

Why Teach ALL Employees How to Resolve Conflict?



By Kelly Murphy, PHR, SHRM-CP, July 7, 2020

We train our managers to deal with conflict between employees. If we train our employees how to resolve conflict in all aspects of their lives, our workplaces might run more efficiently and our employees gain life-long skills.

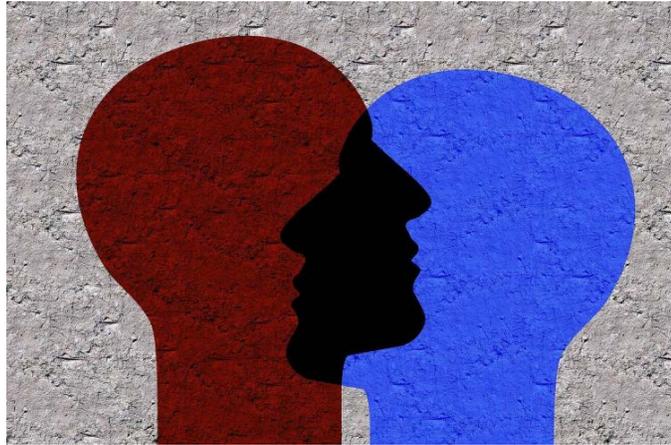
Just Leave It At Home

How many times do our employees come to work with problems at home still on their mind? After all, we are human and really can't "check it at the door" when we come to work. Nor can we stop thinking about problems at work when we go home. By teaching employees how to deal with conflict in both their personal and professional interactions, we reduce negative impacts in the workplace.

Using Conflict Methods at Work and at Home

When we learn different conflict resolution methods and practice them, we grow individually which translates to better customer service techniques at work. Both external and internal customers benefit. At work, we can picture how the different methods may transpire. For example, when two employees disagree about how to accomplish something, they might get emotionally charged up. It might be best to circle back another day to discuss common ground and let cooler heads prevail. In other words, don't poke the bear. Sometimes, it is more important to preserve the relationship and find a compromise such as when employees must still work together. We can't always transfer them to another department. Still, there are times we must take action. For instance, if someone was trying to break into your business, you probably wouldn't get a consensus of what everyone thinks. You probably would pick up the phone and call 911!

These same methods translate to a better home experience as well. When our teenage children are engaging in a yelling match to see who is right, it typically wears on the parents' nerves and they come to work stressed. However, if the parents, and children, learn to deal with the issue instead of the person (finding common ground), it is much better to preserve the relationship since they have to live in the same house. At least for a while longer!



Negative Impacts of Stress

When employees experience ongoing tension among co-workers, whether caused at work or brought along from home, they tend to have a negative impact on companies:

- **Absenteeism** – dealing with family issues, avoiding issues at work, etc.
- **Productivity** – decreased productivity due to focusing on stress and conflict
- **Turnover** – increased turnover rates because they can't get along
- **Litigation** – emotionally charged situations may lead to legal intervention and may be avoided

According to The American Institute of Stress, 55% of all Americans experience stress during their day and US businesses lose around \$300 Billion (with a capital B) due to stress experienced in the workplace. For more enlightening stats regarding workplace costs, click [here](#).



Truly Making a Difference

Imagine how different our homes, workplaces, and even world would be if Conflict Resolution was a required class in high school or college. Since this isn't offered in most public education institutions, let's take the time to train our employees. Our employees and business will benefit from this training and what a great way to be a community partner!



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