Conflict & Conflict Resolution

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What is Conflict?

- Conflict is defined as a state of opposition, disagreement, or incompatibility among two or more individuals.
- Most always views as negative.
- But is it?
Types of Conflict

• Interpersonal – A state of conflict between two individuals

• Intergroup – A state of conflict between two groups, work teams, functions, units, or divisions.
Sources of Conflict

Interpersonal
- Personality
- Perceived inequities
- Role confusion
- Competition for limited resources
- Task ambiguities
- Communication barriers

Intergroup
- Contrasting styles
- Incompatible goals
- Differentiated power
- Scarce resources
- Different cultures, values and assumptions
Conflict Schools of Thoughts

• Traditional View – conflict is negative; undesirable outcomes; avoided at all cost

• Human Relations View – conflict is inevitable; accepted as natural; seeks ways that conflict can benefit the group

• Interactionist View – conflicts are necessary and productive for innovation; lack of conflict leads to apathy and loss in productivity
Functional vs. Dysfunctional Conflict

• Functional conflict
  – Helps the performance of the group
  – Members grow, learn, and change
  – Leads to higher creativity

• Dysfunctional conflict
  – Lowers team morale
  – Often focused on personality and not ideas
  – Leads to polarization and division
Addressing Conflict

• Recognize the source of the conflict

• Identify a process to address the different sources of conflict
Strategies for Addressing Conflict

• Recognize when conflict is becoming dysfunctional
• Establish superordinate goals
• Create common measures of effectiveness
• Third-party facilitation
• Share information widely
• De-layer hierarchy