a place to co-exist with other personnel. One of the leading factors in a satisfactory performing team is communication. Conducting meetings to maintain an effective line of communication is essential in team performance and cohesiveness. The way messages are conveyed is equally important since employees may not be able to interpret the tone in an electronic or written message the way it was intended. Simply using effective methods of communication could avoid inter-personal conflict. Also,being able to maintain transparency that ultimately creates high productivity, instead of avoiding conflict like the collectivist culture.

**Part II**

**Characterizing the Sources**

Sources of conflict have been characterized as mostly negative, but it should not only be labeled negatively, but also very positive as well. Teams can be very productive when conflict is used in a manner that brings multiple ideas together in a controlled environment. Being able to also understand different cultural behaviors is also crucial in the ability to use conflict as a positive feat. The author also stated how HR can use a stage-method to manage conflict when it occurs negatively. Understanding that conflict could also emulate the manager’s aura is a potential starting point for HR. Once again, communication through the actions of asking the manager and teams questions about themselves will be vital in conveying why the group may possess the internal conflict that they do.

**Jurisdiction of Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution can fall within the realm beyond HR. It can even begin with peers of employees who work for a particular manager. However, conflict resolution usually begins with the manager instead. Although conflict resolution typically falls under the responsibility of the manger or HR, everyone who is a part of the team should hold their colleagues accountable and expect each other to try to focus on the team’s alignment.“Members operate with agreed-upon protocols and intra-team relationships are based on transparency. Most importantly, dysfunctional conflict is reduced and redirected into a productive force for producing results” (Guttman, 2009).

**Understanding Sources of Conflict**

It is necessary to understand the sources of conflict so that HR or managers can recognize what approach may need to be taken to come to a resolution. Each situation and as previously mentioned, employee, will require distinct courses of action depending upon the level they hold within an organization, the conflict they might have and who it is that has it. The ability to deal with various conflict will enable HR and managers to align their teams in the manner they wish and ultimately have more satisfied employees with higher productivity.

# References

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