The Art of Conflict Resolution

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Conflict & Conflict Resolution

• Team Dynamics & Conflict on Teams
• Is Conflict Always Detrimental to the Team & Organization
• Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)
• Conflict Definition and the Three Stages of Conflict
• Managing Conflict Through Effective Listening & Strategies
An Exercise...Take About 5 Minutes

See hand out:

Describe:
1) A conflict in which you were satisfied with the outcome

2) A conflict in which you were not satisfied with the outcome

Save this, we will come back to it at the end of the seminar
Stages of Team Development

**Performing**
- High flexibility
- Job is getting done
- Problems being solved

**Norming**
- Established procedures agreed to

**Forming**
- People start to work together
- Getting to know each other
- Beginning to understand goal
- Some questions asked

**Storming**
- Risky issues debated
- Wider options considered
- Personal feelings raised
- Personalities and Egos

*From: Bruce Tuckman*
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Is Conflict Always Bad?

What are your thoughts?

- Think of examples when conflict was detrimental to the project team or the organization.

- When was conflict beneficial to the project team or the organization?
Conflict and Organizational Effectiveness

![Graph showing the relationship between Level of Conflict and Productivity. The graph indicates that as the Level of Conflict increases from low (L) to high (H), Productivity decreases from high (H) to low (L).]
Conflict and Organizational Effectiveness

![Graph showing the relationship between level of conflict and productivity. The graph peaks at point B, indicating the optimal level of conflict for productivity. Points A and C represent low and high levels of conflict, respectively.]

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Your Style of Resolving Conflict

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI)

Determining your preferred style in resolving conflict

©Thomas-Kilmann (TKI)
Conflict Resolution

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromise
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Assertiveness
- Concern for Self

Cooperativeness
- Concern for Other Party

©Thomas-Kilmann (TKI)

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4 of 5 Modes of Handling Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modes</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competing</td>
<td>The project manager uses his or her power to direct the solution, resulting in a win-lose agreement where one side gets its way and the other does not.</td>
<td>I win/You lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding</td>
<td>Both sides do not pursue their own concerns or the other party’s concerns. Rather, they smooth over the situation to allow some time to pass before revisiting the conflict.</td>
<td>I lose/You lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodating</td>
<td>One side is trying to meet the needs of the other side rather than its own.</td>
<td>I lose/You win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromising</td>
<td>Each side is equally concerned with its needs and the other party’s needs. Compromising never fully takes care of anyone’s needs.</td>
<td>I lose a little/You lose a little or, I win a little/You win a little</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Collaborating the 5\textsuperscript{th} Mode

- It is a win-win (Creates long term relationships)
- “I am concerned about myself and I am equally concerned about you.”
- Helps create creative new solutions to a problem or conflict
- Takes time, energy and a commitment to work together to solve the problem or conflict
- If you can effectively collaborate, you will distinguish yourself among your peers!
Group Exercise A

You are the supervisor of a department. Your staff has organized a committee to discuss the location of the office coffeemaker and its effect on their productivity. The coffeemaker is located just outside your office and 40 feet or so from the staff work area. The committee feels that the time it takes them to visit the coffeemaker slows down their work flow. A representative from the committee comes to you with a proposal to move the coffeemaker from its current location to a location that is central to the staff work area. The committee needs your approval to submit a work order for the move. How you might you respond if you wanted to use the _____________ mode?

Modes: Competing, Accommodating, Avoiding, Collaborating and Compromising
Exercise B

Two friends are deciding where to go for lunch. Person A is on a diet, and Person B has to be back at work for a meeting within 30 minutes.

Give a response for each of the modes:
Competing, Accommodating, Avoiding, Collaborating and Compromising

Person A: The Calorie Watcher
Person B: The Clock Watcher
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Elias H. Porter, Ph.D.

- Prominent psychologist, colleague of Carl Rogers
- Author of “Introduction to Therapeutic Counseling and Manpower Development”
- Developed of Relationship Awareness Theory (Determining our Motivational Values)
- Author of the Strength Deployment Inventory (SDI)
What is Conflict?

Conflict is a reaction to a perceived threat to self-worth.

People are willing to go into conflict about things that are important to them. (*conflict triggers*)

When we see conflict in other people, we can discover what is important to them.

*Dr. Elias Porter: © Personal Strengths Publishing*
Two Basic Types of Conflict

Unwarranted conflict:
A threat to self-worth which arises when two people agree on the goal but do not agree on how to achieve the goal. Usually about interpersonal factors (personality styles).

Warranted Conflict:
A threat to self-worth which arises when two people disagree on the goal or the objective.

Dr. Elias Porter: © Personal Strengths Publishing
3 Stages of Conflict

◆ Stage 1
  • Concerned with maintaining self-worth
  • Focus is on self, the problem, the other person

◆ Stage 2
  • Concerned with preserving self-worth
  • Focus is on self and the problem

◆ Stage 3
  • Concerned with protecting self-worth
  • Focus is on self to the exclusion of all else

Dr. Elias Porter: © Personal Strengths Publishing
## Conflict Sequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONFLICT STAGE</th>
<th>METHOD OF DEFENDING MVSS¹ IN ORDER TO RETURN TO VALUED RELATING SYSTEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BLUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 1:</strong> Maintaining Self-Worth</td>
<td>Accommodate Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 2:</strong> Preserving Self-Worth</td>
<td>Surrender Conditionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stage 3:</strong> Protecting Self-Worth</td>
<td>Surrender Completely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Adapted with permission from the Strength Deployment Inventory Facilitation Guide ©Personal Strengths Publishing, Inc.

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Listening - a Key Skill

- Listening is defined as:
  Taking in information from another person while remaining nonjudgmental and empathetic.

“It is also acknowledging the talker in a way that invites the communication to continue while giving input and encouragement to the talker’s response, carrying the person’s idea one step forward.” (This is called active listening)

Madelyn Burley-Allen: Listening The Forgotten Skill
Listening is more sophisticated than hearing:

- Listening:
  - Demands energy and discipline
  - It is a *learned* skill
  - Effective listening is an *active* not passive discipline.

*A skilled listener does not just sit there and allow listening to happen, the listener takes an *active* role.*
Exercise: Paraphrasing

- 2 People, 3 minutes for each round.
- 1st Person interviews Person #2. Person #1: Your job is to ask questions and then to occasionally paraphrase what you heard back to Person #2. Paraphrase throughout the conversation. Suggested topic to ask about: Ask Person #2 about a time when they had to overcome a difficult conflict situation and how did you handle it.
- Person #1: At the end of the conversation, summarize what you have heard.
- (As a reminder, treat this as an interview)

- After 3 minutes, stop. Person #2 gives feedback to Person #1.
  - What was it like to be on the receiving end of the paraphrase?
  - Was it helpful to you? In what way?
  - When you are done giving feedback, switch roles and repeat the exercise.
Tips When the Conversation Gets Crucial

- Focus on what you really want: for me, others, the relationship
- Ask how would I behave if I really did want this?
- Look for when the conversation becomes crucial
  Do not go silent or violent
- Make it safe, apologize when appropriate
- Make sure you have a mutual purpose
- Maintain mutual respect
- Tell your story
- Determine what I should do right now to move toward what I really want
- Be open to others’ views
- Actively explore others’ views

Adopted from: “Crucial Conversations (Tools for talking when stakes are high)”
It’s Time to Process the 1st Exercise

Now lets talk about the 2 conflicts, one in which it was resolved, and the 2nd one in which it was not resolved.

In the first conflict, what conflict mode did you use?

In the second conflict, what conflict mode did you use?
In Closing, Please Remember…

Unresolved conflict never goes away, it just comes back in uglier ways!
What Questions Do You Have?

Questions?

Thank you for your participation!

John Kaman

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