

Chapter 1: The Nature of Conflict

TEST QUESTIONS

True or False questions (each worth 1 or 2 points)

- F 1. Of the five ways that we typically respond to conflict, *compromise* is the most constructive way.
- F 2. If you read a book entitled *How to Play the Negotiation Game and Win Every Time!*, you are more likely to learn about interest-based negotiation than positional negotiation.
- T 3. We often perceive that conflict is bad and, therefore, avoid addressing it.
- F 4. When two parties are interdependent and have compatible needs, conflict is likely to develop.
- T 5. A car salesperson who asks a customer about the kind of car she wants, payment and financing options, color, and other preferences is engaging in an interest-based discussion.

Multiple Choice (worth 2 or 3 points each)

- c 1. The five ways that we typically respond to conflict are:
- Compromise, avoid, acquiesce, collaborate, compete
 - Compete, compare, compromise, avoid, alternate
 - Avoid, collaborate, accommodate, compete, compromise
 - Compromise, avoid, accelerate, accommodate, compare
- d 2. At its heart, conflict involves the following three elements:
- Dependent parties, incompatible interests, and competition
 - Perception of conflict, independent parties, and incompatible interests
 - Two or more parties, competition, and perception of mutual interests
 - Incompatible interests, competition, and interdependent parties
- b 3. A positional approach to addressing conflict is best illustrated by:
- A husband and wife discussing who will do the dishes tonight
 - One neighbor threatening to sue another neighbor about the location of the property line
 - Two employees exploring the best way to accomplish a task
 - Two lawyers negotiating a sales contract that will maximize the benefits for the parties they represent

Short Answer essay questions (each worth up to 10 points)

1. State and describe the three elements necessary for a conflict to exist between two or more parties.

Answer:

1. Interdependent parties: Each party needs something that only the other party can satisfy. If one party does not need anything from another party, there is no reason to be in conflict with him or her.
2. Incompatible interests: The parties' wants, needs, values, and goals that represent the source of the disagreement between them. Each party perceives that his or her interests are incompatible with the other party's. Without this perception, the parties would have nothing about which to be in conflict.
3. Competition: Each party believes that his or her interests can only be met to the exclusion of the other party's interests. This is often referred to as a "fixed pie," meaning essentially "more for me means less for you."

2. Describe the role that perception plays in conflict and how parties can overcome perception problems.

Answer:

Conflict often occurs and continues because the parties perceive that their interests are incompatible. It is usually this perception that causes the parties to avoid conflict altogether, compete aggressively, or seek compromise solutions that leave them only partially satisfied. What is needed instead is some way to overcome the perceptions that the parties have about each other and their reasons for engaging in conflict to explore whether they, in fact, have interests that are compatible and can be reconciled. These perception problems can be overcome through open communication and a willingness to collaborate.

3. Briefly describe the characteristics of the "positional" and "interest-based" approaches to addressing conflict.

Answer:

Positional: In the positional approach the parties, to varying degrees, treat the conflict as a contest of wills. They enter a conflict discussion with clear ideas of what they want to achieve and hold firm to these positions. The positional approach does not take into consideration the underlying concerns, needs, or wants of the parties, which generally forecloses any examination on how the parties' positions might be reconciled. Rather, the parties lock into their positions. If resolution occurs, it is because the parties have weighed what they have to win against what they have to lose by not resolving the dispute rather than considering how each might achieve more by working together.

Interest-based: The interest-based approach takes into consideration the underlying needs, wants, values, and goals of the parties. In *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton discuss the limits of the positional model and make the case that any meaningful conflict resolution must take into consideration the relationship between the parties with the view of preserving it, and perhaps even improving it. They set forth clear principles on which a negotiation should be judged. In addition to preserving or improving the relationship, any agreement should meet the

legitimate interests of the parties, resolve conflicting interests fairly, be durable, and take the interests of others who may be affected by the agreement into account.³ Fisher, Ury, and Patton argue that the interest-based approach is more efficient than the traditional positional model because it eliminates the associated game playing, time, and costs.

Chapter 2: Preventing Conflict

TEST QUESTIONS

True or False questions (each worth 1 or 2 points)

- F 1. According to Maslow's *hierarchy of needs theory*, safety and security needs are the lowest, most basic needs that must be met before all other needs can be addressed.
- T 2. An example of a conflict trigger over values may occur when a supervisor expects an employee to follow her instructions implicitly, and the employee feels the need to ask lots of questions regarding the basis for such instructions.
- F 3. When you observe an employee begin to snap at another employee and make sarcastic remarks in response to the other employee's suggestions, this is most likely a *routine daily event* requiring you to monitor the situation but not to intervene.
- F 4. True conflict situations, or *deeper conflicts*, always require the intervention of an experienced mediator.
- T 5. Herzberg's *hygiene-motivation theory* postulates that employees will become more productive when conditions in the work environment enable them to find intrinsic value in their work.

Multiple Choice (worth 2 or 3 points each)

- d 1. The five levels of Maslow's *hierarchy of needs theory*, in order from lowest to highest, are:
- Psychological, safety and security, acceptance, esteem, and self-actualization
 - Physiological, safety and security, self-esteem, acceptance, and actualization
 - Safety and security, psychological, acceptance, esteem, and self-actualization
 - Physiological, safety and security, acceptance, esteem, and self-actualization
- a 2. A conflict trigger over information may occur when a manager:
- Has not been clear in communicating a directive to the team, causing team members to have differing understandings regarding task expectations
 - Does not understand why an employee has difficulty speaking up in a team meeting but is forthcoming with communicating her ideas when meeting one-on-one
 - Becomes uncomfortable with the political diatribe of an ardently conservative employee
 - Must inform the team of a new organizational structure for the division, which may result in a realignment of their roles
- a 3. A manager should not intervene in the following conflict:
- Two employees become animated as they share dramatically different viewpoints on how to resolve a workflow problem

- b. Two employees have been griping at one another for the past week, whereas previously they had worked well together
- c. An employee shoves another employee hard against a locker
- b. Two employees continue to argue with one another about a troublesome workflow problem, causing a distraction among other workers

Short Answer essay questions (each worth up to 10 points)

1. Relying on Maslow's and Herzberg's theories, describe the basic human needs that must be met in the workplace to minimize the potential for conflict.

Answer:

Herzberg refers to these basic human needs as *hygiene* or *maintenance* factors and states that these factors will not increase motivation among workers, but their absence will cause workers to become de-motivated. Essential hygiene factors in the workplace include fair and equitable policies and administration, supportive supervision, and good working conditions and interpersonal relationships. Money, status, and security are also hygiene factors to which the employer must attend.

These factors are similar to the *physiological*, *safety and security*, and *acceptance* needs in Maslow's *hierarchy of needs theory*.

2. Relying on Maslow's and Herzberg's theories, describe factors and conditions that must be fulfilled in order for an employee to be motivated.

Answer:

According to Herzberg's *hygiene-motivation theory*, true motivation comes from having meaningful work and from employees' ability to find intrinsic value in their work. No one can motivate an employee to become more productive, but there are motivators that an employer can provide that will foster increased motivation. These motivators include achievement, recognition for accomplishment, challenging work, increased responsibility, and growth and development.

The needs for *esteem* and *self-actualization* in Maslow's *hierarchy of needs theory* equate most closely to Herzberg's motivators.

3. State and describe the three stages of conflict intervention and the level of intervention required for each stage.

Answer:

1. *Routine Daily Events*—This is the most frequent type of conflict and is generally healthy and natural within an organization. A supervisor should monitor these situations in the event they escalate, but should otherwise not intervene.
2. *Evolving Conflicts*—These situations have escalated. Parties are not working collaboratively to resolve problems on their own, so the supervisor will likely need to intervene at some level to prevent the situation from escalating to true conflict. These situations present the best opportunity for the supervisor to become involved to keep them from getting out of hand.
3. *Deeper Conflicts*—These are true conflicts. Though less frequent overall in an organization, they are the most serious form of conflict and require immediate attention. The supervisor will need to decide whether he or she has the requisite level of skill and experience to address these situations or whether he or she will need to seek the assistance of an outside party, such as a qualified mediator or a human resources representative.

4. List the five “triggers from which conflict may evolve within an organization.

Answer:

1. Triggers over roles, goals, policies, and procedures
2. Triggers over information
3. Triggers over relationships
4. Triggers over values
5. Triggers over structures