

FIVE COMPONENTS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflict can arise anywhere and at any time in our lives, and frequently it can cross over from one aspect of our lives to another.

It might start at home, the workplace or in our social or extended family relationships.

To make sure it doesn't overwhelm us, it's important to know how to deal with it effectively.

When approached appropriately, conflict can actually be an opportunity for growth.

Hunterlink have outlined 5 simple steps below to help you deal with conflict when it arises:

1. Define acceptable behaviour

Working with a baseline of what constitutes acceptable behaviour is a positive step towards avoiding or defusing conflict.

A framework for decision making, team building and leadership development will help avoid conflict amongst colleagues.

It's also important for people's job descriptions to be well defined and understood so that everyone in the team knows what is expected of them and of their manager.

A well-articulated and understood chain of command also helps to resolve conflict before it begins.

2. Deal with conflict head-on

While not every conflict can be avoided or prevented, the secret to conflict resolution is often conflict prevention.

Seek out areas of potential conflict and proactively deal with the underlying issues in a fair and decisive manner and a great many conflicts may never eventuate.

When conflicts do flare up, an early and proactive response, handled in good faith, can take much of the heat out of the situation.

Taking time to identify sources of conflict or tension is an investment in prevention.

3. Understanding the WIIFM Factor

Understanding the other person's What's-in-it-for-Me position is critical in approaching and responding to conflict. People's motivations, pressures and anxieties will inform their behaviour, so understanding what is driving their role in the conflict is crucial. Approach the conflict in a way that allows you to become the problem-solver - both for your own position and for others'. If you can show others that you will find a solution to their problems, you will find that the obstacles in your path quickly move aside.

4. Assess the Importance Factor

Pick your battles and avoid conflict for the sake of conflict. Decide what is important to you. Maybe it's one or many parts of the whole, but there might be some aspects you can budge on. Make sure you are not just digging your heels in out of spite.

If the issue is important enough or there is enough at stake, people need to do what is necessary to open lines of communication and restore goodwill.

5. View conflict as an opportunity

Hidden within every conflict is the potential for a significant teaching or learning opportunity. Wherever there is disagreement there is an inherent opportunity for growth and development.

A conflict that has been effectively and responsibly managed provides an opportunity to rebuild goodwill or strengthen the working relationship between two individuals or two groups of people.

Conflict is an opportunity for team building and leadership development at every level.