

What is **CONFLICT?**

Conflict is the result of differences – in needs, values and motivations.

Each and every workplace is going to have a degree of conflict, it is the nature of us as human beings. It's what makes the world interesting.

Generally in workplaces unresolved conflict festers. The longer that you let conflict go on in your workplace, the harder it is to resolve. The bigger the issues become and the more each party digs their heels in.

Why do you need to deal with conflict in your workplace?

Simply, conflict impacts productivity. It takes time and energy – yours, the staff member's involved and quite possibly customers and/or suppliers could be drawn into it. This is time and energy that your staff (and yourself) could be spending on building your business.

Symptoms of workplace conflict:

- Increases in sick leave taken
- Tasks being forgotten about and not completed
- Drop in staff productivity
- Increase in customer complaints
- Increase in staff turnover
- Deadlines not met
- Decline in new business

THERE ARE TWO WAYS OF MEETING DIFFICULTIES: YOU ALTER THE DIFFICULTIES OR YOU ALTER YOURSELF MEETING THEM.

FIRST RESPONSE

To Conflict

All staff will at some stage have to deal with concern and conflict. These situations are often charged with emotion.

The key to resolving conflict is to remain calm and emotionally controlled. Nobody likes conflict and our body naturally goes into a flight or fight response which can cause conflict anxiety.

Conflict anxiety is a response to fear and it manifests itself in a number of ways:

- Feel a strong sense of excitement and energy
- Blushing or hot flashes
- Verbal stuttering
- Being tongue tied
- Dryness in the throat and lips
- Upset stomach
- Weak in the knees
- Sweating, especially sweaty palms
- Feeling cold in the fingers, hands, and feet
- Nervous shaking of the hands, feet, arms and head
- Feelings of not making sense
- Losing the thread
- Accelerated heart rate
- Memory loss
- Difficulty in breathing
- Experiencing tunnel vision



**OUR FIRST REACTION IS OFTEN TO GET DEFENSIVE.
THIS WILL ONLY MAKE THE SITUATION WORSE.**

You need to dig deep and use your very best communication skills in these situations. Remember this is not a personal attack but a frustration at the situation. Here are some steps to follow:

ONE

IF POSSIBLE GO TO A PRIVATE AREA

TWO

LET THE PERSON VENT

THREE

ACTIVELY LISTEN

FOUR

USE POSITIVE OPEN BODY LANGUAGE

FIVE

SHOW EMPATHY

SIX

ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE UPSET, ANGRY OR FRUSTRATED

SEVEN

KEEP CALM AND PROFESSIONAL, DO NOT BE SIDE TRACKED BY THE PERSON BECOMING EMOTIONAL (I.E. CRYING, SHOUTING)

EIGHT

NINE

TEN

ELEVEN

TWELVE

THIRTEEN

FOURTEEN

FIFTEEN

DO NOT ATTRIBUTE BLAME

FIND OUT WHAT SOLUTIONS THE PERSON WANTS

FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN DO

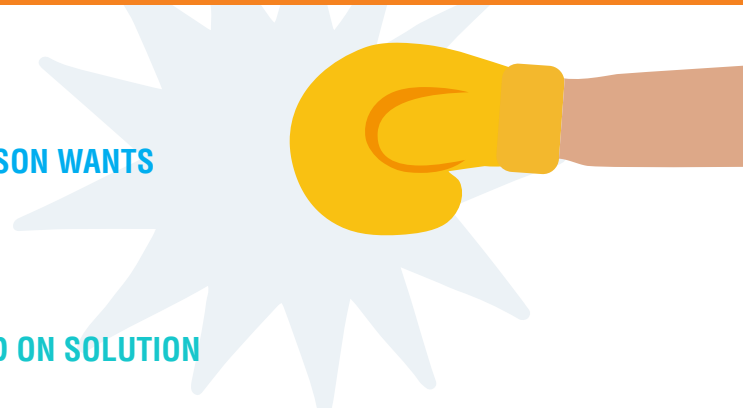
WHEN POSSIBLE PROVIDE OPTIONS

WORK TOWARDS GETTING AN AGREED ON SOLUTION

IF YOU ARE NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE A SOLUTION STRAIGHT AWAY LET THEM KNOW WHAT ACTION YOU WILL TAKE AND WHEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO GET BACK TO THEM.

FOLLOW UP AFTER THE EVENT TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME

DO NOT LOSE YOUR CONFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH THAT PERSON IN THE FUTURE. YOU NEED TO WORK ON BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIP AND TRUST AGAIN.



Active Listening TIPS

Don't ignore or deny the person's feelings. How they feel is their perception and your perception may be different – it doesn't mean that either is wrong. Don't assign blame in your communication. Just talk about the facts and find out the other side of the story.

Ask questions like:

“how do you feel about that?”

“how did that affect you?”

Acknowledge the other person's side of the story. This does not mean that you agree with them, it simply shows that you understand that they are upset. Words to use:

“I can understand”

“I can see why the problem makes you so upset”

An apology can be incredibly effective and can really disarm a situation:

“If that's how you see it, I can understand why you would be upset. I'm sorry it happened that way.”

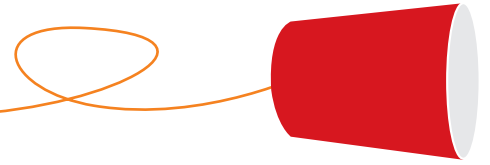
MOST IMPORTANTLY – DON'T GET ANGRY, AND DON'T GET DEFENSIVE. FOCUS ON FINDING A SOLUTION RATHER THAN ASSIGNING BLAME.



TAKE NOTES. File note all conversations and seek professional advice if you need to give a warning. **Use the mantra “if it's not documented, it didn't happen”.**



COMMUNICATION



Communication is generally the root cause of all conflict. Or to be more precise, lack of communication. This scenario sums it up perfectly:

“There are two people in a kitchen. There is only one orange left and both of them want it. They cut it in half”.

Sounds like a great solution doesn't it?

They just cut the orange in half. When you really look at their needs for the orange though, it was a poor solution:

“One now goes and tries to juice half the orange and barely has enough to fill a quarter of the glass. The other needed the rind for a cake. Now neither has enough orange to do either task”.

Had they discussed their needs and reasons, they would have realised their needs were complimentary, not conflicting.



How do you do this in the workplace, when faced with conflict, ask questions like:

- What is your ideal outcome?
- Do you have any ideas on a solution that would suit you?
- What is important to you here?

Have a think about the following:

- Why are good communication skills essential to your role?
- How can pro-active communication stop conflict from occurring?
- What are you currently doing well with communication to your team?

PERFORMANCE *Reviews*

Conduct regular and structured performance reviews. These are so important in workplaces – and we have attached a very simple one that you can build on to use in your workplace.

Conflict can occur from lack of communication, differences in beliefs and lack of clear expectations. Setting clear expectations and having a good structured conversation focused on work issues, can really clear the air and build a strong foundation for the future.

Have a Structured Policy in Place to Handle Grievances

Make sure there is a process to follow and that you take grievances and conflict seriously. Not only is it a Fair Work requirement, it's good business practice. A strong manager will be able to focus on the needs of the team, be able to identify the problem and build on common ground. Focussing on solutions is key to resolving conflicts.



**SPEAK WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY AND
YOU WILL MAKE THE BEST SPEECH
YOU WILL EVER REGRET**

— Ambrose Bierce



DO YOU HAVE CONFLICT IN YOUR WORKPLACE? CALL HR DYNAMICS.

We specialise in tricky staff situations. Performance Management, Performance Counselling, Warnings, Training Improvement Plans, Staff Grievances, Termination of Employment – they are all our specialty. We are locally based and offer professional advice and support.

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HR dynamics **CONSULTANT TEAM**

effective employee management



PHOEBE KITTO
Director

Phoebe Kitto is a Director of Human Resource Dynamics; a leading Industrial Relations and Human Resource consulting company in Far North Queensland. Phoebe has a strong human resources background in international five star hotels, working at a national level as a lead Human Resource Auditor for Starwood Hotels and Resorts. She is passionate about assisting businesses to effectively manage their employees to obtain great productivity and performance directly translating to the bottom line. Phoebe is passionate about educating business owners to understand their industrial relations obligations and assist in the implementation of these obligations in a practical way.

A Director of the company Rebecca has 17 years experience in human resource management complemented by a degree in Management and Human Resources from James Cook University as well as qualifications in training and assessment. Prior to HR Dynamics Rebecca worked in HR leadership roles for large international organisations in both the hospitality and engineering sectors. Rebecca has worked with a number of local Government organisations in Far North Queensland and Cape York Peninsula and is experienced in restructuring and ensuring long-term organisational sustainability.



REBECCA WRIGHT
Director



MARGARET McMAHON
Industrial Relations Advisor

Margaret has an extensive background in HR and Operations Management with a focus on Industrial Relations. With a Bachelor of Business in Industrial Relations and over 20 years experience within large organisations including the NSW and QLD Club industry, Australia's largest defence contractor and large training organisations both as a trainer and Executive level Manager. As HR Dynamics Senior consultant, Margaret is a competent workplace advisor and has researched, prepared and conducted complex cases before Fair Work Australia. These include unfair dismissal cases and adverse action cases. Margaret has experience in preparing complex workcover responses and conducting independent workplace investigations.

Teneal holds a Bachelor of Business majoring in Human Resource Management from James Cook University as well as qualifications in Training and Assessment. Prior to Human Resource Dynamics Teneal worked as a Paralegal where she supported commercial, litigation and criminal lawyers on their matters. Teneal is passionate about helping business achieve their goals, through implementing robust HR systems, including ensuring Modern Award compliance with the Fair Work Ombudsman. Teneal is experienced in writing Contracts of Employment and HR policies. Teneal is also experienced at drafting Enterprise Bargaining Agreements and assisting Employers at the Fair Work Commission. Teneal is also experienced in QA audits and is currently pursuing her interest in WH&S by studying a Certificate IV in Workplace Health and Safety.



TENEAL FABIANI
Senior HR Consultant



JOANNA HRYNCZYSZYN
HR Consultant

Joanna is an objective and personable advisor. She has completed a Bachelor Degree in Psychology and Post-Graduate Certification in Human Resources from Canada. She has over 12 years of International experience managing the day-to-day operations of Human Resources, in both a generalist and managerial capacity. Her international experience, in Canada and Australia, has provided her opportunities to work across a range of industries, including manufacturing, logistics, events, technology, property management and hospitality. Joanna's passion lies in providing people and culture solutions for her clients by helping them identify and build HR frameworks through compliance, technology and people.

Marinka holds a Diploma in Human Resource Management and is currently studying her Bachelor of Business (Human Resources) at the University of New England. Marinka is also an accredited Workplace Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator.

Prior to Human Resource Dynamics, Marinka worked in recruitment and marketing roles in the region. A proud local, Marinka demonstrates her passion for Far North Queensland by volunteering her time on the committee for the Cairns Agricultural, Pastoral and Mining Association.



MARINKA ZANETICH
HR Consultant



EMILY ELJED
HR Administrator

Emily joins the team at Human Resource Dynamics studying a dual-degree in Law and Business specialising in Human Resource Management at James Cook University. Prior to working at Human Resource Dynamics, Emily worked as a legal assistant, specialising in criminal matters, and also has a retail management background - where Emily gained valuable front line staff management experience, as well as hands-on experience in the end-to-end recruitment process. Additionally, Emily has experience rolling out national learning and development programs within her store. Originally starting at Human Resource Dynamics through the JCU HR internship program, Emily is working part-time whilst she completes her dual degree.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

At Human Resource Dynamics we are committed to providing a range of staffing solutions to assist you in reaching your business goals. We believe that people are a company's greatest asset; good people management will result in a productive and engaged team this will lead to a successful business. Acceptance of our services signifies acceptance of these terms and conditions. Our standard rates:

- \$160 + GST per hour for generalist HR consultation and recruitment
- \$190 + GST per hour for termination and redundancy advice, performance management, warnings, terminations and complex investigations, Fair Work preparation
- \$200 + GST per hour for mentoring and senior management/CEO performance reviews, training sessions, Fair Work hearings and conciliations, mediation services
- 15% discount for clients on ongoing packages off all rates

CONFIDENTIALITY

The strictest confidentiality of all business and staff related information pertaining to your organisation will be kept at all times.

THIRD PARTY SERVICES

To ensure that accurate information is provided by Human Resource Dynamics, advice may be sought from government agencies and employer advisory groups. To assist in the inquiry, information regarding your business may need to be provided. Should you not wish this to occur please contact Phoebe Kitto or Rebecca Bottomer.

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Invoices are payable to Human Resource Dynamics Pty Ltd within 14 days of invoicing. Accounts can be paid by means of cash, cheque or direct deposit.

OUR INVOICING TERMS ARE STRICTLY 14 DAYS.

Liability Human Resource Dynamics does not provide legal advice. If you need a lawyer we are happy to make a recommendation. We take all due care to provide you with quality human resources services, however, our liability is limited to the extent of the contractual payments you have made to us and then only if we have demonstrably breached our obligations to you. We accept no liability for any sort of consequential loss or damage.

TRAVEL COSTS

For areas outside of Cairns, Mossman and Port Douglas, the travel rate of \$160.00 AUD per hour will be charged.