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## Conflict management: Key to a successful organization

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### Abstract

There are many contexts in which conflict arises, and no organization would exist without conflict. A fight or contest between individuals who hold divergent opinions, ideals, or ambitions is referred to as conflict. Conflicts arise for a variety of reasons and can take several forms, based on factors like engagement, scope, outcomes, and rights and interests. The main goal of conflict management is to identify problems by seeing past the immediate issue and using appropriate tactics to prevent them in the future. An organization can resolve conflicts using a variety of conflict management techniques, such as accommodating, avoiding, cooperating, compromising, competing, etc. The challenges of conflict management in a variety of projects stem from the executives' and workers' disparate levels of authority and accountability. The difficulties of conflict management include raising salaries and working conditions, establishing calm, private workspaces, promoting employees, relieving stress, and striking a balance between the needs and interests of the populace. Conflict may be one of the main drivers of positive development in an organization if it is managed and positioned well.

**Keywords:** Conflicts, organization, management, development

### Introduction

An organization is a group of people who work together to achieve specific goals. It can be thought of as a social structure that includes all formally recognized human interactions. The organization includes task alignment with respect to the company's ultimate aim and the division of labour among personnel. An organization consists of two or more individuals cooperating within clearly defined boundaries to achieve a shared purpose aims or objectives.

The following list includes significant ideas that result from this definition:

- People comprise organizations, and as such, the human element is crucial due to the complexity, variety, and diversity of social relationships.
- When individuals collaborate, a number of things are required. For instance, the requirement for specialized expertise and the division of labour among individuals.
- Organizations have recognizable boundaries, such as those pertaining to its membership, personnel, and the locations of specific operations.
- Organizations are deliberate, goal-oriented work environments. In other words, organizations exist to achieve shared objectives.

Etzioni (1976) [25] defined organizations as human groupings or social entities that are purposefully created to pursue particular objectives. An organization's goals have several purposes. By illustrating a desired future condition of affairs that the organization aspires to, they offer direction. As a result, they established rules for organizational behaviour. Objectives serve as a source of legitimacy that supports an organization's actions as well as the reason for its very existence. Goals also act as benchmarks by which both internal and external stakeholders can evaluate the efficacy and efficiency of an organization. An organization's success greatly depends on having a clear knowledge of its objectives.

### Importance of a Good Organizational Climate in an Organization

The history of the concept of organizational climate is not easily traced. Lewin, Lippit, and White (1939) [1] were the ones to bring up the topic of organizational climate in their experimental research on social climate, but they were hardly able to provide any concrete ideas for conceptual frameworks or methods for quantifying organizational climate. The importance of individual diversity, group cooperation, social connections, and employee participation was emphasized by Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) [2]. Later on it was asserted that mature employees become irritated by the formal organizational structure, directive leadership, and

strict managerial controls. Argyris (1958) <sup>[3]</sup> introduced the concept and defined organizational climate in terms of employee needs, values, personalities, and formal organizational policies. He went on to say that not only do companies not see their employees' full potential, but they also do not offer sufficient motivation for their personal growth. According to Forehand and Glimmer (1964) <sup>[4]</sup>, organizational qualities can be used to describe an organization's climate. The traits of one organization typically diverge from those of other organizations. These traits hold up over time and have a significant impact on how the concerned organization's personnel behave.

In order to attain good employee performance, major organizations operating internationally that have formed or aim to develop alliances and joint ventures without any boundary conditions must have a favorable work environment Madhuka and Sharma (2017) <sup>[2]</sup>. Furthermore, companies that engage in the global market need a diverse workforce in order to successfully conduct their operations. People from all backgrounds can be recruited, trained, and kept on staff by creating a people-oriented atmosphere. A wide range including autonomy, cohesiveness, trust, pressure, support, justice, and recognition, are crucial in shaping the organizational climate. There has always been a connection between climate, culture, and psychological health. Since not all organizational climate types apply to all firms and not all organizational climate aspects have a positive influence, it is challenging to determine which organizational climate feature is most beneficial to enterprises.

### Types and Dimensions of Organizational Climate

Broadly four dimensions has been discussed regarding organizational climate:

#### People Oriented Climate

Organizations should cultivate a people-oriented environment with the main objective of valuing and respecting individuals. Skvarciany *et al.*, (2015) <sup>[5]</sup>. Because of the mutual respect, the people climate will make employees feel that they are being treated fairly. It is essential to foster this superior-subordinate relationship since it fosters the idea in employees' minds that they are an essential "cog" in the company's machinery. Offering profit-sharing and other incentive programmes also helps employees feel like valued members of the team. Worker's ought to receive recognition at work for their contributions, as these are crucial to the development of creative ideas. Similarly, fostering a culture of work-life balance will contribute to a healthy work environment. Employees of today want flexible work schedules. Investing in the development and success of employees is also essential to creating a people-oriented organizational culture. The company's success and the success of its personnel are, in fact, closely related. This can be achieved by acknowledging the needs of staff members and offering suitable assistance, which will inspire them and provide them with a feeling of agency inside the organization. Numerous factors have been highlighted by Koys and De Coitiis (1991) <sup>[6]</sup> as contributing to the psychological climate of organizations. Employee perceptions of their jobs and the organization, which are formed from their experiences inside it, form the foundation of the psychological environment. Among them are the following: The ability of workers to plan their tasks and responsibilities as well as their workload is referred to as autonomy. Peer relationships, teamwork, warmth and friendliness, sociability,

lack of conflict, and rank distinctions are all examples of cohesiveness. Examples of trust include managers' warmth and candour instead of being distant, as well as their sensitivity and faith in leaders. Pressure is the general stress that a job causes due to its role, workload, role uncertainty, and conflicts. Support: This is the all-around help that supervisors provide to their staff. Acknowledgment includes both positive and negative feedback, chances for development and advancement, and rewards and penalties. Fairness: This includes, but is not limited to, the policies' clarity, promotion procedures' clarity, and incentive system's fairness. The organization's people-oriented culture will aid in creating a positive psychological environment.

#### Rule-Oriented Organizational Climate

In the rule-oriented environment, the corporation gives rules and regulations a lot of weight. It is predicated on the policies, procedures, and guidelines established by the organization Rudd and Mills (2020) <sup>[7]</sup>. Individuals won't be allowed to do anything unless certain rules are created. This aims to guarantee the safety of every individual within the organization. Stated differently, an organization's rule-oriented atmosphere stems from tradition and a strong set of norms that are difficult to change, and employees are expected to adhere to policies, processes, and rules. Pre-determined scenarios are often prepared to follow known processes and procedures in an environment that is rule-oriented. The greatest illustration of a rule-based organizational culture is found at McDonald's. Thorough instructions are provided for preparing burgers, ice cream, tea, and french fries, among other foods. This approach functions well in highly structured organizations with a distinct hierarchy and clear job descriptions for all employees. For instance, the procedure starts with an assistant manager and moves up to a manager, district manager, and so on when a customer files a complaint. Individuals will be driven to follow the unalterable customs, norms, and values, and they will understand the serious repercussions of breaking the rules and laws. The emphasis on establishing rules stems from the belief that they regulate behaviour and provide organization, consistency, and uniformity to the business. The company's regulations are represented by the policies and procedures, which are a component of them. According to some experts, if regulations are followed too strictly in a corporation, it would damage organizational performance (Drexler 1977) <sup>[8]</sup>.

#### Goal Oriented Organizational Climate

The success of an organization depends on its goals since they direct workers towards tasks and objectives. "Goal-oriented climate" describes the actions of an organization that are primarily concerned with achieving its goals. According to Pavle *et al.* (2016) <sup>[9]</sup>, the organization should establish a culture that continuously inspires staff to accomplish the desired outcome. Organizations may have medium-, long-, or short-term goals. Long-term goals are categorized into medium- and short-term goals and are strategic in nature. In order to accomplish organizational objectives, the organization's goals should be in harmony with one another and support the integration of interrelated organizational resources. Senior managers have a broad strategic mission to pursue, and they also need to plan for long-term goals. Front-line managers' goals get more specific and their timeline gets shorter. The frontline managers have a tight deadline for completing each of their targets. The purpose pyramid is hence often called the "cascade of objectives." An organization may have long-term

objectives, but line managers' targets may provide a daily reminder of what has to be done to complete their responsibilities and help the organization reach its overall goals. Whatever kind of organization you work for, there's a good chance it has at least one obstacle preventing it from accomplishing its goals with ease. It could be the company's small client base, something rivals are vying for in a corporation. It might be the minuscule percentage of those who can be convinced to contribute funds to a worthy cause. Cash limitations in the public sector may be imposed by the government. Because money is still scarce, priorities need to be determined and enough money allocated to them. SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed) objectives should be set. It is crucial to have clear goals, so managers should make an effort to include everyone in the planning and goal-setting processes of their organizations. This will help everyone understand their aims and the goals they need to meet.

### **Innovation Oriented Organizational Climate**

Organizations must enhance their capacity for innovation if they are to be able to adapt and thrive in the dynamic and changing environment of today. 2019's Annika *et al.* The term "innovation" refers to the process of coming up with new ideas, which is frequently vague and unpredictable. Daft (1978), <sup>[10]</sup>. Innovation often originates from an attempt to create something new. Establishments ought to cultivate an entrepreneurial mentality in order to promote a creative and innovative atmosphere. The three pillars of the innovation climate are being bold, proactive, and creative. Lumpkin and Dess (1996), <sup>[11]</sup> Lumpkin and Covin (2011) <sup>[12]</sup>, and Miller (1983) <sup>[13]</sup>. Yström *et al.* (2015) <sup>[14]</sup> have identified additional characteristics of creative and innovative businesses, including challenge, freedom, concept, trust, debate, and risk-taking. Businesses that are recognized for their innovative approaches to procedures, rules, products, services, and other aspects should operate in a different atmosphere than those that are purposefully outdated or conservative. Ekvall (in 1996). Isaksen and Ekvall (2010) found that "the organizational environmental characteristics play a critical influence in stimulating the workforce to think creatively and augment organizational performance by having radical product innovations" in a study of idea generation among middle management. A highly creative environment has been linked, among other things, to increased market share, sales volume, and the ability to implement complex work designs.

### **Conflicts in Organization**

Due to its widespread and ubiquitous character, the idea of conflict has come to have a plethora of meanings and connotations, leaving us with a semantic maze. Similar to other terminologies, conflict causes a great deal of ambivalence and uncertainty, leaving many academics and administrators unsure about two things: (1) what it means and is relevant to; and (2) how to deal with it. Situations involving conflict are unavoidable in interpersonal relationships, workplaces, and even international relations. A conflict arises when one party implies that the interests of the other party are at odds. People typically only notice the visible aspects of conflict, such as hostile remarks, oppositional behaviour, etc. However, this is really a minor portion of the process of conflict. Conflict as a fight for scarce status, power, and resources as well as a war over values, in which the rivals' objectives are to neutralize, harm, or destroy the rivals. "An expressed struggle between at

least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from other parties in achieving their goals" is another definition of it from a communication perspective. Organizational conflict, according to Wikipedia, is a condition of disharmony brought on by the real or imagined conflict between those who are impacted by formal authority and power and their demands, values, and interests. Given the apparent inevitability of conflict, managers must undoubtedly possess the skills necessary to identify its root cause, assess its potential for both positive and negative outcomes, manage conflict, and apply conflict resolution techniques in a workable manner. But during the past 25 years, a lot of academics have had second thoughts about conflict. Nowadays, it's believed that conflict can lead to constructive development. Three presumptions are listed by Deetz and Stevenson (1986) <sup>[15]</sup> that suggest disagreement can be constructive. They contend that a more practical understanding of the conflict resolution process is provided by the management of conflict. They make the following assumptions: (a) Conflict is desirable and necessary; (b) conflict is normal; (c) Real differences are the foundation of most conflicts.

### **Forms /Classifications of Conflict**

Various classification of conflicts are given below:

- (a) Relationship conflict: arises when members of a group have interpersonal incompatibilities, such as personality conflicts, tension, antagonism, and aggravation (Jehn, 1995) <sup>[16]</sup>. Negative personal feelings are brought on by this kind of conflict, including tension, irritation, fear of rejection by other team members, anxiety, mistrust, or resentment (Jehn, 1995) <sup>[16]</sup>. (Murnighan & Conlon, 1991) <sup>[17]</sup>.
- (b) Task conflicts: These are arguments concerning the objectives and content of a task, including how to divide resources, how to proceed, and how to interpret the data. Task conflicts can arise from disagreements over ideas, opinions, and points of view. They can also be brought on by lively conversations and intense emotions. The results for task conflict are less clear-cut than those for interpersonal conflict. Task conflict has been linked to a number of positive outcomes, including enhancing the use of debate within a team (Jehn, *et al.*, 1999) <sup>[18]</sup>, which produces innovative and high-quality ideas (Amason, 1996; West & Anderson, 1996) <sup>[19]</sup> and improves service delivery (Tjosvold, Dann & Wong, 1992) <sup>[20]</sup>.
- (c) Process conflicts: These occur when members of a group cannot agree on who is responsible for completing a particular work, or when there is dispute regarding how a task should be completed, individual responsibilities, or delegation (Jehn & Mannix, 2001) <sup>[21]</sup>. Process conflict has been linked to poor team performance, reduced morale, and decreased production (Jehn, 1997; Jehn, 1999) <sup>[22]</sup>.

### **Causes of Conflicts**

#### **Conflicts can be caused due to the following factors**

- a) Specialization: Workers frequently specialise in one area of work or acquire broad expertise across a variety of duties. Because they are unaware of one other's work duties, disputes may arise in an organisation where the majority of the staff members are specialists. For example, a camera repair shop receptionist might claim that a camera can be fixed in an hour, even if it will actually take a week. The receptionist shouldn't set an arbitrary deadline



for when the camera will be ready because she doesn't know much about the technician's profession. Conflict between the technician and the receptionist may result from this circumstance ([skiemman.is/en/category/view](http://skiemman.is/en/category/view)).

- b) **Common Resources:** We frequently have to share resources at work. A conflict situation is more likely in an organization where resources are scarcer. Conflict results from a shortage of resources since everyone who requires the same resources always undermines those who seek alternate objectives. Limited resources can be in the form of cash, goods, personnel, or knowledge.
- c) **Goal Differences:** The likelihood of conflict frequently rises significantly when organizational departments have conflicting or incompatible agendas.
- d) **Interdependence:** The degree of task interdependence often tends to enhance the likelihood of conflict. It is simpler to place the responsibility for a mistake on a coworker when one is dependent on another person to finish a task. Interdependence typically arises when team members have to be interested in the work process and obtain results that rely on other members' performance.
- e) **Authority Relationship:** Because most individuals dislike being told what to do, there is often underlying tension between managers and employees in businesses. Managers get perks at many companies, such as extended breaks, free personal long-distance calls, and flexible scheduling. Extremely rigid bosses are known to frequently have disagreements with their staff. Occasionally, people attempt to use conflict as a means of gaining more authority or position inside an organization.
- f) **Roles and Expectations:** An employee's intended behaviour is referred to as their role. Each person works for the company in one or more roles. These positions include things like job title, responsibilities, and an agreement between the company and the individual. When a subordinate's job is unclear and each side has a different interpretation of it, manager-subordinate conflict may arise.

### Conflict Management Styles and Techniques

There is a difference between resolving a conflict and managing conflict. Resolving a conflict ends the dispute by satisfying the interests of both parties. Managing a conflict contains specialized interaction that prevents a dispute from becoming a battle. Managing a conflict attends to personal issues so as to allow for a constructive relationship, even though the objective issues may not be resolvable (<http://EzineArticles.Com>).

One of the most uncomfortable and annoying things an administrator has to deal with is dispute between and among people. An administrator must be aware of the source of any attempt to change a particular conflict stance. The likelihood that the appropriate resolution or stimulation technique will be chosen increases with knowledge of the source.

Active conflict management enables organizations to communicate honestly about problems and differences, share information, and resolve conflicts amicably. Furthermore, Tjosvold *et al.* (2002) <sup>[23]</sup> contend that argument contradiction is made conceivable by openness. Studies have indicated that engaging in open dialogue and confronting arguments can lead to significant opportunities. Conflict management has a good impact on team effectiveness because of its active approach. Early conflict identification and attention to the persons involved are crucial components of any conflict management

technique. When a manager handles disagreements that are either dysfunctional or functional, these components are crucial. Early detection of the dispute and assessment of its effect on workers' performance are necessary. Creating a plan to handle dysfunctional conflict or promote functional conflict is also essential ([skiemman.is/en/category/view](http://skiemman.is/en/category/view)). The degree to which a participant is emotionally invested in the dispute will also determine the conflict's method and style of management. Organizations can use a variety of strategies and tactics to manage conflict. These include conflict resolution strategies, conflict stimulation strategies, and conflict control tactics. Kenneth Thomas (1976) created five interpersonal conflict resolution models for organization.

### Based on two dimensions

- a. How assertive or unassertive each party is in pursuing its own goals
- b. How cooperative or uncooperative each is in meeting the concerns of the other

He underlined that as conflict arises from human interactions, we must also take into account the beliefs, expectations, and perspectives that each party brings to the table. Some individuals start a dispute with:

- a. A WIN-WIN orientation is the belief that the parties will resolve their differences in a way that benefits both of them. They think that if the parties collaborate to come up with a novel solution, the resources at risk are expandable rather than fixed.
- b. A WIN-LOSE Origination: They embrace the notion that both sides are taking from a fixed pie, meaning that the more one wins, the more the other loses.

According to McShane and Glinow (2003) <sup>[24]</sup>, when parties adopt a WIN-LOSE mindset, they are more likely to rely on politics and power in order to obtain the upper hand. Sometimes the disagreement is genuinely about a fixed resource, in which case a WIN-LOSE perspective may be suitable. The opposing factions can benefit, to differing degrees, from the perception that innovative solutions are feasible and that their perspectives aren't entirely at odds.

Choosing a WIN-WIN or WIN-LOSE mindset affects how we approach the disagreement and behave towards the other party. The five (5) conflict resolution styles that Buchanan and Huczynski (2004) identified are:

**a) Collaboration:** Working together to solve problems and come up with a solution that benefits both sides is known as collaboration. Information exchange is a crucial component of collaboration, allowing both sides to find points of agreement and possible solutions that could satisfy some or all of their needs. The only style that embodies WIN-WIN orientation is collaboration.

### The following scenarios call for the use of this method

- 1) When both sets of issues are too significant to ignore, this method can be used to develop an integrative solution.
- 2) When learning is your goal.
- 3) To incorporate knowledge from various viewpoints.
- 4) To win support by integrating reservations into an agreement.
- 5) To resolve emotions that have hampered a partnership.

**b) Avoiding:** Attempting to diffuse or completely avoid confrontational situations is known as avoidance. For instance, some workers may change their activities or workspace to reduce engagement with particular colleagues. The following circumstances are suitable for using this method or style:

- 1) When a problem is unimportant because there are more significant issues.
- 2) When you believe there is no possibility of allaying your worries.
- 3) When the advantages of resolution are outweighed by the possibility of disruption.
- 4) To allow folks to gather their thoughts and chill off.
- 5) When acquiring knowledge takes precedence over making snap decisions.
- 6) When there are more capable parties to the dispute than you are.
- 7) When problems appear unrelated or to be symptoms of other problems.

**c.) Competing:** The goal of competition is to prevail in a dispute at the other party's expense. Because of its highest assertiveness and lowest cooperativeness, this style has the biggest win-lose orientation. Along with blustering and threatening, the party also makes positional promises and compelling arguments.

**The following circumstances call for the use of this approach/style**

- 1) When prompt, definite action is essential (such as in emergencies)
- 2) On significant matters where it is necessary to take unpopular measures (such as cost-cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, or disciplining).
- 3) On matters crucial to the well-being of an organization, when you are correct.
- 4) Against those who profit from non-competitive actions

**d.) Accommodating:** Giving in fully to the desires of the other party, or at the very least participating with little to no consideration for your own interests, is what is meant by accommodation. In this case, the party offers assistance, unqualified promises, and unilateral concessions.

**This method/style can be used in the following situations**

- 1) When you realise you're incorrect, give someone else a chance to speak out, learn from it, and demonstrate your reasonableness.
- 2) When other people's needs come before your own in order to keep everyone happy and foster collaboration.
- 3) To accrue social credit for upcoming problems.
- 4) To reduce your loss while you are losing and outmatched.
- 5) In situations where stability and harmony are crucial.
- 6) To let subordinates grow by experiencing failure and learning from it.

**e.) Compromising:** Seeking a middle ground with the opposite party is the goal of compromise. You seek to enter a position where your gains are equivalent to your losses.

**This type of approach can be used in the following situations**

- 1) When objectives are significant but not worth the effort of possibly upsetting more assertive modes.
- 2) When equally powerful opponents are dedicated to

opposing objectives.

- 3) To find short-term solutions to difficult problems.
- 4) To find quick fixes when pressed for time.
- 5) As a fallback in the event that rivalry or cooperation fails

## Conclusion

Thus, it is clear that various writers have differing opinions about the definition, conceptual framework, and aspects of organization, organizational climate, conflict and conflict resolution. From the conversation so far, it is clear that leadership styles, rivalry for supremacy, a lack of shared resources, etc., are some of the reasons why disputes arise in organizations. This lowers output or quality of service provided as well as employee work satisfaction. As a result, it's critical to identify conflicts early on and give the parties involved careful consideration. Force should never be used to resolve a dispute; instead, the people involved should negotiate a solution. Darling and Fogliasso (1999) come to the conclusion that conflict cannot be completely eliminated. Managers who attempt to remove conflict will not remain long; on the other hand, those who do it successfully will usually reap the rewards of both institutional and personal happiness.

Additionally, this review clarifies a number of causes for discrepancies in organizational environment and expands on the significance of further investigation. This kind of essay not only identifies study prospects for future studies, but it also advances the body of knowledge already known about the issue of "climate." We hope that this article will help future scholars better understand the state of the field, the potential for growth, and the future scope of the study of Organizational Climate, conflicts and its management. It will also encourage more research in this area.

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