

Dr. Shweta Mishra

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology

Career Convent Girls PG College, Vikasnagar, Lucknow

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflicts occur at various levels within the individuals; between the individuals in a group and between the groups. They may have important implications on the work and effectiveness of the persons and groups involved. The nature and intensity of conflict varies from individual to individual, and from group to group and it may put a manager in a very difficult situation. A manager often experiences his most uncomfortable moments when he has to deal with conflicts or differences among his job in so many ways. Therefore, it is of great importance that the manager should understand the conflict fully and try to handle it effectively.

## CONCEPT AND NATURE OF CONFLICT

### Definition of Conflict

The term 'conflict' is used by different people to convey different meanings. For instance, 'conflict in mind' conveys that individual is in a state of dilemma over a certain issue and is not able to arrive at any decision. The term 'conflicting views' denotes difference of opinions between two or more persons or groups.

Conflict may broadly be viewed as a breakdown in the standard mechanism of decision-making. Let us take the case of an intra-individual conflict, the individual is in a state of conflict in his mind as he is not able to take any decision in a given situation. In case of inter-individual conflict, two persons are not able to reconcile their views and hence there is a breakdown of mechanism of decision-making.

## Nature of conflict

In the context of an organization, broad of a conflict are as under:

- ❖ Conflict occurs when individuals are not able to choose among the available alternative courses of action
- ❖ Conflict between two individuals implies that they have conflicts perceptions, values goals.
- ❖ Conflict is dynamic process as it indicates a series of events. Each conflict is made up of a series of interlocking conflict episodes.
- ❖ Conflict must be perceived by the parties to it. If no one is aware of a conflict, then it is generally agreed that no conflict exists.

## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SKILLS

### **(1) Avoidance and Repression of Conflicts**

Avoidance strategies call for avoidance of conflicts through reorganizing the groups, regulating the inter-personal contacts. Repression of conflicts calls for putting, down of conflict by the manager. These strategies include the following :

- A. Avoidance or ignoring the conflict.
- B. Reorganization of groups.
- C. Reduction of inter-dependence between groups.
- D. Dominance or repression of differences.
- E. Regulation of inter-personal contacts through transfer.

## **(2) Defusion of conflicts.**

The strategies under this category call for keeping conflict abeyance cooling the emotions of the parties involved. Tensions are sought to be reduced by the following methods.

A. Smoothing.

B. Super ordinate Goals.

## **(3) Containment of Conflict.**

Using certain strategies, the manager allows some conflict to surface, but fully regulates the issues to be discussed and the manner in which they are to be resolved. Such stratifies are. compromise or trade off and restricting the interactions between the groups.

A. Compromise or Bargaining.

B. Restructuring the Interaction between groups.

#### (4) Confrontation or Sharpening Differences into Conflicts.

When a manager is aware that differences exist among the members of the group, he may try to create an arena in which conflicting parties may fight it out. The parties may mobilise their strengths and capitalise on the weaknesses of each other. He will, however, ensure that persons understand the issue over which they differ and the procedures by which they can discuss their differences and the kinds of roles which each person is expected to perform during the struggle. This approach may be followed when the parties to the conflict follow a rigid stand and are ready to find tactics to win over each other. But it may perpetuate ill-will rather than resolve the conflict. This is way, this technique should be used with great care.

### **(5) Problem Solving.**

The transformation of conflict into problem solving situation may help to deal with some of the feelings which often accompany disagreement, frustration, resentment and hostility. The manager using this approach may help to channel the energy generated by feelings into creative rather than into destructive activities. For this, he should clarify the nature of the conflict and give recognition to the feelings of individuals involved.

### **(6) Conflict Stimulation.**

The strategy of conflict stimulation is based on the interactional view of conflict discussed earlier. It involves the following tactics.

- A. Communication.
- B. Encouraging competition.
- C. Bringing in new employees.
- D. Restructuring the organization.