

DRAKE Business Review

**FOCUS ON
DRAKE AUSTRALIA
PAGES 21 TO 25**

HELPING YOU MEET THE CHALLENGES IN YOUR BUSINESS – RIGHT NOW

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FOCUS ON **DRAKE AUSTRALIA**

TALENT MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS



Sydney Opera House, Sydney, Australia

WHAT EVERY MANAGER NEEDS TO KNOW
ABOUT WORKFORCE PLANNING

SEVEN EMPLOYEES THAT DRIVE MANAGERS CRAZY –
AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

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RESOLVING CONFLICTS IN THE WORKPLACE

ARE ANY OF YOUR EMPLOYEES OUT AND out fighting with each other at work? Are they yelling, screaming, not getting along, or perhaps having difficult relationships with their supervisor?

Conflicts in the workplace happen frequently, and the fallout can be costly to employer and employees. Costs to the organization arise from:

1. Decreased productivity due to the emotions involved in interpersonal conflict
2. Time lost from work by employees
3. Time lost from work by managers involved in the conflict
4. Recruitment and training of new employees
5. Decreased productivity by other staff due to tension/stress and the overall work environment

For an employee, leaving a job because of a conflict means a great deal of change. They might not be able to get the same level of pay, benefits, shifts, and so on that they are accustomed to. The impact on the employee and their family can be high.

The root of many conflicts is unclear communication. People often feel they have been clear, only to find out that the other

At all times, avoid taking sides: As the manager, your interest is the company, the resolution of the conflict, and each employee. Don't mandate a solution; you want the staff invested in the solution.

person misunderstood them. One way to address incidents of conflict is communication training. Learning how to listen and talk clearly can decrease and even prevent conflicts. Being a clear communicator takes commitment. You need to be able to talk in a neutral sort of way, eliminating inflammatory emotions. Speak and listen from the heart. Listen deeply to what the other person is saying and then check with them by asking: “Is this what you are saying?” It lets the other person know what you have understood and gives them the opportunity to clarify or correct misunderstandings.

As the leader, you can create an environment to resolve the dispute by following some simple steps and laying out guidelines.

Individual meeting

First, spend time talking with each person involved. Let them know you believe that developing a shared solution is important to each person and that you value each of the employees involved. During the individual meetings, begin to gather information about what they see as possible solutions. Let the employees know that you intend to meet with each individually and then with them together to talk about their perspective and possible solutions to the conflict.

Group meeting

1. Create a safe space, one that is private and neutral, for involved parties to talk together.
2. Set out the guidelines: only one person talks at a time; no interruptions, defending, or justifying; come in with a mind open to the possible solutions and be willing to compromise.

3. Give each person an opportunity to tell their story, from their perspective. Remind the other person that you are each listening to each person’s perspective. This is key.

4. Paraphrase each person’s stories to ensure that each has been understood, using such phrases as “What I am hearing you say is...?” and “Is that right?”

5. After everyone has had an opportunity to tell their story, brainstorm possible solutions. Because you want all the ideas – good, bad, and out in left field, this isn’t a time to judge. One of these ideas might just help someone come up with the best solution.

6. Identify solutions that work for each party. It’s important that the solution is agreeable to each party and the company, as it will work and be successful only if everyone buys in.

7. Agree to act on the solution. This last step is key to moving forward.

At all times, avoid taking sides: As the manager, your interest is the company, the resolution of the conflict, and each employee. Don’t mandate a solution; you want the staff invested in the solution.

If employees refuse to participate in conflict resolution

Offering employees the opportunity to resolve conflict is a much better option than disciplining them, having supervisor-mandated solutions, or taking no action at all. When they refuse to cooperate or participate, talk with them about your company policies, their personal responsibility for their behaviour and actions, and your responsibility as the owner or manager to take actions based on their behaviour.

The intent of this conversation is not to threaten disciplinary action, but to discuss the reality of the situation and the need to resolve it. Each individual makes choices. As a supervisor, your actions are based on the behaviours and actions of the employee. You are encouraging them to make a good choice, but the reality is that some people will make a poor choice to continue to act in ways that are not acceptable in your workplace.

In such situations, you must follow your organization’s employee handbook policies. Resolving the conflict and creating a good work environment for everyone is your first choice.

By listening, you can resolve conflicts in the workplace. Giving each person space to tell their story validates them and communicates to them their value to you and the organization.

DBR

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