



A MANAGER'S GUIDE TO CONFLICT COACHING

And Other Conflict Management Approaches

A MANAGER'S ROLE IN CONFLICT

Managers are responsible for maintaining effective and productive workplace relationships. At times this can be a real challenge –demanding highly developed interpersonal skills and excellent conflict prevention, management and resolution skills. Many organisations now look for these skills when recruiting and promoting managers. Excellent analytic, listening, influencing and decision making skills are essential, in addition to well developed emotional intelligence.

WHAT IS CONFLICT COACHING?

Conflict Coaching is a new way of skilfully managing workplace conflicts - while maximising the powerful learning opportunities they offer – for yourself and your organisation. It is based on an understanding that finely honed conflict management skills are ultimately learnt through experience!

A trained conflict coach with conflict management expertise, works with clients to explore workplace conflicts and ways of addressing them. Conflict coaching assists managers and/or individuals who are direct parties to conflict to develop skills and strategies for handling those conflicts.

As a conflict coaching client you are very much in the driving seat. Coaching sessions will address your identified goals and the coach will support you to mobilise your own knowledge and insights, to refine your ideas and to develop the skills necessary for their effective execution.

HOW MANAGERS USE CONFLICT COACHING

Managers have sought conflict coaching for a range of situations including:

- Interpersonal conflict with colleagues with staff
- Team conflict
- Addressing performance issues
- Managing bullying and harassment
- Improving communication practices in their workplace
- Gaining further insight into their own 'triggers', needs and values
- Understanding others' needs and drivers of their staff behaviour
- Investigating possible conflict management strategies
- Developing their own general conflict management competence
- Reducing the incidences of complaints and grievances in the workplace
- Understanding and navigating organisational dynamics
- Assessing the political implications of decisions
- Making career choices
- Working toward cultural change in the workplace
- Working skilfully with resistance to change
- Exploring options for resolving conflicts
- Investigating management strategies for conflicts that seem unresolvable.

In addition to exploring external conflicts, managers find conflict coaching a valuable tool for exploring those internal or value conflicts which arise as a result of, and sometimes immobilise them in performing their complex roles. Support to understand these challenges, leads to clearer and more congruent communication in the workplace and is an excellent stress management tool. After experiencing the method a number of managers have trained as conflict coaches and now used the powerful questioning methodology in their supervision of staff.

WHAT MANAGERS HAVE SAID ABOUT CONFLICT COACHING

This has helped me to recognize the importance of planning how to work most effectively with each member of my team and given me practical ways of preparing for meetings and dealing with conflict situations.'

I now realize that I need to be a lot clearer about my intentions and the outcomes I am seeking before talking with my staff or my managers. I have a greater understanding and a plan of action as to how I might approach difficult conversations with them.'

'I have much greater awareness of my management style on a number of levels and the need to be more mindful of how I speak with and react to my staff.'

'These sessions have opened up my eyes to seeing conflict situations through the other person's eyes and therefore enabling me to be much more effective in managing the conflict.'

'I am able to see how my pattern of ineffectively dealing with conflict impacts on my life in a number of ways and to see the need to take action to speak out rather than avoid conflict.'

'This has really opened my eyes as to how I contribute to the conflicts I have with people and the assumptions I make about them.'

'This process has stimulated me to think seriously about and make the decision to take action to deal with a long standing conflict instead of endlessly pondering over it and doing nothing.'

'Helped me to understand just why this situation pushed my buttons so strongly.'

'This has opened the door to me seeing the difference between what I think I'm communicating and what I am actually communicating.'

'It feels good to have made a decision to take some action and to know that I can apply what I have learnt here in other situations.'

'I have understood why the way I have been approaching this situation is not working and these sessions have helped me sort through practical steps to take to manage it more effectively.'

OTHER CONFLICT MANAGEMENT METHODS AND SERVICES

CLE Consulting Australia provides a range of other conflict management interventions and services

- Strategic Assessment & Analysis
- Conflict Management Skills Training
- CINERGY™ Conflict Coaching Practitioner Training
- Mediation
- Conciliation
- Conferencing
- Team Building
- Formal Grievance Investigations
- Facilitation - Difficult Conversations
- Injury Management Interventions

A full overview of these services is available at www.conflictcoachingaustralia.com/services1.html

Further Information:

Our conflict management services: www.conflictcoachingaustralia.com

Our organisational development services: www.cleconsulting.com.au

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