

# Coaching Employees

Week 8

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# When is Coaching Required?

- Performance (attendance, late, lunches, breaks, etc.) –
- Work habits
- Encouragement for success, input needed
- Problems with other employee(s)

# Coaching Strategies for Individual Employees

- Establish the purpose of the discussion – for example, describe in detail the poor work habit you have observed or the struggle you may have seen
- Indicate why it concerns you
- Ask for the employee's help in solving the problem
- Discuss/clarify details about the situation
- Discuss causes of the problem
- Identify and write down possible solutions – more training, possible demotion, move to another position
- Decide on specific action to be taken by each of you – agree on what needs to be accomplished
- Agree on a specific follow-up date
- Work to maintain or enhance self-esteem
- Listen and respond with empathy
- Encourage

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# Organizational Conflict

- The discord that arises when goals, interests or values of different individuals or groups are incompatible and those people block or thwart each other's efforts to achieve their objectives.
  - Conflict is inevitable given the wide range of goals for the different stakeholder in the organization
  - Conflict can also exist between departments and divisions that compete for resources

# Types of Conflict

## **Interpersonal Conflict**

Conflict between individuals due to differences in their goals or values.

## **Intragroup Conflict**

Conflict within a group, team or department

## **Intergroup Conflict**

Conflict between two or more teams, groups or departments.

Managers play a key role in resolution of this conflict

## **Interorganizational Conflict**

Conflict that arises across organizations.



# Sources of Conflict



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# Functional Conflict Resolution

- **Compromise:** each party is concerned about not only their goal accomplishment but also the goal accomplishment of the other party and is willing to engage in a give-and-take exchange to reach a reasonable solution.
  
- **Collaboration:** both parties try to satisfy their goals by coming up with an approach that leaves them both better off and does not require concessions on issues that are important to either party.

# Ineffective Strategies

- ▣ **Accommodation** : An ineffective conflict-handling approach in which one party, typically with weaker power, gives in to the demands of the other, typically more powerful, party.
- ▣ **Avoidance** : An ineffective conflict handling approach in which the parties try to ignore the problem and do nothing to resolve their differences.
- ▣ **Competition** : An ineffective conflict handling approach in which each party tries to maximize its own gain and has little interest in understanding the other party's position and arriving at a solution that will allow both parties to achieve their goals.



# Conflict from a Manager's Point of View – Mediation and Negotiating Employee Differences

- Mediation – usually involves 2 sides. The number of people involved will vary
- The mediator must be neutral.
- The mediator is not necessarily an SME – this person charged with guiding the conversation and facilitating between the people in conflict. The mediator does not make decisions
- Arbitration – The arbitrator acts as a judge. The arbitrator will listen to both sides and then make a decision. Not usually within the realm of most manager's job descriptions as if it involves immediate employees, may create sense of unfairness, favoritism
- For true arbitration, most likely better to bring in an outside person – HR, etc. that does not have direct supervisory responsibility of the employees
- Most organizations unlikely to use arbitration except in negotiations with groups of employees over legal matters, pay, union
- For most managers, employee negotiation or mediation more likely to be utilized
- Negotiating employee differences – mediation “lite.” Not usually a true example of mediation and usually involves 2 people under the manager's immediate supervision

# Mediation

- Goal of mediation is to offer a **safe** environment where everyone is given the opportunity to air differences and then figure out solutions. The mediator does not figure out the solution; that is up to the people involved
- Really offering opportunity to teach employees how to have constructive conversations and communicate/interact in a new way
- Mediation calls attention to a problem that might not only be impacting morale, but quality, efficiency, etc. – very real problems within the organization
- Often not called mediation in an organization
- When a mediation is required, may be necessary to have someone from outside the group perform the mediation. Often employees will not feel comfortable talking in front of their manager.
- The mediator is neutral so it can be someone from HR, etc.
- Would want an outside person to perform the mediation if the dispute is between groups under different management. At times, organizations may even hire a professional mediator
- Person acting as mediator must feel comfortable in the role of opening up communication. Also requires ability to keep interaction civil and set standards for behaviors – some managers do not have the skill set for this – not comfortable in role, not comfortable in “calling out” people with inappropriate behavior, too hard to not offer own opinion or remain neutral

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# When to Mediate

- Persistent problem
- Parties unable/unwilling to resolve independently
- Problem affects organization
- Lack of professionalism between parties

# Before Mediation Begins

- Usually starts with a person/group complaint
- To begin, ask the person to articulate the problem and have them complete a simple, one page document that contains:
  - Problem statement – concisely describe the problem
  - Impact statement - how is the problem impacting the person or group – ask for facts, figures – make them quantify the problem. May require some data collection and analysis
  - Key personnel – identify the people involved on both sides of the conflict
  - How long to resolve – estimate of how long it will take to resolve the problem
  - This statement forces the person/group to focus on what the problem really is about. Often, the true problem is not the initial complaint. Sometimes, after data collection, it may be decided that what was perceived as a big problem really isn't a problem at all. At this point, it may become more a matter of “coaching” and helping the person or group work through it.
- Don't discount the people who complain – they are often red flags of a real problem that should have some attention focused on it

# Act of Mediation – Starting Out

- Proceed if initial problem statement reveals a problem
- Set a date and time in a neutral environment for both sides to meet
- Invite all key players
- Mediator sits between the 2 sides
- Mediator makes opening statement
  - State goal
  - Lay out facts
  - Set ground rules
- Ask group to consider 3 questions:
  - What do you want?
  - What are you willing to do to get it?
  - What are you not willing to do to get it?

# Act of Mediation – Where the Work is

- Ask for volunteer to start
- Groups may start out arguing or defensive – allow venting as long as it remains somewhat civil
- If someone addresses mediator or wants mediator to make decision, direct it back to the group – remain neutral
- When sides start to talk to each other, the mediation is succeeding
- The 2 sides must work to resolve the problem – one side may want something that the other side can't do. Allow the groups to offer different solutions. It is important that the groups find their own solutions. As mediator, do not offer ideas. The mediator can write the ideas of the group on a whiteboard and continue to facilitate.
- If groups reach impasse, take break or resolve to meet another day (set date!), ask each side to take some time to digest the information and come up with possible solutions. Emphasize that this problem is not going to go away and a solution must be found.

# Act of Mediation - Closing



- Once possible solution decided upon and it is agreeable to both groups, have group or one member of group or one member of each group craft a memo of understanding formalizing what was agreed upon
- Set date, time, place to meet again for follow-up
- At follow-up will discuss how the solution is working, if it isn't working what can be done to fix it, and any fall-out from the solution (were new problems created?)

# Mediation – Key Ideas Summary

- Listen and coach
- Guide conversation to resolution (Always Be Closing)
- Provide chance for follow-up to check progress
- A successful mediation may circumvent formal grievances against another person, the organization, etc.
- Provides an opportunity for employees to be heard
- May shine a spotlight on a dysfunctional process
- Might try bringing snacks to soften tone, but if truly angry, probably will not eat a lot. Eating is a very social experience.



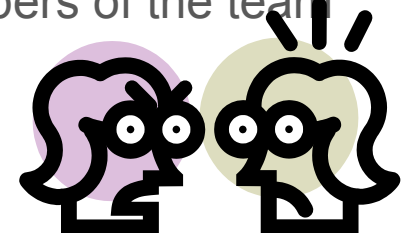
# Negotiating Employee Differences

- Could be thought of as a form of mediation, but usually just involves 2 people directly supervised by a manager (most common role a manager will take of the 3 we've talked about today)
- If a complaint involves accusations of harassment of any kind, abuse, threats, or safety issues, contact Human Resources immediately – they should have procedures in place
- Sometimes the complaining employee just may need a venue to talk it out and vent. If this is the case, always important to remain neutral and offer encouragement and support, but again, let the employee find own solution.
- You don't know all of the facts and it would be tough to make a an impartial decision without hearing both sides. Keep emotion out of it. Keep personal biases out of it.
- If manager "solves" problem, could be seen as favoritism, etc. and will lose credibility in department. It is not your job to solve the problem or institute workarounds to solve a problem as perceived by employees.
- If is truly a problem that requires some attention, then offer the employee the opportunity to talk to you on his/her own or offer to act as neutral third party to help move conversation along without taking sides and you will not take sides at any time.



# When is the Manager Involved?

- Often employee will voluntarily come to you, at first possibly expecting you to solve the problem
- Other times, a manager may need to initiate the process:
  - When an argument is disrupting working conditions in the department
  - When a neutral party is needed to help employees work through a problem
  - Before a dispute begins to involve other members of the team

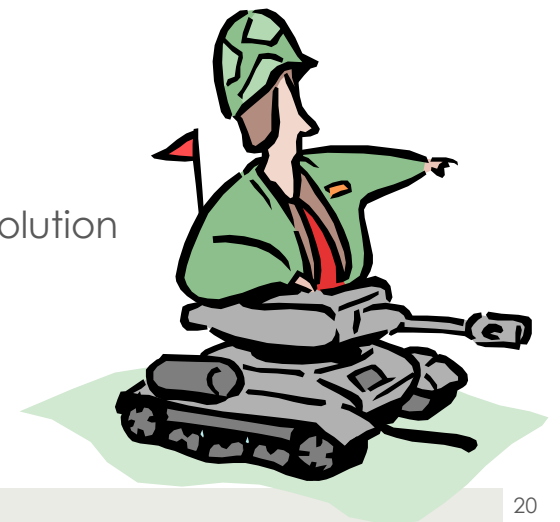


# Negotiating - Initiation by One Party

- ❑ Bring both employees into a secure, private environment away from prying eyes/ears
- ❑ Begin with a factual and straightforward statement of why everyone is present.
- ❑ Stress that your role is simply to act as a neutral third party to facilitate the conversation.
  - ❑ You will not be making any judgments or decisions.
  - ❑ You are not taking sides.
- ❑ Try to make each person comfortable and stress the need for a common resolution to which they must both agree
- ❑ As with mediation, set ground rules
  - ❑ Each has opportunity to talk,
  - ❑ No interruptions. must listen to each other,
  - ❑ Must come to some resolution
- ❑ Set a date and time to meet again to follow-up.
- ❑ As manager, your job is to keep conversation moving in a civil manner and move employees to a resolution that satisfies both parties.

# Negotiating – Manager Initiation

- Secure a safe, quiet environment away from others
- Begin with a statement of why you brought them in – keep it factual
- Stress that the behavior witnessed was not appropriate and will not be tolerated
- Stress that this behavior will not continue and the parties involved will work this out in a civil manner
- Articulate your role – neutral arbiter, rule enforcer
- Ask if each party is able to participate at this time – do they need cooling off period?
- Allow each party to talk
- Again, the parties involved must find own solutions
- Once solution is found, as manager, articulate and emphasize the solution
- Set date and time to meet again to follow-up



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# Strategies for Avoiding Conflict

- Increasing Awareness of the Source
- Increasing Diversity Awareness & Skills
- Job Rotation
- Permanent Transfers

# Role Playing Activity

1. Divide into groups of 4. Pick group members that you will be comfortable getting feedback from.
2. Get your packet of role playing exercises.
3. Randomly assign group members to be manager 1, 2, 3, or 4. Randomly assign other group members to employee or observer roles
4. Managers and employees read your role details. Do not share with observers. Read **only** your role.
5. Manager decide on the type of coaching that is appropriate (success, improved performance, correcting poor work habits, or mediation). Think about your conversation.
6. Manager and employee complete coaching discussion (generally takes 5 – 15 minutes).
7. Observers watch the scenario and complete observer observation form.
8. After completion of coaching session provide feedback to manager. Employee may also provide feedback. Give completed observer form to manager.
9. Repeat steps 4 – 8 for all 4 scenarios (use a new manager for each scenario). Other group members should switch between employee and observer roles.