

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT- MEANING AND STRATEGIES TO MANAGE
CONFLICT

MEANING OF CONFLICT

A conflict is a situation when the interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties interfere with one another. In the workplace, conflicts are common and inevitable. .

- Different stakeholders may have different priorities; conflicts may involve team members, departments, projects, organization and client, boss and subordinate, organization needs vs. personal needs.

MEANING OF CONFLICT

- conflict is a result of perception. Is conflict a bad thing? Not necessarily.
- Conflict presents opportunities for improvement. Therefore, it is important to understand (and apply) various conflict resolution techniques.
- Conflict is both constructive and destructive. Constructive conflict should be stimulated and destructive should be resolved amicably

STRATEGIES TO MANAGE CONFLICT:

STIMULATING CONFLICT

- Robbins has suggested the following strategies for stimulating constructive conflict:
- 1. **Using communication**- Management may send threatening or ambiguous messages to stimulate conflict. e.g. management may spread the message that their organization is to be closed down.
- This will reduce friction and they will try to find the ways and revise their existing practices.
- 2. **Encouraging competition**-Rewards ,bonus etc. can stimulate healthy competition between individuals and they will struggle hard to outperform other

STIMULATING CONFLICT

- 3. **Reorganisation**-Management may reorganise work group, increase interdependence and change rules to change the status quo.
- Employees will adjust to new situation and there will be improvement in the methods used.
- 4. **Bringing in outsiders**-In order to bring life in the old stagnant group new employees from different background can be brought.

❖ PREVENTING CONFLICT

- 1. **Reducing interdependence**- Conflict between two departments is high when they are interdependent .
- Best way to reduce this interdependence is by providing them separate resources.
- 2. **Rotation of people**-Through this method employees understand the problems of other departments and their mutual understanding also increase

PREVENTING CONFLICT

- 3. **Superordinate goals**- It is a common goal which appeals to all.
- Such goal cannot be achieved individually but requires cooperation between parties. e.g. when survival of the company is under threat then all the departments will work towards overcoming the threat.
- 4. **Appointing liaison group**-Under this method an intermediary may be appointed to remove the differences between parties.
- He must understand the problem of both the parties and should provide a solution which is mutually acceptable. He is considered to be unbiased having no vested interest in any party.

❖ RESOLVING CONFLICT

- 1. Avoidance/Withdrawal –
 - Under this strategy parties avoid dealing with conflict and pretend that conflict does not exist.
 - Avoiding is used when the differences are irrelevant for the organisation. Individuals end up ignoring the problem assuming that conflict will resolve itself.
 - Sometimes avoidance would mean that you neglect the responsibility that comes with it therefore it is better to confront the problem before it gets serious.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

- 2. Accommodation(Smoothing)-
- Under this approach an individual set aside his own concerns to maintain peace and highlight similarities and areas of agreement.
- Management tries to appease the group members whose feelings have been hurt. The purpose is to reduce the intensity of the conflict.
- This method does not tackle the real issues which are likely to resurface soon. e.g. when some controversial issue is being discussed in a meeting tempers run high and then the chairman intervenes to cool down temper

RESOLVING CONFLICT

- 3. **Compromising**- It is a process of bargaining where the parties negotiate on the basis of give and take to arrive at some agreement but it is not in the longterm interest because the basic problem is not solved rationally.
- This strategy is used commonly where the conflict arises due to differences in values or goals and it can be effective when the desired goals/resources can be divided.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

- 4. **Competition-** Competition involves authoritative behaviour and involves direct attack to gain control over others.
- This approach uses means to attain what the individual thinks is right. It may aggravate the situation unless one party is strong enough to dominate other.
- This style is power oriented and based on win-lose strategy. Positive side of this method is that where quick decision is required this course of action can be taken and the negative side of this method is that a competitor may suppress or coerce other parties into conflict.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

- 5. Collaborating- It involves an attempt to work with the other person to find solution that would be satisfying to both the parties. Hence, communication is an important part of this strategy.
- This style is high on cooperation.
- Question of who is right or wrong is avoided and the focus is on sharing information to avoid misunderstandings.

Disclaimer: Above content is prepared after consulting online resources, various books and references to facilitate students in understanding the basics of the topic.

THANK YOU