Developing Conflict-Savvy Leaders

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Presenter

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Agenda

➢ Understand the background of Conflict.

➢ Identify characteristics of conflict savvy cultures

➢ Understanding the roles of HR and Supervisors in conflict management

➢ Discuss tools and resources for developing conflict-savvy leaders

➢ Discussion/Q&A

Understanding Conflict: What is It?

Any situation in which people have apparently incompatible goals, interests, principles or feelings.
- It's inevitable! It cannot, nor should it, be completely avoided.
- We begin constructing what "conflict" is and how to respond as children.
- Each behavioral or emotional response to conflict serves a purpose.

Often, conflict takes place when at least one person's needs or values are not being met.
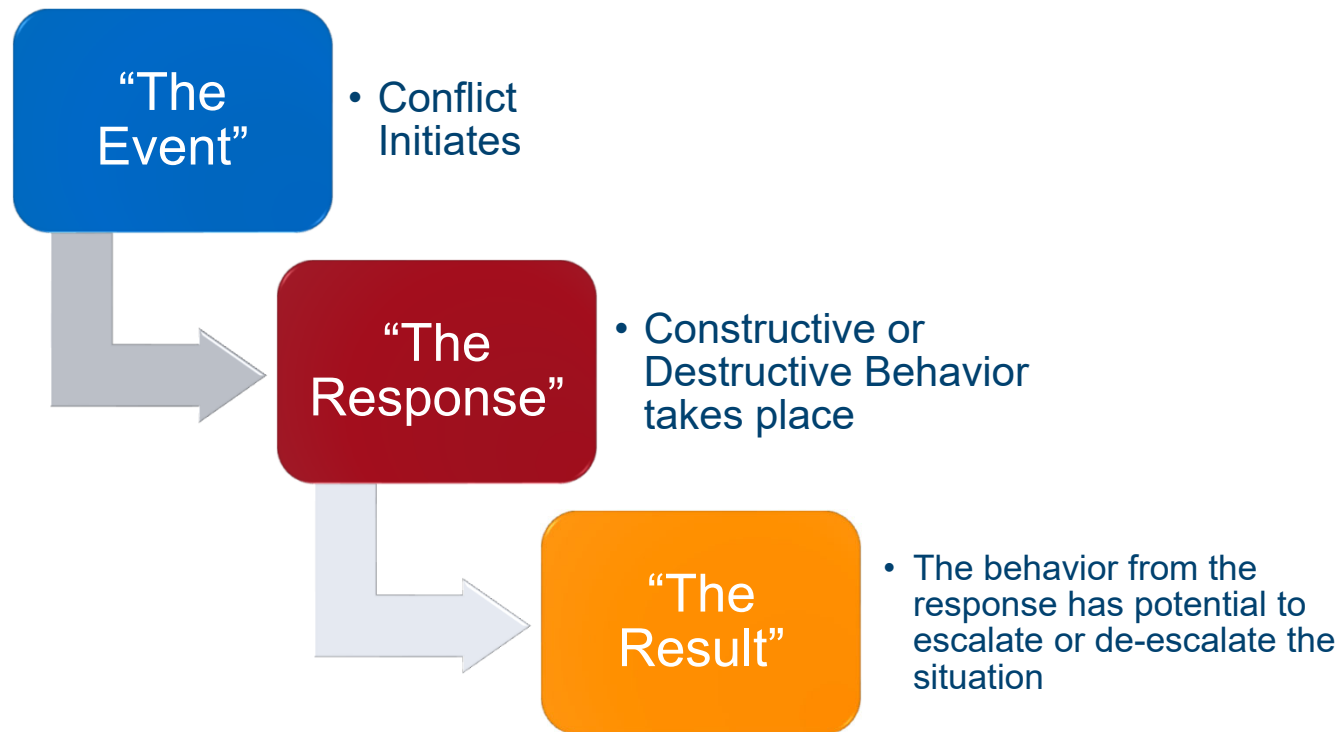
Common "hot-buttons" (CDP) include:

Unreliability	Self-Centered
Overly-analytical	Abrasive
Aloof (unresponsive)	Untrustworthy
Micromanagement	Hostility

Understanding Conflict: What is the Goal?

The goal of successful conflict management is not elimination, but to reduce **harmful** effects and maximize its **useful** ones.

Understanding Conflict: Breaking it Down

"The Event"
- Conflict Initiates

"The Response"
- Constructive or Destructive Behavior takes place

"The Result"
- The behavior from the response has potential to escalate or de-escalate the situation

Chat Question: Let's talk Culture

What are current thoughts at your institution around conflict?

Poll Question: Let's Talk Culture

What are the most common types of conflict taking place at your institution/org?

- Peer to peer
- Supervisor to team member
- Team member to supervisor
- Student-involved conflict with team members
- Performance related conflict
- Personal difference-related conflict
- Task-related conflict
- Change-related conflict

Benefits of Having a Leadership Team who is Prepared for Conflict

- Better, richer communication
- Transparency across levels and divisions
- Fewer challenges arising to the level of Human Resources
- Intentional and thoughtful problem solving
- Win-Win solutions can be found
- Trust is built
- A thriving innovative process
- Potential for increased retention of personnel

Conflict-Savvy Culture Development

The importance of good norms
- General communication norms
- Norms around feedback
  - How to effectively receive and provide feedback

Practicing self-awareness
- Awareness of one's own hot-buttons, their history around conflict, and giving themself time and grace in managing the conflict.

Regular 1-1s where wins and opportunities for growth are shared
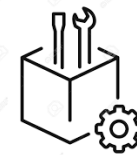
Conflict Dynamics Profile assessment
www.conflictdynamics.org

Example of Feedback Norms

Make sure everyone knows and follows the same set of norms!

Providing Feedback:

- Describe, rather than criticize/judge

- Be specific, clear, and respectful

- Address behaviors that can be controlled by the other party

- Engage in feedback in a timely manner

- Include the use personal pronouns such as "I" or "my"

- Focus on the opportunity for growth and future planning

- Be open to also receiving feedback- this is a dialogue.

Receiving Feedback:

- Active Listening- commit to listening to feedback openly and mindfully
  - Summarize what has been said after listening to ensure you understand the feedback being given.

- Thank/recognize the feedback
  - Regardless of the feedback content, it is important to create an environment of respect and openness to the cycle of change

- Re-Framing
  - Not everyone has perfect feedback presentation 100% of the time, if provided with feedback that was delivered inconsistently with norms, reframe the feedback into something manageable.

- Focus on what's next
  - "What ideas do you have for managing this situation in the future?"
  - "How can we collaborate to find a solution?"
  - "What would you prefer I do in that situation?"

- **Assume Positive Intent**

Small Adjustments, Huge Impact

Lean in. Listen.

The Impact of Growth-Centered Language:
- "But" → "And"
- "Why" → "help me understand/ I'm curious…"
- "Should" → "here's what I would like moving forward"
- "We all make mistakes"; "how can we learn from this one?"

Avoid the whirlpool

Know when to refer up

Creating a Neutral Dialogue Opener

Creating a Neutral Dialogue Opener

1. I would like to discuss (topic/event of challenge).

2. I noticed (evidence/observable behaviors).

3. I'd like **us** to find a solution to (name the desired outcome).

4. Let's connect (find some time within the next couple of days, even if it's 15 minutes from now).

Qualities of a Strong Opener:

Unbiased to both parties.

Objective (doesn't place blame).

Specific- both parties know what needs to be solved

Resolvable- we have autonomy over this situation.

Concise- keep it brief.

Follow it up with confidence that working together will ensure it gets done!

Let's Practice:
Create an opening statement for a recent conflict you faced

Creating a Business Challenge Statement:

1. I'd like to discuss/connect about _____.

2. I noticed _____, and

3. I'd like <u>us</u> to find a solution to _____.

4. Are you available this afternoon to discuss?

Qualities of a Strong Business Challenge Statement:

Unbiased to both parties

Objective (doesn't place blame).

Specific- both parties know what needs to be solved

Resolvable- we have autonomy over this situation.

Concise- keep it brief.

Pathway to a Successful Dialogue

Don't ambush- plan a time to discuss, even if that's in 15 minutes.

Opening Statement
- Express appreciation of the other person
- Express optimism that we can overcome the challenge together
- State the business challenge statement
- Gain commitment from the other party to participate in dialogue
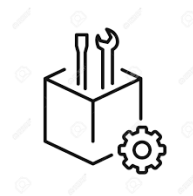
Invite them in- "help me understand…"

Engage in Dialogue
- Remain optimistic and respectful
- Support conciliatory gestures

Make a Plan
- Come to a solution that is balanced
- Set behaviorally specific goals
- Write it down

Follow up later to check-in

Learn more about Self-Mediation:
- Self mediation as a solution to workplace conflict by Bernice Muya
- Primary Principle of Self-Mediation by Katherine Golub

Final Tips & Tricks

Building and implementing effective conflict management strategy takes time!

- Take it slow and find your champions to pilot out with.

- Folks will start to notice and eventually the work will promote itself.

Consider sharing or learning more about communication styles through use of assessments such as True Colors or Insights Discovery

Takeaways

✓ Conflict management can be done effectively with small, intentional actions.

✓ Slow down so that you can speed up later on by implementing strong norms around conflict and communication.

Call to Action: What Now?

Create a Strategy for Conflict Management:

- Gain buy-in from Senior Leadership

- Be intentional in how conflict is talked about and managed across all levels

- Create a policy/guideline that incorporates aspects of collegiality and appropriate informal conflict resolution steps

- Pilot using these techniques in your "hot-spots"

- Scale it up

- Share your wins!

Have a Question?

Submit questions to Erica using the
Chat.

Thank You

Please complete your event evaluation

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