

STRATEGIES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

PLAYING TO PARTNER > PLAYING TO WIN

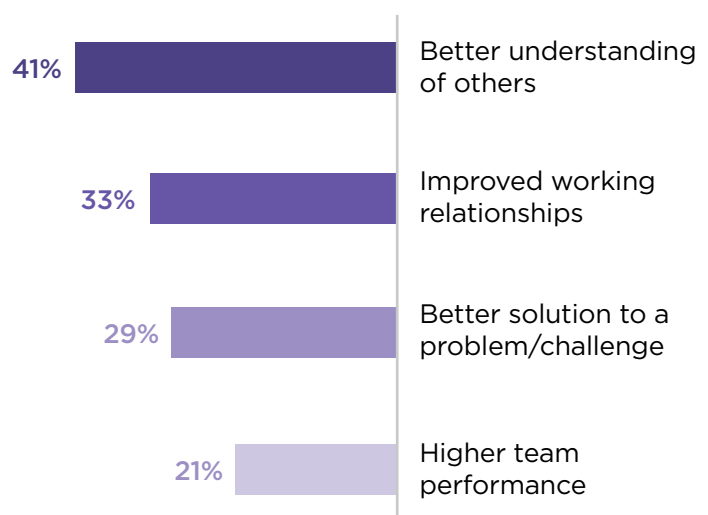
Conflict is unavoidable in the workplace, as people bring their dissenting opinions, concerns and own challenges to the table. In fact, the average employee in the U.S. **spends 2.8 hours a week** dealing with conflict. Learning leaders are not immune to these challenges — especially when it comes to proving the value of training to business leaders and key stakeholders.

Without effective conflict resolution practices in place, organizational culture can suffer, leading to increased turnover and reduced morale. Training is the biggest driver in achieving high-quality outcomes from conflict. Organizations can leverage training to equip employees and leaders with the skills they need to effectively manage and resolve conflict.

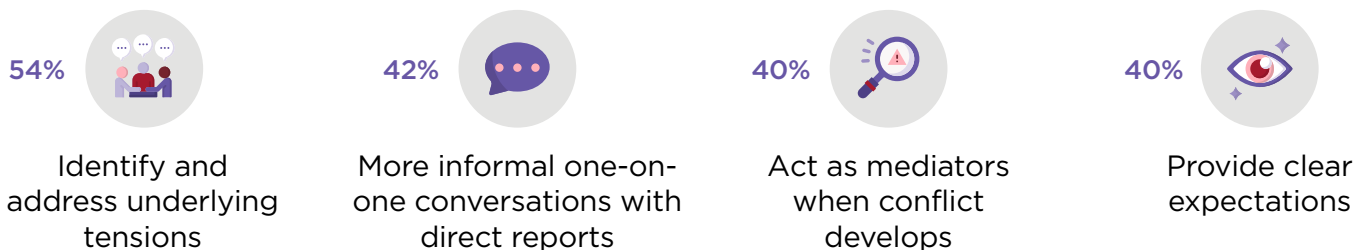
Primary causes of workplace conflict:



Positive outcomes from workplace conflict:



Actions leaders can take to effectively address conflict:



PRO TIP

Minimize conflict caused by miscommunication by fostering a healthy working environment that promotes open and honest communication.

Source: *"Workplace Conflict and How Business Can Harness it to Thrive"*

STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVELY PARTNERING WITH OTHERS

Pave the way for conflict resolution by using these strategies to effectively partner with others:

Seek to Understand. Actively listen with the intent to understand. This may require resisting the natural urge to respond. Listen to what an individual is trying to communicate to better understand their challenges and perspective.

Assume Positive Intent. Oftentimes, our brains will create stories about situations or people to support our own agenda, creating preconceived thoughts or an underlying bias. Looking for positive intent will allow you to learn the details of the situation and have productive conversations.

Hold Yourself Accountable. People become emotionally tied to their ideas and projects, causing us to approach a situation based in emotion. In these scenarios, hold yourself accountable by choosing to address a situation with facts and data despite your own emotions.

Be Adaptable. Knowing your audience's working styles will help you form effective partnerships and working relationships. Try tailoring your communication approach based on the end user's personal preferences (i.e., some people prefer email to video conferencing).

TIPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

Work to find common ground to achieve shared goals by using the following tips:

Keep an Open Mind. Pause before jumping to find a solution. Let go of your perception of "how things ought to be" and be open and receptive to what others are saying.

Connect on a Personal Level. We can sometimes get lost in the agenda and forget to make human connections. Starting conversations with the goal of connecting with your audience can help to ease tension.

Ask the Right Questions. In order to get to a solution, we need to ask the right questions in a way that is inviting to honest responses. Engaging your audience will not only make them heard, but also will allow you to grasp a greater understanding of their point of view.

Recognize Differing Opinions. With cultural and generational gaps broadening, and a constantly shifting workplace, employees have different thought processes and approaches to work. Recognizing these differences will help you better understand the cause of conflict so that you can find an appropriate solution.

Step into Their Shoes. Be a neutral mediator. Our preconceived thoughts regarding situations or people can lead us to think the worst when something goes wrong, such as someone rejecting or opposing your recommendations. Use compassion and empathy to understand your audience's specific challenges.

Get to the Root of the Conflict. Listen and engage in discussion to find the root cause of the conflict, which is necessary to find an effective solution.

Create Space for Two-way Communication. Poor communication is one of the main causes of workplace conflicts. When presenting your recommendations or solutions, make space in the conversation for your colleagues to express their ideas, concerns and suggestions without inhibition.

PRO TIP

Look out for subtle signals. During a conflict, pay close attention to your audience's nonverbal cues, such as body language, facial expressions and eye contact. This can help you figure out what the other person is really saying and allow you to respond in a way that builds trust and gets to the root of the problem.

FOSTER A HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENT

Employees are plagued with stress and burnout, which can amplify interpersonal conflict. Training professionals can partner with their organizations to take steps to address mental health in the workplace, which can lead to improved employee performance and conduct. Together, you can work to:

-  Provide access to mental health services.
-  Prioritize work-life balance.
-  Offer paid time off or wellness days to employees for physical and mental rejuvenation.
-  Foster a culture that boasts open communication, trust and well-being.
-  Train leadership in conflict resolution, psychological safety and communication.

Sources:

Are You Striving to Win or Striving to Partner? A 3-Step Model for Conflict Resolution

Preparing Leaders for Change: 5 Conflict Resolution Techniques That Work

5 Strategies for Managing Conflict Within an Organization

Workplace Conflict and How Business Can Harness it to Thrive

Want to learn to effectively partner with stakeholders and master the comprehensive consulting model in its entirety? Explore Training Industry's Internal Consulting Certificate.

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