

Tips From Executive Coaches For Managers on Conflict Resolution

By Steven J. Chen, Ph.D.

According to researchers, 44% of managers spend over an hour and a half of their workday sorting out conflicts among employees. Furthermore, workplace conflict is one of the most common and preventable stressors that plague most businesses. When you combine this with the pressure of meeting customer deadlines and trying to make a profit, you have a very stressful situation indeed. The good news is that you no longer have to suffer in silence or put your business at risk. Help is available. It may come from an executive coach.

An executive coach is a professional motivator, problem solver, creative thought partner and mentor that motivate clients towards personal and professional success. They are extremely knowledgeable about resolving conflicts, closing communication gaps, building stronger teams and leaders, and much more. In essence, they teach clients how to handle difficult situations on their own while becoming better overall.

So, why do managers and supervisors turn to executive coaches for conflict resolution? The reason is simple, they need help from an expert. After all, they can't perform at their best if they are consistently bogged down daily with people problems. Not only will this create delays and below par job results, it will also cost a company in lost revenue and a poor reputation. Plus, it's simply more economically feasible to hire someone who can give creative, logical, and workable solutions to workplace conflict instead of waiting for the solution to miraculously resolve on its own or for the team to fall down. Plus, having more control of the team, allows the leader to become more balanced, focused and better able to lead the team instead of wasting time with personnel issues.

Now that you understand how an executive coach can help you resolve conflicts, you may be wondering what types of workplace conflicts they can help resolve. To understand this further, we first have to discuss the various types of conflict. They are as follows:

- Interpersonal – 2 party conflict caused by envy, dislike or prejudice
- Dissatisfaction – caused by lack of recognition, pay, or status
- Structural – caused by 2 or more departments not working well together

- Opposing goals – no team work, no common goal
- Common resources – battling over limited resources
- Lack of communication – Deliberate or not, problems in communication will cause conflict

An Executive Coach Will...

Help You Know and Understand Better Communication Skills

The first thing your coach will do is to help you learn how to identify problems and diffuse negative situations. You will be specifically trained on how people communicate, how information is shared, how individuals deal with conflicts, how to explore issues, understand develop and choose workable solutions.

Look at Your Performance as a Manager/Leader

Next, you and your coach will look at how you perform as a manager. For instance, you will evaluate whether you are favoring one individual over the other and how you face issues. If there is an accusation of favoritism, your coach will help you figure out how to become a more effective leader and avoid such accusations in the future.

Teach You How to Stop Ignoring Issues and Resolve Them

The biggest mistake you will make as a manager is to ignore problems. Even if a day passes where things are running smoothly, it is probably the “quiet before the storm.” Your executive coach will teach you that conflicts never resolve themselves. Although people can change and conflict can fizzle with time, action is usually necessary to fix issues. And, the best way to resolve those issues is to understand them, figure out what people need, come up with a win-win solution and then implement a well thought out plan!

Inspire You to Be A Great Listener

A manager should know when to talk and when to listen. He should also be able to separate emotional talk from the issue to be resolved. In an argument, people tend to rebut what the other guy is saying rather than trying to prove his point. This is why conflicts deteriorate even more. With this in mind, your executive coach can help you develop stronger listening skills. He can teach you how to listen and respond to conflicts appropriately. You will learn proven skills on diffusing negative situations and bring harmony to negative situations.

In conclusion, leaders are not born, they are developed. Some of the greatest leaders of all times were inspired by and received assistance from executive coaches. With this in mind, you should never feel intimidated by leadership training or executive coaching. Instead, see it as an opportunity to grow and excel. Plus, it is a great way to resolve conflict and bring unity among a conflicted team. As a manager, it is your duty to make something good out of a negative situation and executive coaching allows you to show your worth as a leader!