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Conflict Resolution

A photograph of three business professionals in a meeting room. A woman on the left, a woman in the center, and a man on the right are all smiling and shaking hands over a table. The table has a laptop, a coffee cup, and a glass of water. The background shows a window with a view of a city.



Understanding Conflict in the Workplace

- Conflict happens when people want different things, have different beliefs, or aim for different goals. It can be annoying, but it can also be a chance to learn and improve things.



Types of Conflict



Interpersonal Conflict

- This is the most common type, arising between two individuals due to personality clashes, communication breakdowns, or differing work styles.



Intra-group Conflict

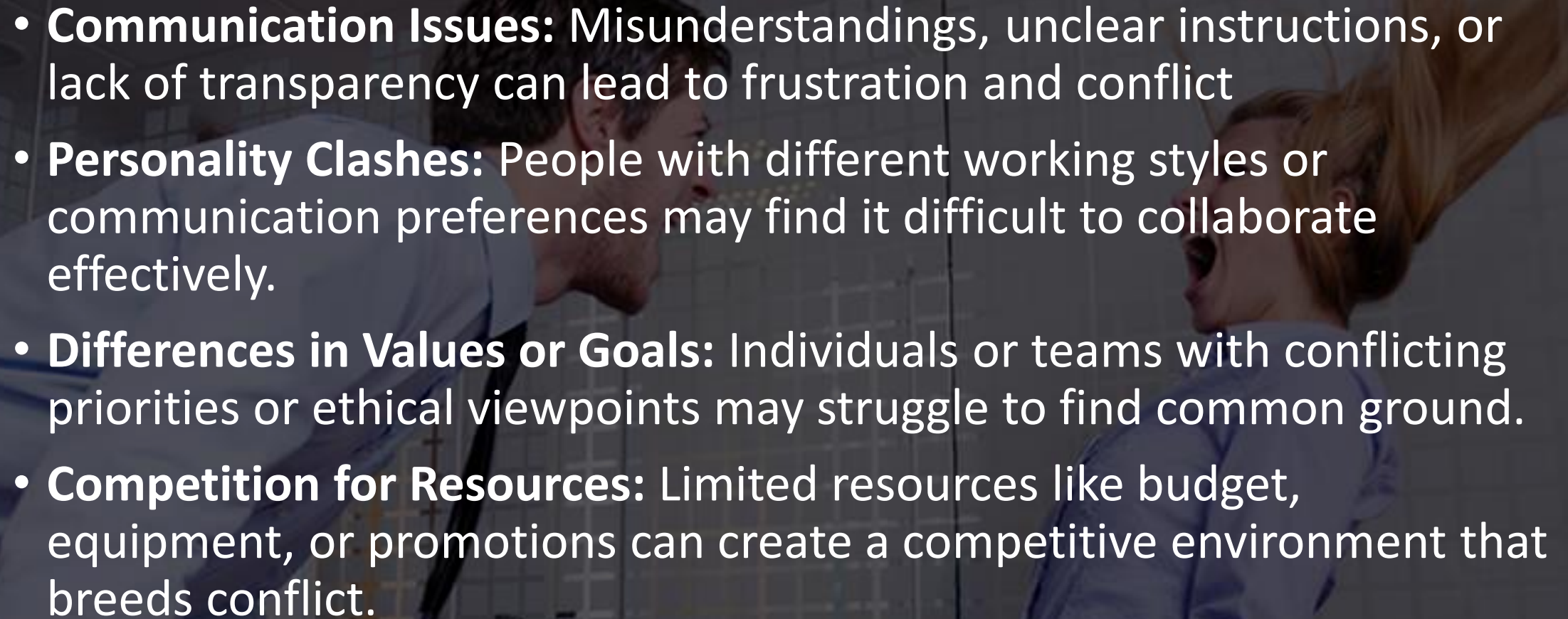
- This occurs within a team or department. It can stem from disagreements on project direction, competition for resources, or unclear roles and responsibilities.



Inter-group Conflict

- This happens between different departments or workgroups. It might be caused by competition for funding, differing priorities, or communication silos.

Causes of Conflict

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- A man and a woman in business attire are shown in a heated argument. The man is on the left, leaning forward with his mouth open as if shouting. The woman is on the right, also shouting with her mouth wide open and her hands raised in a gesture of frustration. The background is a blurred office environment with a grid pattern on the wall.
- **Communication Issues:** Misunderstandings, unclear instructions, or lack of transparency can lead to frustration and conflict
 - **Personality Clashes:** People with different working styles or communication preferences may find it difficult to collaborate effectively.
 - **Differences in Values or Goals:** Individuals or teams with conflicting priorities or ethical viewpoints may struggle to find common ground.
 - **Competition for Resources:** Limited resources like budget, equipment, or promotions can create a competitive environment that breeds conflict.



- **Unfair Treatment:** Perceptions of favoritism, unequal workloads, or lack of recognition can lead to resentment and conflict.
- **Organizational Change:** Restructuring, mergers, or new policies can create uncertainty and resistance, leading to conflict.



Conflict Resolution Strategies



Avoiding Conflict Resolution Style

- **Overview:** Withdrawing from the conflict altogether.
 - **Seems Easy:** Avoids immediate confrontation.
 - **Problems:**
 - Underlying issues remain unresolved.
 - Can lead to resentment and frustration.
 - Missed opportunities for improvement
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Accommodating

- Giving in to the other party's demands to preserve peace.
- **Use When:** Maintaining relationships is more important than winning.
- **Benefits:**
 - Quick resolution.
 - Maintains harmony.
- **Drawbacks:**
 - Can be seen as passive.
 - Underlying issues might not be addressed.
 - Unfair to you in the long run.

Competing Conflict Resolution Style

- **Overview:** Pushing your needs and goals above others, prioritizing "winning."
- **Use When:** Quick decisions are essential, urgency is high.
- **Benefits:**
 - Fast resolution.
 - Effective in emergencies.
- **Drawbacks:**
 - Damages relationships.
 - Breeds resentment.
 - Stifles creativity (people might not share ideas for fear of being overruled).

Compromising Conflict Resolution Style

- **Overview:** Finding a middle ground by giving up some on both sides.
- **Benefits:**
 - Quicker resolution than collaborating.
 - Feels fair in the moment.
- **Drawbacks:**
 - Underlying issues might not be addressed.
 - Can feel like a "lose-lose" situation for both parties.
 - Doesn't necessarily lead to the best solution.

Collaborating Conflict Resolution Style

- **Overview:** Working together to find a solution that satisfies everyone's needs.
- **Requires:** Open communication, empathy, and creativity.
- **Benefits:**
 - Addresses underlying issues.
 - Builds stronger relationships.
 - Leads to the best possible solution.
- **Long-Term Approach:** Requires more time and effort initially.

Choosing the Right Strategy

- **Severity of the Conflict:** For minor disagreements, compromising or collaborating might be suitable. For serious conflicts, a more assertive approach like competing might be necessary.
- **Importance of the Relationship:** If preserving the relationship is crucial, consider accommodating or collaborating.
- **Time Constraints:** If a quick decision is needed, compromising or competing might be quicker than collaborating.
- **Your Goals:** Do you prioritize winning the argument, finding a common ground, or strengthening the relationship?

Skills for Conflict Resolution

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- **Active Listening:**
 - Pay close attention (verbal & nonverbal cues).
 - Reflect back to confirm understanding.
 - **Empathy:**
 - See things from the other's perspective.
 - Acknowledge their feelings without judgment.
 - **Assertiveness:**
 - Clearly communicate your needs & concerns.
 - Use "I" statements (e.g., "I feel frustrated when...")

Negotiation Techniques for Conflict Resolution

- **Separate People from the Problem:** Focus on the issue, not personal attacks.
- **Focus on Interests, Not Positions:** Explore underlying needs, not just stated demands.
- **Invent Options for Mutual Gain:** Brainstorm creative solutions that benefit everyone.
- **Use Objective Criteria:** Evaluate solutions with facts & data, not opinions.
- **Be Willing to Walk Away:** Know your limits and when to end negotiation.

Creating a Supportive Environment

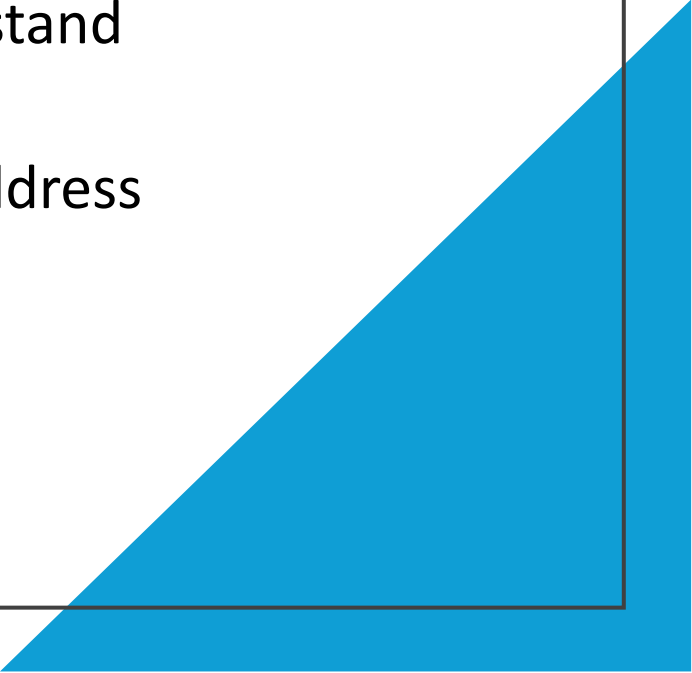
- A supportive work environment is crucial for minimizing conflict.
- Encourage open and honest communication by actively listening, providing regular feedback, and fostering a safe space for employees to voice concerns.
- Treat everyone with respect, value diverse perspectives, and demonstrate fairness in decision-making.
- Encourage teamwork and collaboration to foster a sense of shared purpose
- Set clear expectations for behavior, communication styles, and conflict resolution processes.



When conflict
arises, follow a
structured process
to manage it
effectively

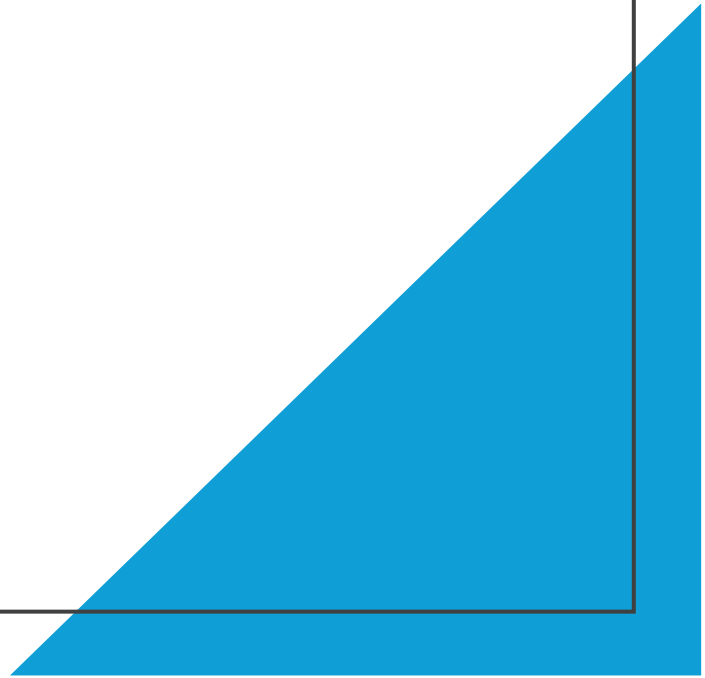


Conflict Resolution Process

- **Identify the Conflict:** Be aware of potential conflicts and address them promptly.
 - **Gather Information:** Talk to everyone involved to understand their perspectives and concerns.
 - **Develop Solutions:** Brainstorm creative solutions that address the underlying issues and meet everyone's needs.
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Conflict Resolution Process

- **Choose the Best Solution:** Evaluate options collaboratively and choose the one that is most fair and sustainable.
- **Implement and Monitor the Solution:** Put the chosen solution into action and monitor its effectiveness.



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