



Handling Conflict

Conflict with another person, or within your organization is never a good thing. Unresolved conflict can lead to a toxic work environment, the loss of good employees, or worse, the end of the organization. As a leader conflict can never be ignored.

Each conflict must be noted, and after careful reflection, you as the leader must determine how to handle the conflict. Conflicts can be internal or external, between 1 employee, or several, regardless of the specifics, leaders must confidently and quickly put an end to the conflict.

The first step is to assess the situation. As much as possible, you must determine what happened and what is now happening as a result. Remember there are always three sides to every story, what each employee saw and what actually happened. No matter how many different employees you interview, each story will be slightly different. In order to truly know what happened you must be able to remove all emotions and search out the facts.

The next step is to determine what you want the outcome to be. From this point, you can work backwards to determine the proper steps and course of action. Remember, while not every conflict should be dealt with, each conflict must be noted. If you notice a trend with one employee, someone who enjoys stirring the pot just enough, or who needs to be in control, you can work to put a stop to the overarching situation.

The final step is to have a conversation with all involved employees. Give each time to speak, and then explain to them what the results of the behavior will be. As difficult as it is to have these conversations, walking away from them will only hurt the organization as a whole.