

HANDLING CONTENTION & CONFLICT CONSTRUCTIVELY

– Program objectives and expected outcomes

Research suggests that one key factor in the smooth and productive operation of any business or organisation is the ability of its people to handle the inevitable conflicts, differences and disagreements that arise during the course of day-to-day business, or operational activity.

As the company or organisation adapts to new challenges, important disagreements will inevitably arise. The ability of managers to harness the tension of these conflicts and develop more innovative business solutions will be a critical variable in the company/organisation's future success.

This 1-day workshop helps you to adopt new and more productive ways of handling differences and disagreements in the workplace whether with customers or fellow team members. It differentiates itself from traditional conflict management programs, which typically assume that conflict is negative, something to be minimised or "managed" away. Instead, it encourages you to welcome contention and look at it as an engine of innovation and renewal.

This workshop goes beyond the typical conflict skill training in that it develops several key concepts:

1. Conflict, or contention, is a difference of interests, understandings, values, styles, or opinions.
2. Conflict is natural, it is neither positive nor negative – it just is.
3. It is not whether you have conflict in your life but what you do with the conflict that makes the difference.
4. Conflict can be seen as an opportunity and an invitation to grow and change.
5. There are four major styles of dealing with conflict – passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive and a metaphor of sea creatures is used to address this.
6. An assertive or collaborative approach to conflict resolution allows a "win/win" solution where all parties involved in the conflict can address their needs.
7. There are specific skills, attitudes and strategies which can be learnt and acquired which will enable the positive resolution of conflict.

Participants will leave the program with the following learning outcomes:

- The ability to explore attitudes and their effect on conflict and its resolution or non-resolution
- A better understanding of how communication skills and particularly, effective listening skills, can assist the process
- A greater insight into different personality styles and how that can contribute to conflict and dealing with contentious issues constructively
- To examine the different conflict styles and explore the effects these styles have on oneself and others, particularly in the effective management of stress
- To identify one's own methods of dealing with conflict and the stress it may cause
- To learn specific skills to enhance the possibility of constructive contention
- To practice conflict resolution skills in specific, relevant situations where conflict, or potential conflict exists.

This is a very participative, hands-on workshop, appropriate to all members of a team.

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