Conflict Management class notes

## Objective 1: Types of Conflict

Topic 1: Types of Organizational Conflict -- Types of Conflict in Organizations

Different types of organizational conflict, including intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, and interorganizational.

**Cause and Effect**

Conflict is a process that involves people disagreeing. Researchers have noted that conflict is like the common cold. Everyone knows what it is, but understanding its causes and how to treat it is much more challenging (Wall & Callister, 1995).  the work environment, conflict appears in discord about how tasks should be accomplished and how materials are allocated, as well as in interpersonal situations involving misunderstandings and competition.

**Intrapersonal Conflict**

Intrapersonal conflict arises within a person. For example, when you’re uncertain about what is expected or wanted, Role conflict, another type of intrapersonal conflict, includes having multiple responsibilities to a number of people within an organization. Role conflict pulls people in many different directions, and is nearly inevitable in society.  A third type of intrapersonal conflict involves role ambiguity. Perhaps you’ve been given the task of finding a trainer for a company’s business writing training program. You may feel unsure about what kind of person to hire

**Interpersonal Conflict**

Interpersonal conflict is among individuals such as coworkers, a manager and an employee, or CEOs and their staff. EX CEO resigns due to conflict between him and the board.

**Intergroup Conflict**

Intergroup conflict is conflict that takes place between different groups. Types of groups may include different departments, employee unions, or management in a company or competing companies that supply the same customers or must work together in a collaborative manner.

**Interorganizational Conflict**

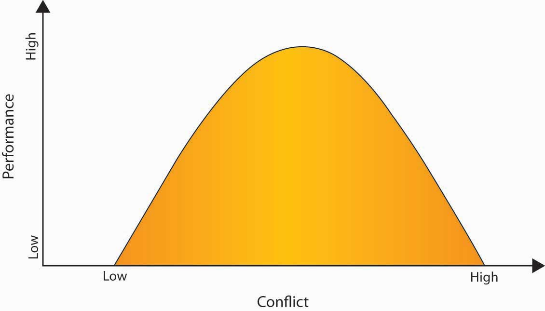
Interorganizational conflict is conflict between two or more organizations. There are three main types of interorganizational conflict. The first, substantive, usually has to do with fundamental differences in beliefs. The second type of interorganizational conflict is emotional conflict, which usually stems from jealousy or envy of an organization’s success. The last type of interorganizational conflict is cultural conflict.

Understanding Conflict – no notes

Assessing the Necessity of Conflicts

**Is Conflict Always Bad?**

**a moderate amount of conflict can actually be a healthy (and necessary) part of organizational life (Amason, 1996). The goal is to hold conflict levels in the middle of this range as shown in Figure 1.1.**



Conflict can stimulate creativity. However, it can interfere with complex tasks in the long run (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Personal conflicts, such as personal attacks, are never healthy because they cause stress and distress, which undermines performance. The worst cases of personal conflicts can lead to workplace bullying.

Milestone Activity: Conflict Within Your Organization – refer to separate file

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## Objective 2: Sources of Conflict

Topic 1: Causes and Outcomes of Conflict -- Factors that May Contribute to Conflict

Oftentimes, conflict relates directly to human interaction. In other instances, conflicts may come from superficial ideals, or the environmental structure itself. Conflict is caused by perceived or actual values, interests, or needs that are at odds with those of other people or groups. Causes are, Organizational Structure, Limited Resources, **Task Interdependence, Incompatible Goals, Personality Differences, Communication Problems.**

Note. Adapted from “Causes and Outcomes of Conflict,” by T. Bauer & B. Erdogan, 2010, Organizational Behavior, Chapter 10, Section 3. Copyright 2010 by Flat World Knowledge, Inc.

Approach and Avoidance in Conflict and Human Motivation

When reading the article, “Motivation,” consider the basic types of conflict and their relationship to the basic needs and motivations of individuals for survival and comfort. – in directory.

Many theorists argue that human behavior cannot be predicted because each individual has the power of free will. For this reason, it is common sense thinking to presume that conflicts and their outcomes are also not predictable. Other theorists, like American psychologist Abraham Maslow, believed that individuals are governed by their motivations. Maslow described motivation with a five-level hierarchy of needs that established a system with the most basic of human needs—such as food, oxygen, and sleep—as the first level.

the article, “[Motivation(This content will be opened in a separate window or downloaded to your computer)](http://psychology.jrank.org/pages/433/Motivation.html),” describes four basic types of conflict that are directly influenced by the different motivations of an individual. These are:

* Approach-approach conflicts
* Avoidance-avoidance conflicts
* Approach-avoidance conflicts
* Multiple approach-avoidance conflicts

Outcomes of Conflict

conflict can have both positive and negative outcomes

One of the most common outcomes of conflict is that it upsets parties in the short run (Bergman & Volkema, 1989). However, conflict can have both positive and negative outcomes. On the positive side, conflict can result in greater creativity or better decisions. For example, as a result of a disagreement over a policy, a manager may learn from an employee that newer technologies help solve problems in unanticipated new ways.

Positive outcomes include:

* Consideration of a broader range of ideas, resulting in a better, stronger idea
* Surfacing of assumptions that may be inaccurate
* Increased participation and creativity
* Clarification of individual views that build learning

On the other hand, conflict can be dysfunctional if it is excessive or involves personal attacks or underhanded tactics.

Examples of negative outcomes include:

* Increased stress and anxiety among individuals, which decreases productivity and satisfaction, resulting in poor performance and the pressure to do better
* Feelings of being defeated and demeaned, which lowers individuals’ morale and may increase turnover
* A climate of mistrust, which hinders the teamwork and cooperation necessary to get work done

It is important to recognize the importance of managing conflict, especially in a leadership position. The ability to manage conflict can result in reduced employee turnover, greater job satisfaction, and higher productivity.

The Cost of Conflict Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbZCQl\_lIMo

Milestone Activity: What Happens Now? – different file.

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## Objective 3: Conflict Management Strategies

**Topic 1: Managing Conflict --Constant Change to Mitigate Conflict**

In separate file – no notes

Conflict Manager for the Day

Test to the above paper i.e. mitigate conflict.

Five Conflict-Handling Styles

There are five common styles of handling conflicts as shown in Figure 3.1

Avoidance: The avoiding style is uncooperative and unassertive. People exhibiting this style seek to avoid conflict altogether by denying that it is there.

Accommodation: The accommodating style is cooperative and unassertive. In this style, the person gives in to what the other side wants, even if it means giving up one’s personal goals. People who use this style may fear speaking up for themselves or they may place a higher value on the relationship, believing that disagreeing with an idea might be hurtful to the other person.

**Compromise:** The compromising style is a middle-ground style in which individuals have some desire to express their own concerns and get their way but still respect the other person’s goals. The compromiser may say things such as, “Perhaps I ought to reconsider my initial position” or “Maybe we can both agree to give in a little.”

**Competition:** People exhibiting a competing style want to reach their goal or get their solution adopted regardless of what others say or how they feel. They are more interested in getting the outcome they want as opposed to keeping the other party happy, and they push for the deal they are interested in making. Competition may lead to poor relationships with others.

**Collaboration**: The collaborating style is high on both assertiveness and cooperation. This is a strategy to use for achieving the best outcome from conflict—both sides argue for their position, supporting it with facts and rationale while listening attentively to the other side. The objective is to find a win-win solution

**Which Style Is Best**? there is no one “right way” to deal with conflict. Much of the time it will depend on the situation. However, the collaborative style has the potential to be highly effective in many different situations. Research also shows that when it comes to dealing with conflict, managers usually use a competing style, which allows them to control the conflict and/or situation, while their subordinates are more likely to engage in avoiding, accommodating, or compromising (Howat & London, 1980).

**What If You Don’t Have Enough Conflict Over Ideas?** Part of effective conflict management is knowing when proper stimulation is necessary. Many people think that conflict is inherently bad—that it undermines goals or shows that a group or meeting is not running smoothly. In fact, if there is no conflict, it may mean that people are silencing themselves and withholding their opinions.

Stimulating Conflict

**How Can You Stimulate Conflict?**

Sometimes conflict is good for an organization, and it is important to know how to stimulate conflict. Here are some tips for stimulating conflict:

* *Encourage people to raise issues and disagree with you or the status quo without fear of reprisal*. An issue festering beneath the surface, when brought out into the open, may turn out to be a minor issue that can be easily addressed and resolved.
* *Assign a devil’s advocate to stimulate alternative viewpoints*. If a business unit is getting stagnant, bring in new people to “shake things up.”
* *Create competition among teams, offering a bonus to the team that comes up with the best solution to a problem*. For example, have two product development teams compete on designing a new product. Or reward the team that has the fewest customer complaints or achieves the highest customer satisfaction rating.
* *Build some ambiguity into the process*. When individuals are free to come up with their own ideas about how to complete a task, the outcome may be surprising, and it allows for more healthy disagreements along the way.

*Note*. Adapted from “Conflict Management,” by Bauer, T. and Erdogan, B., 2009, *Organizational Behavior*, Chapter 10, Section 4. Copyright 2009 Flat World Knowledge, Inc.

**Milestone Activity: How Do We Manage Conflict? – different file.**

 **Topic 2: Conflict and Negotiation --** **Introduction to Conflict Negotiation**

Negotiation is a process whereby two or more parties work toward an agreement. There are five phases of negotiation, as represented in Figure 3.2,

**Phase 1: Investigation**

The first step in negotiation is the investigation, or information gathering stage. And you need to be brutally honest with yourself about your priorities” (Webber, 1998).

**Phase 2: Determine Your BATNA**

an acronym that stands for the “best alternative to a negotiated agreement.” Roger Fisher and William Ury (1981) coined this phrase in their best-selling work, Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In. The party with the best BATNA has the best negotiating position, so try to improve your BATNA whenever possible by exploring possible alternatives (Pinkley, 1995).

**Phase 3: Presentation**

The third phase of negotiation is presentation. In this phase, you assemble the information you’ve gathered in a way that supports your position.

**Phase 4: Bargaining**

During the bargaining phase, each party discusses their goals and seeks to get an agreement.

**Phase 5: Closure**

*Note*. Adapted from “Negotiations” by Portolese-Dias, L., 2012,*Human Relations*, Chapter 9, Section 4. Copyright 2012 Flat World Knowledge, Inc.

Steps to Negotiation – test page –no notes

Negotiations in Transactions and Conflicts

**Avoiding Common Mistakes in Negotiations** –

Failing to Negotiate/Accepting the First Offer

Letting Your Ego Get in the Way

Having Unrealistic Expectations

Getting Overly Emotional

Letting Past Negative Outcomes Affect the Present Ones

**Tips for Negotiation Success** **(Stuhlmacher, Gillespie, & Champagne, 1998)**

* *Focus on agreement first*. If you reach an impasse during negotiations, sometimes the best recourse is to agree that you disagree on those topics and then focus only on the ones that you can reach an agreement on. Summarize what you’ve agreed on, so that everyone feels like they’re agreeing, and leave out the points you don’t agree on. Then take up those issues again in a different context, such as over dinner or coffee. Dealing with those issues separately may help the negotiation process.
* *Be patient*. If you don’t have a deadline by which an agreement needs to be reached, use that flexibility to your advantage. The other party may be forced by circumstances to agree to your terms, so if you can be patient you may be able to get the best deal.
* *Whose reality*? During negotiations, each side is presenting their case—their version of reality. Whose version of reality will prevail? Leigh Steinberg offers this example from the NFL, when he was negotiating the salary of Warren Moon. Moon was 41 years old. That was a fact. Did that mean he was hanging on by a thread and lucky to be employed in the first place? “Should he be grateful for any money that the team pays him?” Steinberg posed, “Or is he a quarterback who was among the league leaders in completions and attempts last year? Is he a team leader who took a previously moribund group of players, united them, and helped them have the best record that they’ve had in recent years?” (Webber, 1998). All those facts are true, and negotiation brings the relevant facts to the forefront and argues their merit.
* *Deadlines*. Research shows that negotiators are more likely to strike a deal by making more concessions and thinking more creatively as deadlines loom than at any other time in the negotiation process.
* *Be comfortable with silence*. After you have made an offer, allow the other party to respond. Many people become uncomfortable with silence and feel they need to say something. Wait and listen instead.

**When All Else Fails: Third-Party Negotiations**

Alternative Dispute Resolution

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) includes mediation, arbitration, and other ways of resolving conflicts with the help of a specially trained, neutral third party—without the need for a formal trial or hearing (New York State Unified Court System, 2008).

Mediation -- an outside third party (the mediator) enters the situation with the goal of assisting the parties in reaching an agreement. – non binding.

***You Know It’s Time for a Mediator When… (Crawley, 1994; Mackie, 1990)***

* The parties are unable to find a solution themselves.
* Personal differences are standing in the way of a successful solution.
* The parties have stopped talking with one another.
* Obtaining a quick resolution is important.

***Arbitration***

In contrast to mediation, where parties work with the mediator to arrive at a solution, in arbitration the parties submit the dispute to the third-party arbitrator. It is the arbitrator who makes the final decision. The arbitrator is a neutral third party, but the decision made by the arbitrator is final. (The decision is called the “award.”)

***Arbitration-Mediation***

It is common to see mediation followed by arbitration. An alternative technique is to follow the arbitration with mediation.

When Negotiations Need a Little Nudge – no notes

**Milestone Activity: Let's Make a Deal – outside file**

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## Objective 4: Conflict Resolution Skills

**Topic 1: When Workplace Violence Escalates --**  **Setting the Tone After Conflicts Occur**

While we have identified that some organizational conflict can be positive, conflicts can escalate and become verbally or physically abusive or violent. There are a number of risk factors, which can put some organizations and individuals at greater risk for escalation of conflict.

They might include:

Employees’ fear of job loss

Increased workloads

Downsizing and other larger organizational changes

Employee drug or alcohol abuse

Considering Conflict Responses

If a conflict does escalate into a verbal or physical situation, there are a number of steps or actions that should be taken by the victim during the conflict:

Stay calm.

Be firm and give short answers such as “no” and “maybe.” The goal is to avoid saying something that could ignite tension.

Do not argue with the aggressor. Since the conflict has already escalated, anything said now could only enrage him or her.

Speak carefully and try to avoid raising your voice.

Try to focus on the problem and provide possible solutions that help the aggressor save face, especially if in a group setting.

If the aggressor does not calm down, move physically (unless in the case of e-mail) from the situation. Avoid conversing with this person until they have calmed down. When they have, request a meeting with a supervisor present to mediate the disagreement.

If you are the supervisor, the same rules apply.

After the conflict, it is important for the victim to file a formal complaint. Once they do so, the supervisor should conduct an investigation of the conflict and make sure any necessary actions are taken, as outlined in the organization’s code of conduct.

**Milestone Activity: Keep Calm -outside file**

**Topic 2: Conflict Resolution, Applied --**  Case Studies

**Case Study 1: Negotiating with Wal-Mart Buyers**

[**Negotiating with Wal-Mart Buyers(This content will be opened in a separate window or downloaded to your computer)(This content will be opened in a separate window or downloaded to your computer)**](http://www.negotiations.com/case/negotiating-wal-mart/)

**Sarah Talley was 19 in 1997 when she first began negotiating with Wal-Mart's buyers for her family farm's pumpkins and watermelons. Due to her skillful approach when working through the parameters set with the mega-retailer, she was able to work out a partnership arrangement that was beneficial for both Wal-Mart and her family business, Frey Farms. This accomplishment was not without its challenges. In the article, “Negotiating with Wal-Mart Buyers,” Talley provides a list of key negotiation principles that she found especially helpful during her time partnering with Wal-Mart.**

**Choose your top three favorites from this list, and share why the principles stand out to you in the Discussion Board.**

**Case Study 2: Informal Conflict Resolution**

[**Informal Conflict Resolution: A Workplace Case Study(This content will be opened in a separate window or downloaded to your computer)(This content will be opened in a separate window or downloaded to your computer)**](http://www.mediate.com/articles/taylor.cfm)

**In this article, conflict is looked at from two paradigms: 1) family systems theory and 2) emotion-centered conflict responses. When reading the article, consider factors that might support or go against each paradigm.**

**Select the paradigm you identify with most, and share the factors that you support most and/or least about it. Share your thoughts in the Discussion Board.**

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**Milestone Activity: What's Your Resolution? Outside file**

**Topic 3: References**

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