

**Course Name: Certificate in Higher Education for the
Workplace**
Module Name: Problem Solving and Decision Making
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Introduction

Conflict at work is the center of my academic report that aims to analyze all the components of this very vast and complex subject with regard to the world of work.

During my explanation I will try to bring in the valuable contributions of certain authors who have very well elucidated the pros and cons of conflict at work.

Because, in fact, the success or failure of any company depends on how it deals with conflict at work.

Conflicts are part of human nature. They can be of personality, interests or values. But one thing is certain: they all come from differences. And the important thing is to know what conflict management is and how to deal with them.

In this report I will share, as an example, a real case of conflict that occurred in my workplace.

Throughout this course, I learned that when I refer to books, magazines etc.... the lecturers recommend using Harvard. But even knowing this, in addition to using Harvard, I will explore two articles of Portuguese origin, not because Portuguese is the language of my comfort zone, but also to better support my thesis on this very interesting subject.

Choosing the problem

Although often linked to confrontation, conflict situations are not always harmful. When properly managed, conflict can become the driving force for positive change in the business. Conflict management is called the set of practical methods and processes that aim to manage conflicting situations.

Conflict management is a way of mediating deadlocks between people or teams, reducing their negative impact and making the conflict situation productive.

According to several converging definitions, the concept of conflict is “opposition of ideas, feelings or interests”. In other words, conflict is the clash between opposing forces or divergent opinions. Where there is a group of people, there is conflict.

In other words, however great the synergy between the teams of a company, inevitably, there will be some kind of conflicting situation. This is where the need to adopt measures for conflict management comes in.

Some large companies, which have a high number of employees, often set up specific clusters focused exclusively on conflict management within the Human Resources sector.

When managed efficiently and didactically, conflicts can be converted into great opportunities for learning and personal and professional growth.

What are the causes of conflicts in the company?

In general, conflicts in a company are usually generated by personal or professional disagreements, differences of opinion or obstacles that directly or indirectly affect the work of a particular team or employee.

Some of the main reasons for conflicts in the company are:

- Very sudden or rapid changes in processes;
- Unreasonable deadlines or non-compliance with them;
- Divergent objectives and goals;
- Unavailability or misallocation of resources;
- Interdependence in the execution of tasks;

- Miscommunication or misinterpretation;
- Lack of information;
- Contradiction in the company's attitude towards its culture and policy code;
- Imposition of new rules and restrictions;
- Implementation of new procedures;
- Toxic leaderships;
- Abuse of power.

Situations of conflict and power are almost always related - whether by disputes or abusive postures.

Authoritarian or hardheaded collaborators have more difficulty with conflict. While more resilient and empathetic professionals handle these situations better.

Conflict management at work

Most of the time, the word "conflict" is interpreted from a negative perspective, associated with fights or clashes. However, conflicts can bring positive results - as I will show later.

Conflict in my workplace

After a retrospective on the concept of conflict and its management, I will now talk about the real case that happened in my workplace and from there support my study, highlighting causes and proposing two possible solutions.

I have been working for three years in one of the seventeen restaurants that make up the large Steak & Co chain in central London. I work in the grill chef kitchen at a very busy restaurant with a target of £ 100,000 a week. Two months ago, there was a very serious case of conflict between two members of the company. For obvious reasons, I will create fictitious names to better protect company data and the identity of those involved.

On a very busy Saturday, by the way, Saturday is the day that gives the most money to the restaurant, we were all busy and tired with so much work to do. Americo, our head chef, a seasoned chef with long years at home, asked Mauro to give him some missing dishes to send food to the tables. Mauro, tired with his tasks, because he is not a chef like us but the waiter, he thought he did not have to pass dishes to Americo because it is not part of his job. But as we were all tired of busy, Mauro shouted that he didn't give anyone any dishes because he has more to do. Americo felt bad about Mauro's response and decided to report it to the general manager and he went to the kitchen to calm the spirits of both colleagues so we can continue our work. It all seemed calm when we suddenly heard the noise in the back of the kitchen. We went running to see what it was and to our amazement they were fighting, and Mauro dealt a hard blow with the bottle that cut Americo's head. We managed to separate the two colleagues and called the manager who, in turn, called the ambulance and the police as well. After a few minutes, the ambulance and police arrived, and after some inquiries, they took Americo to the hospital and Mauro to be heard by the authorities. The next day Mauro was fired while Americo was at home on sick leave.

The incident Saturday was the worst of all Saturdays in terms of production and profitability for the company because it affected the whole team.

Theoretical Framework on Conflict

You cannot talk about work without conflict at work, so for many years many authors have presented their studies on this vast subject with the sole purpose of always elucidating how

to avoid or minimize the impacts of conflict on work. One such study is Malcom & Rennie (1998) with the famous argument that people meet to conduct business conflicts; conflicts of will, personalities, ideas, strategic plans and interests. Also, Coleman and Ferguson (2014, p.1) that according to them the conflict is not intrinsically bad. It is a natural, fundamental and all-encompassing part of life. Not to mention Bruce Tuckman's (1965) very important study of forming, storming, norming and performing and with an emphasis here on storming that focuses on conflict and its overcoming as the decision maker of teamwork success. What happened in my work led me to be more interested in causal studies about workplace conflict and in my readings, I was able to learn about the 4 types of conflict elucidated by (Ahamefula, 2014): Interpersonal Conflict; Intra-Group Conflict; Conflict between groups and Interorganizational conflict. And highlighting the latter that will support my entire report.

Conflict at work exists and is not a taboo.

Everything will depend on the stance taken by both the stakeholders and the company.

There is a huge difference between admitting the existence of the conflict and confronting it or denying its existence and “putting hot rags” on the situation.

Steps to manage conflicts

Without taking the merit of the great researcher Kappel (2017) with six steps proposed by him and which are: Embrace the conflict; Talk together; Hear; Find a deal; Provide guidance; Be quick to forgive. I want to introduce another 4

steps that are really all about the steps he presents.

The success of conflict management will depend on how the mediator will behave throughout the steps involved in resolving the problem.

The person responsible for mediating conflicts must be totally impartial and focus on the interests of those involved - not their personal and professional positions.

It is also important to look for approach points between the conflicting parties. This helps broaden perspectives and search for more efficient solutions.

Another important point is to act clearly and objectively, both when analyzing the situation and during the mediation itself.

This ensures more assertiveness in conclusions and prevents focus from being lost during the conversation.

How to handle a conflict depends on a few variables. These include the intensity, duration, context and causes of the conflicting situation.

There are some steps that should be taken once a conflict is known to exist. Are they:

Clearance

The first step in conflict management is to find out the facts about the event. This involves investigating the nature and origin of the conflict and identifying those involved.

Then you need to talk individually with each other to hear possible versions of the story. Keep in mind that, at this time, it is very important to practice empathetic listening and attentive observation. Don't be just concerned with complaints. Try to identify the needs behind the criticism.

Once you have listened to all sides, you will need to review the collected information impartially. Identify possible misunderstandings or noise in communication between the parties.

Negotiation

The negotiation stage involves the development of possible solutions to the conflict jointly. First and foremost, it requires a joint conversation, mediated by the conflict manager. The dialogue should serve to clarify the perceptions of both parties. This will ensure that there is understanding of each side's needs.

Resolution

Finally, the mediator should guide the creation of solution proposals collaboratively, considering all sides.

Often one party will have to waive some requirement. If this is the case, you need to make sure that those involved are aware of and agree with it, making sure that there is no disagreement.

Side dish

After conflict mediation, it is time to put the solutions into practice. But the job of the conflict manager doesn't stop there.

Follow-up work needs to be done, monitoring the possible developments - positive or negative - of the conflict and its evolution, as well as checking whether the proposals are being met.

Remember that not every conflict needs a task force to be resolved. Some situations can be resolved between those involved, without the need for company intermediation.

Factors Affecting Decision Making

The 'past experiences' based on Dietrich (2010) mirror the problem-solving and decision-making process very well as influencing the process. According to him, the knowledge that comes from experience determines our choice and decision.

By this I intend to use the method (4ps) that are Place, Procedure, People and Policies of the Fishbourne study to decipher the causes of the conflict in my workplace and the possible reasons that led to such an attitude of Mauro.

Problem - a physical confrontation between two collaborators that resulted in the medical discharge of one and the dismissal of the other.

Place- the work climate and its constantly stressful busy environment all the time.

Procedure- The constant busy aspect may have led to such a reaction from Mauro.

People- Numerous factors can lead to such an attitude, namely stress and other personal forum problems may have conditioned such reaction.

Policies- Consider the impact that this conflict of my workplace has had on the rest of the members and the financial effects that will surely follow from the conflict.

All this leads us to other theories such as (Maund et al. 2017) which states that in our lives we are challenged to make decisions on a constant basis and that some decisions turn out to be irrelevant for nothing new or significant change bring to us. But there are other important ones, such as those related to our workplace, because of their profound consequences for our lives.

Impacts of conflict situations on the company

Unmediated conflict situations can have very negative impacts, directly affecting the organizational climate.

Unresolved conflicts generate disagreements, disharmony between teams and hostile treatment. In addition, they can generate feelings of frustration and demotivation, directly affecting employee productivity.

But the harm doesn't stop there. Negative conflicts also have psychological and even physical impacts due to the stress and anxiety caused.

The result is a vicious circle: the feeling of dissatisfaction and altered mood due to conflict tend to generate even more tension, leading to conflicting situations.

For HR, in addition to having to play the role of "putting out fires," it also reflects an increase in turnover, hampering talent retention.

On the other hand, when properly mediated, conflict management can have very positive impacts on the corporate environment.

Conflict resolution requires leaving the comfort zone and finding new solutions through creativity and reasoning.

No wonder many recruitment and selection processes use conflict situation simulations to test candidates' problem-solving and resilience capabilities.

How to prevent negative conflicts

As I mentioned earlier, conflict situations in companies can have both positive and negative impacts, depending on the nature of the conflict and how it is mediated.

In addition to mediation strategies, it is important for HR to work on conflict management also from the precautionary point of view, taking preventive measures on a daily basis.

Some effective conflict prevention strategies are:

- Periodic meetings;
- Open communication;
- Consistency of the company itself with its values;
- Good feedback policies;
- Positive leaderships;
- Employees engaged and appropriate to the organizational culture;
- Moments of interaction and leisure;
- Cultivating empathy and healthy bonds between teams.

All these measures contribute to the maintenance of a harmonious organizational climate, preventing conflict situations from becoming large and avoiding possible disagreements within the company.

In addition to boosting possible positive changes in the company, the existence of conflicts, by itself, can be seen as something positive. They demonstrate an environment of diversity, open to people with different mindsets and points of view.

With a good conflict management strategy, it is possible to make business day to day more enriching and creative without disharmony or damage to the organizational climate.

A positive and balanced work environment without organizational conflicts is undoubtedly a decisive factor in achieving any organizational goals or results. This is because if the corporate climate is unfavorable, performance impacts will automatically follow suit.

If a professional cannot relate peacefully to another colleague, for example, he can hardly make good income in a job that requires collective strength, right? Or rather, if employees are not motivated or satisfied with some business-related aspect such as salary, for example, the results are unlikely to be beneficial or profitable for the organization in question.

We know that in any business there are differences. This is because any company is made up of people with careers, education and personalities different from each other. And, as a result, conflicts or differences of opinion can greatly favor the growth and development of the team and the work performed when affected professionally, mature and aiming at change, new ideas and, especially, innovation in the services provided.

When organizational conflicts overcome the professional environment, damage the organizational climate and affect the personal side of employees, the company can be negatively and not satisfactorily impacted. This generates a series of damages and harms such as: decreased productivity, indiscipline and rebellion of employees, poor performance, demotivation, among others.

Therefore, avoiding these conflicts and disagreements in the business environment is an increasingly important factor in the search for positive results.

The two possible solutions

Assuming that the team has to be one and inseparable for a good working environment and consequently better results in terms of production and profitability of companies, assuming that every man is recoverable, in my opinion, to Mauro should be given another opportunity and find other ways to punish him, namely:

1st Solution-Second Chance

What happened to Mauro could have happened to any of us. Therefore, to prevent it from recurring, one has to have a wiser way to solve this problem. To this end, I propose that you first be given a second chance and then work with the entire team on the top 10 organizational conflicts that, if avoided, will give any company big gains:

1. HOST WORKING ENVIRONMENT

This is undoubtedly one of the most prevalent conflicts within companies that can occur between employees and between leaders and their subordinates. The rivalry and hostility in the workplace not only influence the results and activities performed, but also becomes a negative current that may impact other workers.

If a professional has conflicts with his supervisor due to insubordination, opposing thoughts or even authoritarianism, for example, he is likely to influence more colleagues to behave the same way and not the other way around.

In this sense, it is essential that managers are always attentive and willing to improve and provide a healthy and stimulating working atmosphere where employees constantly feel valued and well-related to each other. Therefore, promoting freedom of expression, respect and good coexistence among employees is essential.

2. DEMOTIVATION

This is another major conflict present in countless companies. When the employee gets attacked by the demotivation virus, he works badly, doesn't give his best, and delays corporate results as well. This is why it is very important that the company be careful to evaluate the motivation level of its employees periodically and to promote actions that encourage the encouragement and encouragement of its employees.

This is because a happy professional earns more, performs their tasks with hard and dedication, produces in less time and, especially, favors the achievement of results for the company.

There are a number of ways to motivate employees, whether through satisfying pay that matches their job and position, positive and constructive feedback, compliments, performance awards, and more.

3. UNSATISFACTORY RESULTS

Another common problem in companies is when the balance on the results and projects performed is not being satisfactory. In these cases, it is important to do a thorough analysis on all areas and work steps to find out what is the real cause of the problem.

If the cause is linked to poorly performed activities, for example, it is time to assess whether employees are really fit and qualified to perform their duties. Or if it's linked to external factors like lack of investments or equipment, for example, it's time to do a good scan on all organizational processes.

In many cases, seeking advice for a specific problem or relying on employee collaboration to define improvement points can be a great alternative to avoiding further conflict.

4. RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS

Promote fellowship activities: These activities will provide an opportunity for professionals to get to know each other on a more human level, it is also of great value to an organization. That's because when people work with people they care about, the activity gains value that goes beyond financial.

5. NON-TASKING

One of the most constant problems within a company is the execution of tasks. It is important that there is respect and cordiality among all, whatever position the person holds in the company. Valuing personal relationships within the company makes employees feel comfortable to perform their tasks. To be valued by the market it is important first to be valued by your employees. Do like the big organizations, pay attention to those little details that make all the difference. After all, your first customer is your employee.

6. LOW PRODUCTION

Low production has a lot to do with the lack of validation. Value creativity in your employee. Offer tools that motivate and stimulate creativity. This attitude helps to create the process of belonging of the employee and the whole team, stimulates the thinking, validates the work done, making them believe in themselves.

7. LACK OF FOCUS

The lack of encouragement from teamwork generates lack of focus. Feeling that they are part of a group and important to the company will make each employee feel comfortable helping the colleague within the team's purpose. Motivation will be a spontaneous routine within the company if it feels important.

8. LOW PERFORMANCE

To solve this problem, you need to be close to the team. It helps to avoid barriers that end up harming the performance of all staff. Proximity helps to better understand the skills of each employee.

9. CONFLICTS BETWEEN EMPLOYEES

A major difficulty for many leaders is to resolve conflicts. At this time the leader has to be very sensitive and careful to resolve any conflict between the team. You should find a quick and appropriate solution to the problem.

10. Devaluation of the Professional

Strengthen trust and respect between leader and team. The leader who participates and respects the entire team in the participation of projects and goals, giving space to the creativity and contribution of each collaborator to the achievement of these projects, strengthens the feeling of trust and respect. This makes the team grow together.

2nd Solution - Periodic Suspension

Considering that nothing justifies physical violence, much less in the workplace, a firm stance should be taken to prevent anything like this from happening again. Therefore, as I said earlier, every man is recoverable, a periodic suspension of one month must be given so that the Mauro can reflect on his act and after the punishment, be subjected to a series of training in the area of conduct. .

Some negative forms adopted by companies, in addition to denying conflicts, are imposing solutions, diminishing importance, relativizing causes or even avoiding conflicting situations. Companies that deal with conflicts in a healthy way seek to intermediate conflict situations, betting on dialogue and negotiation, always focusing on integrating the parties involved. Remember that conflict resolution is not the sole responsibility of HR (Human Resources), but the stakeholders and direct leaders.

Therefore, it is important to have training and awareness campaigns so that everyone is engaged and responsible for maintaining a healthy organizational climate.

The key to healthy conflict management is to cultivate a harmonious and empathic environment with open and efficient internal communication.

Conclusion

Coming to the end of this report on problems, their resolution and decision-making, after all this explanation on this subject, one can easily conclude that the secret of solving the problem is good communication skills first and foremost. Because the problem will always exist, there will always be conflicts where bringing two or more people together but the secret will be in the ways to solve or solve the problem. Therefore, open, open and engaging communication is able to avoid many problems and also solve existing problems.

But first of all, when there is a problem, we have to accept that it exists so that we can tackle it together, find a solution together, and solve the whole problem together. If problem and conflict in the workplace have been and are seen by many scholars as normal and sometimes even useful for business dynamics, dismissal of one or both of the parties to the problem should not be a primary option. A solution must be sought within the dialogue, communication and staff valorization policy.

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