

# ACADEMIQUE

**SIT50416 Diploma of Hospitality Management**

## **SITXCOM005 Manage Conflict**



## **STUDENT HANDOUT**

## SIT50416 Manage Conflict

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to resolve complex or escalated complaints and disputes with internal and external customers who colleagues. It requires the ability to use effective conflict resolution techniques and communication skills to manage conflict and develop solutions. It does not cover formal negotiation, counselling or mediation.

This unit applies to all tourism, travel, hospitality and event sectors. The unit applies mainly to senior operational personnel, supervisors and managers who operate with some level of independence and use discretion and judgement to resolve conflicts.

### Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENTS	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
Elements describe the essential outcomes.	Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.
1. Identify conflict situations.	1.1. Identify potential for conflict and take swift and tactful action to prevent escalation. 1.2. Identify situations where personal safety of customers or colleagues may be threatened and organise appropriate assistance. 1.3. Identify and use resources to assist in managing conflict.
2. Resolve conflict.	2.1. Establish and agree on the nature and details of conflict with all parties and assess impact. 2.2. <b>Manage conflict</b> within scope of own role and responsibilities, and according to organisational procedures. 2.3. Take responsibility for seeking a solution to conflict within scope of own role and responsibilities, seeking assistance where required. 2.4. Identify and evaluate impact of conflict on business reputation and legal liability. 2.5. Evaluate options to resolve the conflict, taking into account organisational policies and constraints. 2.6. Implement the best solution and complete required reports.
3. Evaluate conflict resolution.	3.1. Communicate with parties involved to seek and provide feedback on conflict and its resolution. 3.2. Evaluate and reflect on the conflict and effectiveness of the solution. 3.3. Determine possible causes of workplace conflict and provide input for workplace enhancement and improvements.

***People don't get along because they fear each other. People fear each other because they don't know each other. They don't know each other because they have not properly communicated with each other".***

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

### **What is conflict?**

**Wikipedia says it is** “a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one” or “a prolonged armed struggle. It is also a state of mind in which a person experiences a clash of opposing feelings or needs”.



Conflicts are generally defined as relational disputes between two or more parties. “The clashing of opposed principles” Oxford Dictionary

“Conflict is inevitable in organisational life but it need not have destructive consequences for the organisation (or work group). Depending on how the conflict is managed, the negative effects may be minimised, and positive effects may result from the conflict. Effective conflict management is based, in part, on a solid understanding of the different ways conflict emerges and can be resolved”.  
Organisational Behavior Hellreigel, Slocum and Woodman, 2001  
Ninth Edition, South Western Thomson Learning, Singapore

There are several different types of conflict; Relationship Conflict; Value Conflict; and Interest Conflict

Relationship Conflict is a personal perspective and can arise when one person behaves in a negative manner or another person has skewed perception due to things like stereotypes and rumors. The relationship between people is affected negatively, and in the workplace, performance is eroded due to poor team cohesion.

Value Conflict arises when two people or groups have dissenting views on moral values--that basic understanding of what is naturally right or wrong. Relationship and value conflicts are the most subjective conflict types, because they are based totally on what someone "feels" about a person or situation.

Interest Conflict arises when one person's desired outcome is in conflict with another person or group's interests. Typically, this occurs when one person believes that another person's desires, if enacted, will prevent his or her own interests from being met.

This type of conflict can be experienced when two people who have relationship conflict are required by a team manager to work as a part of a team.

## Follow these guidelines for handling conflict in the workplace.

1. Talk with the other person. ...
2. Focus on behavior and events, not on personalities. ...
3. Listen carefully. ...
4. Identify points of agreement and disagreement. ...
5. Prioritize the areas of conflict. ...
6. Develop a plan to work on each conflict. ...
7. Follow through on your plan

## Resolving Conflict Situations

To manage conflict effectively you must be a skilled communicator. That includes creating an open communication environment in your unit by encouraging employees to talk about work issues. Listening to employee concerns will foster an open environment. Make sure you really understand what employees are saying by asking questions and focusing on their perception of the problem. To learn more about communication skills.

Whether you have two employees who are fighting for the desk next to the window or one employee who wants the heat on and another who doesn't, your immediate response to conflict situations is essential. Here are some tips you can use when faced with employees who can't resolve their own conflicts.

- **Acknowledge that a difficult situation exists.** Honesty and clear communication play an important role in the resolution process. Acquaint yourself with what's happening and be open about the problem.
- **Let individuals express their feelings.** Some feelings of anger and/or hurt usually accompany conflict situations. Before any kind of problem-solving can take place, these emotions should be expressed and acknowledged.
- **Define the problem.** What is the stated problem? What is the negative impact on the work or relationships? Are differing personality styles part of the problem? Meet with employees separately at first and question them about the situation.
- **Determine underlying need.** The goal of conflict resolution is not to decide which person is right or wrong; the goal is to reach a solution that everyone can live with. Looking first for needs, rather than solutions, is a powerful tool for generating win/win options. To discover needs, you must try to find out why people want the solutions they initially proposed. Once you understand the advantages their solutions have for them, you have discovered their needs.
- **Find common areas of agreement, no matter how small:**
  - Agree on the problem
  - Agree on the procedure to follow
  - Agree on worst fears
  - Agree on some small change to give an experience of success
- **Find solutions to satisfy needs:**
  - Problem-solve by generating multiple alternatives
  - Determine which actions will be taken
  - Make sure involved parties buy into actions. (Total silence may be a sign of passive resistance.) Be sure you get real agreement from everyone.
- **Determine follow-up you will take to monitor actions.** You may want to schedule a follow-up meeting in about two weeks to determine how the parties are doing.
- **Determine what you'll do if the conflict goes unresolved.** If the conflict is causing a disruption in the department and it remains unresolved, you may need to explore other avenues. An outside facilitator (such as the Staff Ombuds Office) may be able to offer other insights on solving the problem. In some cases the conflict becomes a performance issue, and may become a topic for coaching sessions, performance appraisals, or disciplinary action

<http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/guides/managing-hr/interaction/conflict/resolving>

## **Top 10 sources of conflict**

1. Barriers, such as prejudice, selective hearing and preconceived opinions.
2. Competition for limited resources
3. Content matters such as who said what, and over policies, plans and priorities.
4. Differences in goals, wants, needs, expectation.
5. Differences in values
6. Fear of what people might lose (including 'face')
7. Perception, for example, who knows best, who has authority, whose job it is, and so on
8. Personality clashes
9. Poor communication such as lack of empathy, an inability to listen reflectively, poor summarising skills and lack of assertiveness.
10. Role pressures and emotional issues.

Be aware of these common causes of conflict so you don't trigger unnecessary conflict. Keep an eye open for conflict brewing around you and do what you can to address it.

## **Common responses to conflict**

The only two internal responses to conflict available to a person lacking assertiveness skills are 'fight' (aggression) and 'flight' (submission, both of which are stressful. Stress responses to conflict include 'butterflies' in the stomach, a thumping heart, tightening of the vocal chords (resulting in a higher than usual, or shrill, voice or the need for repeated throat clearing), clenched fists, a clenched jaw, grinding teeth and breathlessness. When ongoing conflict is unresolved or a conflict is unsatisfactorily resolved, long-term stress responses such as ulcers, problems associated with tension or substance abuse, and domestic problems can result.

People trained to deal with conflict successfully, either by watching others deal effectively with conflict or through formal or self-guided training, are better able to respond assertively, avoiding the stress conflict can cause.

## **Five ways to manage conflict**

1. Accommodate
2. Avoid
3. Collaborate
4. Compete
5. Compromise

## **Four steps to resolving conflict**

1. Open a discussion
2. Give useful information
3. Gather useful information
4. Problem solve