

Techniques for Navigating Conflict in a Dynamic Environment

Complex organizational conflict often follows organizational change and cuts across all levels. Your team will look to you to provide the leadership they need. This guide can help you manage conflict while leveraging the skills and commitment of your leadership team to assure long-term success.

Model a Composed and Professional Presence

Maintaining your composure in difficult situations allows you to make goal-focused effective decisions and encourages others to do the same. Use combat breathing and strategic pauses to release your own tension so you can think clearly, make deliberate decisions, and direct the actions of others.

Help Your Team Rally Around Shared Purpose

Try these strategies with your team to replace frustration with reassurance and to rebuild camaraderie that is often lost during significant disruption.

- Create a regular rhythm of communication with your team to build trust and alignment.
- Know how your organization is adapting. Observe behaviors, interactions, and relationships among team members and seek the input of your leadership team.
- Inspire teams to use the best available information, make decisions, and iterate as needed.
- Share your priorities, recognize achievements, and invite ideas for supporting the team.
- Celebrate victories regularly. Even small ones build momentum.



Sources of Conflict Associated with Organizational Disruptions or Change

- **Structure:** Undefined or overlapping roles and levels of authority
- **Information:** Lack of clear, consistent, and commonly understood communication
- **Behavioral:** Different personalities, communication styles, and social norms
- **Trust:** Inconsistent expectations, unexpected impact, and shifts in balance of power
- **Loss of Shared Purpose:** Shifts in priorities, disrupted patterns of goal achievement

Manage Organizational Conflict

1. Address urgent issues immediately while taking a more deliberative approach to systemwide conflict.
2. Engage your leadership team to execute solutions.
 - Share your perspective on issues contributing to conflict and their impact on the mission.
 - Solicit input from your leadership about how to address them.
 - Define the desired outcomes and implement an action plan.
 - Identify iterative goals and ways to recognize and celebrate achievements.
3. Take a strategic approach to problem-solving.
 - Address problems early to keep small issues from becoming larger and affecting others on the team.
 - Address individual issues one-on-one, using a coaching framework to improve outcomes while avoiding ineffective blanket admonishments.

Your composure, commitment, embrace of new strategies, and courage can guide your team through the challenges of organizational conflict to the greater resilience and cohesion of a mission effective team.



Navigating Conflict in a Dynamic Environment

FROM CONFLICT TO COHESION

