

How Can Conflict Be Good for an Organization?

By [Leigh Richards](#) Updated March 06, 2019 in Chronus Online

Conflict, while often avoided, is not necessarily bad. In fact, conflict can be good for organizations because it encourages open-mindedness and helps avoid the tendency toward group think that many organizations fall prey to. The key is learning how to manage conflict effectively so that it can serve as a catalyst, rather than a hindrance, to organizational improvement.

Tip

Conflict is beneficial when it highlights a specific problem area for the organization and clears a path for change.

Conflict Encourages New Thinking

Although it is often assumed that people avoid conflict, many people actually enjoy conflict to a certain degree because it can be the stimulus for new thinking. Considering a different point of view – which in certain cases represents conflict – can open up new possibilities and help to generate new ideas that might otherwise have not been considered.

Conflict Raises Questions

Organizational conflict usually leads to a series of questions for those on both sides of any issues. Those questions can lead to new ideas and breakthroughs in thinking that can benefit individuals, departments and organizations. When there is no conflict, nothing changes. There is no need to question or challenge the status quo. Conflict represents an opportunity to reconsider, which can lead to breakthrough thinking.

Conflict Builds Relationships

Being agreeable is nice, but encouraging conflict can actually strengthen relationships. Organizational conflict between individuals, departments and even competitors can help to build relationships through mutual understanding and respect. Learning to listen and listening to learn leads to insights valued by both sides in any conflict situation. Leaders who sincerely value the opinions and ideas of their subordinates are not only more effective leaders, they are also considered more valuable by their employees. If an employee feels that management values his opinion, that employee will value his work more and overall morale will increase.



Conflict Opens Minds

Organizations that teach employees how to manage conflict effectively create a climate of innovation that encourages creative thinking and opens minds to new, previously unexplored, possibilities. Considering the possibility for new ways of approaching challenges and meeting the demands of a competitive business world can result in improvements that benefit staff as well as the organization.

Conflicts Beats Stagnation

Organizations that avoid conflict avoid change. Avoiding change is futile and can lead to the demise of even successful organizations. Companies that encourage staff to approach conflict in positive and productive ways can beat the stagnation that opens the doors to competitors. It also challenges the ability to continue to provide customers with new and innovation solutions to meet their needs.

Kiki's note: Which idea above best suits your organizational needs?

Have this conversation with your executive team and ensure the culture will support and encourage productive conflict. Please reach out to me if I can be of service.

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