Conflict as a Competitive Advantage

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Project Plan

1. Define Conflict
2. Conflict to Trust Journey
3. Conflict in Proper Context
4. Places Conflict appears
5. Net value of Conflict
6. Cost of "Conflict gone Wrong"
7. Top 8 Conflict Leading Strategies
8. Summary and Chat Questions

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What is Conflict?

Definition <u>according to Merriam-Webster</u>:

Noun:

1: <u>fight</u>, <u>battle</u>, <u>war</u>; an <u>armed conflict</u>

2a**:** competitive or <u>opposing</u> action of <u>incompatibles</u>**:** <u>antagonistic</u> state or action (as of divergent ideas, interests, or persons), a conflict of principles

b**:** mental <u>struggle</u> resulting from <u>incompatible</u> or <u>opposing</u> needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal <u>demands.</u> *His conscience was in conflict with his duty*.

3**:** the <u>opposition</u> of persons or forces that gives rise to the <u>dramatic action</u> in a drama or fiction; The *conflict* in the play is between the king and the archbishop.

Verb:

1**:** to be different, <u>opposed</u>, or <u>contradictory</u>**:** to <u>fail to be in agreement or accord</u>. *His statement conflicts with the facts.*

2: archaic; to contend in warfare.

Fear of Conflict = Disfunction

Patrick Lencioni, in his book **The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable**, identifies "fear of conflict" as being Dysfunction #2.

This fear of conflict often correlates with Absence of Trust, the base of Lencioni's dysfunction pyramid. Employees lacking trust may believe that conflict could result in them being fired, labeled as a troublemaker, or a waste of time.

He says that the desire to preserve artificial harmony stifles the occurrence of productive ideological conflict.

Why talk about conflict?

Minivans, American Revolution, BLM, Me To Movements, Ransom Ware

Is conflict **good** or **bad**?

Places conflict appears

1.   Project Selection
2.   Team Selection/Onboarding
    •   Personality Styles
    •   Mentoring
    •   Perception vs Reality
3.   Supplier Selection
    •   Rent/Buy/Make
4.   Tool/Location/Methodology Selection
    a.   Throughput vs Quality
    b.   Throughput vs Safety
    c.   People vs Results
    d.   Security vs Access Ease
5.   Decision Management
    a.   Speed vs Engagement
    b.   Big Data (high volume/low clarity vs low volume/high quality)
    c.   Colin Powell on Big Data solution

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Places conflict appears

1. Project Selection
2. Team Selection/Onboarding
3. Supplier Selection
4. Tool/Location/Methodology Selection
5. Decision Management
6. Disputes and arguments
7. Change Management
8. Innovation/M&A Centers
9. Team member departure/arrival
   - The Home(Family) Team
10. Political/Medical: Covid19 Vaccine/Masking
11. Others?

#1 Zoom Poll: with this ubiquitous nature of conflict, are your CM skills Very proficient, Good, Fair, Poor?

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#2 Zoom Poll:

How is conflict and tension seen
by most of your coworkers?
  a. Necessary for our
   success.
  b. Helpful Sometimes
  c. Harmful and distractive
  d. Neutral

Benefits and value of conflict

1. Innovation – Bishop Wright
2. Idea Enhancement
3. Proactive Risk Management
4. Team member engagement
5. Builds high performance teams: Sense of Urgency
6. To reach a positive conflict outcome. Benefits of getting the "no" quickly

❑ **Zoom Chat: Other benefits? Enter a Co-vid 19 conflict that produced net positive result(s)**

#3 Zoom Poll:

What is the current level of conflict and tension in your organization (either in general or related to Post-Covid return to work plans)
   a. Very low
   b. Moderate and manageable
   c. Growing in intensity
   d. Very high, creates issues/opportunities on a
      regular basis

Conflict gone wrong

The 7 Costs of "Conflict Incompetence"

1. Wasted time.
2. Employee turnover.
3. Grievances, complaints, and lawsuits.
4. Absenteeism and health costs.
5. Workplace violence.
6. Poor decision-making.
7. A poisoned workplace.

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Tips to leading conflict

1. Training on pros and cons of conflict?
   - Ask them to see conflict as a way to move forward—not a paralyzing force.
2. Master mediation?
   a. ID & Build on what is common first
   b. Then seek areas of common principles and benefit.
   c. Best way(s) to escalate conflict?
3. Know when to avoid or postpone conflict.
4. Use arbitration to minimize conflict.
   - Difference between arbitration and mediation?

Tips to leading conflict

5. Accelerate and Feed the conflict.

6. Respect others. Are those who disagree "the enemy?"

    a. Fight the issue, not the person

    b. Reward the "Naysayer and Contrarians"

    c. Leverage their Personality Style

7. Know when to agree to disagree. (Program/Portfolio Leaders)

    a. 100% buy in on a 80% solution (theirs)?

    b. 75% buy in on a 90% solution(yours)?

8. Learn to compromise. *"Keep direction, change speed/travel mode"*

Scenario – Scheduler Selection

As sponsor you walk into a heated team argument on choice of the new project scheduler. Raj has 10 years of scheduling experience, knows the current team and is the project managers top choice. He has a track record of late deliverables. Erica is a new hire, has PMI-SP certification, is married to the CTO and is top choice of the project team.

How would you resolve this conflict?

Summary, Conflict & 1 Chat takeaway

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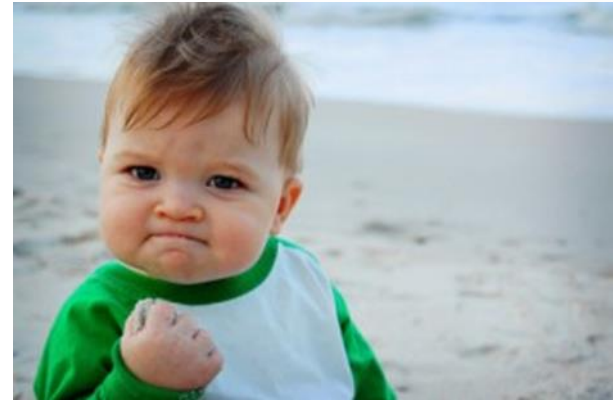
THANK YOU!

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