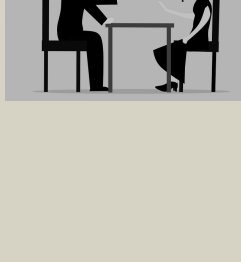


SUPERVISORY NEWSLETTER May 2023 | Issue 15


Would you be surprised to learn the majority of supervisors we've polled have said managing **CONFLICT** is their biggest challenge as a supervisor? If this also applies to you, know you are not alone. Conflict is part of the human experience and is extremely common in the workplace. One [study](#) suggested that up to 85% of employees deal with some level of conflict, and up to 29% of employees deal with conflict regularly. This suggests that our focus and efforts need to shift from trying to prevent workplace conflict, to being equipped with the right tools and skills to handle conflict effectively when it inevitably emerges.

If you Google the definition of conflict it'll likely be described as a dispute, a quarrel, a disagreement, a clash of interests, incompatibility, a lack of harmony, misaligned goals, etc. You'll notice that *many* of these definitions carry a negative connotation, and how we *feel* about conflict is exactly how we'll approach it and experience it. At its root, however, conflict is neither good or bad - it's simply a state of opposition resulting in friction. Ultimately, it's the emotions that are associated with each individual's perceptions and views, and their subsequent emotional behaviors, that determine whether or not conflict becomes beneficial or destructive.

Once we understand that, and our own conflict response defaults, we can begin to utilize conflict as an opportunity to enhance problem-solving and decision-making, increase productivity, and strengthen workplace relationships. Effective conflict management is a skill that may or may not come naturally to you. If it doesn't, well...we've got you covered! Read on to learn how you can become a conflict management pro.

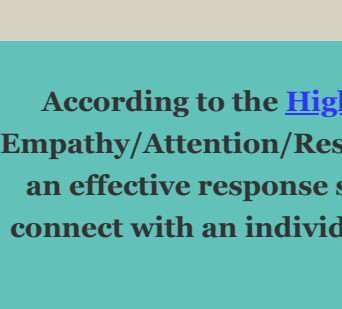
Until next month!

[HRS Employee Relations](#)

STARTER BITES

"You don't get harmony when everyone sings the same note."

- Doug Floyd

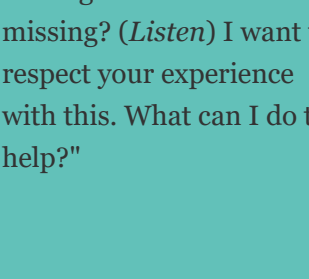


"Conflict is inevitable, but combat is optional."

- Max Lucado

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

- Viktor E. Frankl

FEATURE BITES


According to the [High Conflict Institute](#), EAR (Empathy/Attention/Respect) statements are part of an effective response strategy that can help you connect with an individual in a conflict situation.

- **Empathy:** The goal of empathy is to connect with others on an emotional level. Validating someone's feelings and demonstrating a desire to tackle the problem together can help defuse conflict. Note, this does not mean you have to agree with them.

EAR Sample Statement

"I can see this is really upsetting for you. Help me understand where you're coming from...what am I missing? (*Listen*) I want to respect your experience with this. What can I do to help?"

- **Attention:** When we focus our full attention on someone it demonstrates care. Being interested, and looking interested, are both vital to ensure this attention is received properly. Keep a relaxed body posture, lean in slightly, nod or acknowledge verbal statements to help others keep calm.

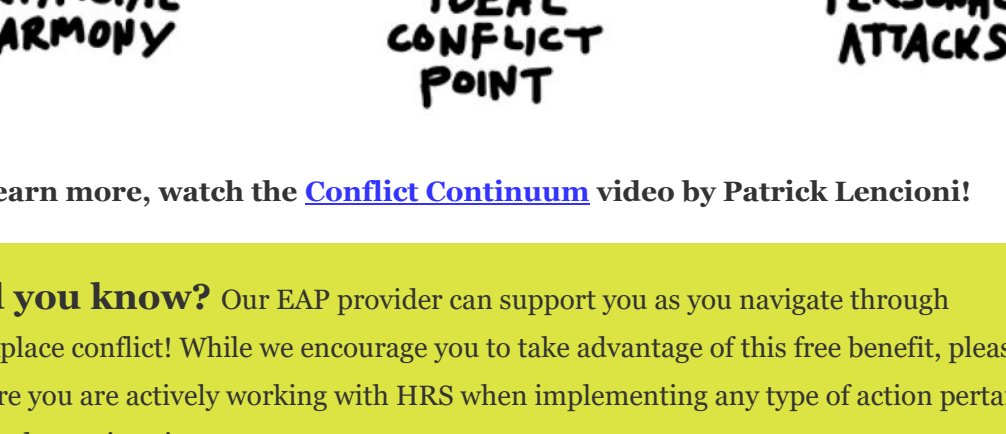
- **Respect:** People want to feel their needs are being considered and taken seriously when bringing up issues. In high-conflict situations, "...communicating with respect is often the key to moving forward to solve the problem."

[Click on the High Conflict Institute link above to learn more!](#)

Lencioni's Conflict Continuum

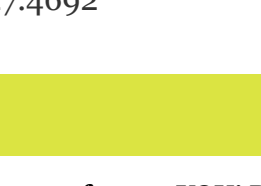
Patrick Lencioni, author of *The Advantage* and *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, describes the continuum below as a guide to help teams navigate conflict. On one end of the spectrum is what he describes as artificial harmony, which basically translates to conflict avoidance. In this state, no one feels comfortable disagreeing or speaking up in group settings, issues are swept under the rug, decision-making and change is ruled by fear, and toxic positivity abounds. On the opposite end of the spectrum lies destructive conflict, such as personal attacks and unhelpful dialogue. In this state, team members regularly undermine one another, disagreements about petty issues arise, problems become personal attacks, and grudges and bitterness become the norm. Neither extreme is healthy! Preferably, teams should strive for a point somewhere between those two extremes. The "ideal conflict point" is one where differences are valued, opposing views are encouraged, dialogue and debate and welcome, and where professional respect is demonstrated even when people may not see eye to eye.

Where does your team lie on this continuum?



To learn more, watch the [Conflict Continuum](#) video by Patrick Lencioni!

Did you know? Our EAP provider can support you as you navigate through workplace conflict! While we encourage you to take advantage of this free benefit, please ensure you are actively working with HRS when implementing any type of action pertaining to employee situations.



Call for consultation:
800.327.4692

Management Consultation

Assistance includes, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Responding to workplace conflict.
- ✓ Addressing employee performance concerns.
- ✓ Managing difficult employee situations.

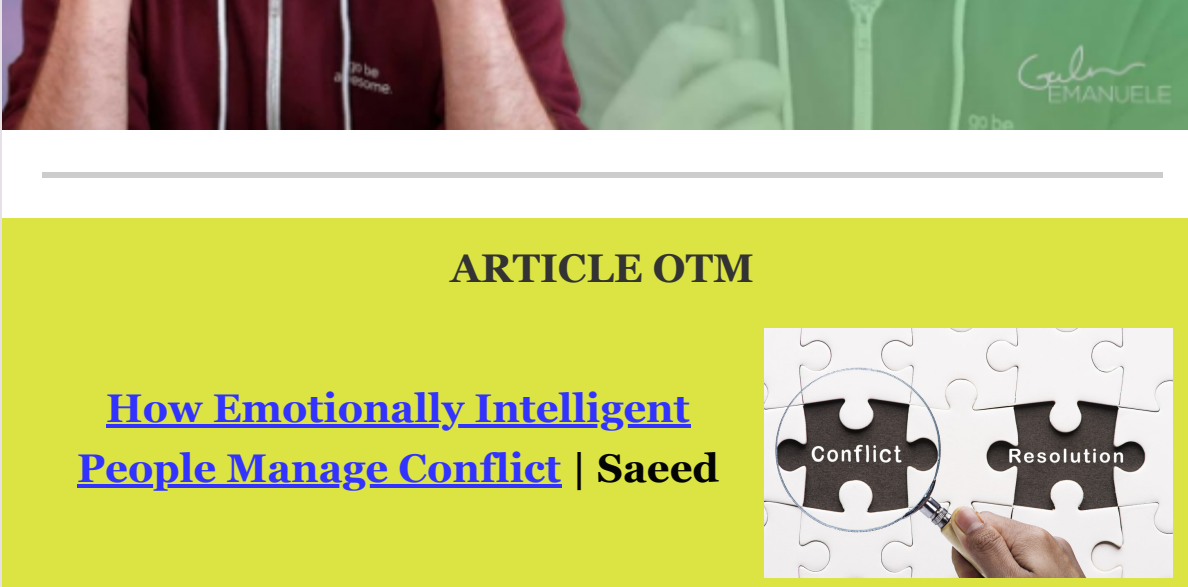
We want to feature YOU! Do you have any supervisory tips/tricks you'd like to share? Burning questions about supervision you'd like to ask? Are you a new UNI supervisor? Do you have a cool or unique workspace? Reach out to be featured in our upcoming issues.

SMALL BITES

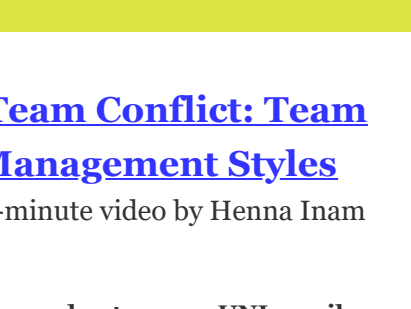
The Do's and Don'ts of Workplace Conflict | Galen Emanuele



How to Resolve Conflict Between Two Co-Workers | Galen Emanuele


ARTICLE OTM

[How Emotionally Intelligent People Manage Conflict](#) | Saeed


LinkedIn Learning

[Managing Team Conflict: Team Conflict Management Styles](#)

WATCH this 3.5-minute video by Henna Inam

To access this video, click on the purple button above and enter your UNI email address when prompted. If your personal email address populates, please ensure you click on the "change" link first to update your email address. Once entered, click on "Continue to the University of Northern Iowa LinkedIn Learning account" to access content.

[Click on the graphic above to learn more at peregrineglobal.com!](#)

BIG BITE

Book Club

The Optimistic Workplace: Creating an Environment That Energizes Everyone by Shawn Murphy.

[UNI Rod Library Link](#)

Chapter IV, "The Downside of Optimism: Missteps and Excess," explains that while optimistic workplaces can be energizing, room should be made for some healthy skepticism. The first misstep described is the failure to acknowledge that creating this environment is our personal responsibility. As leaders, we have the most influence to direct change for those reporting to us. The second misstep is failing to create allies that can support and strengthen our plans. The third misstep is assuming how every team member feels about the climate and failing to encourage open and honest discussions. The fourth misstep is not communicating the importance each team member's role/position has on the organization. Contrary to popular belief, most employees aren't able to see how their contributions align with the organization's bigger picture. The fifth misstep is failing to create team goals and only focusing on individual achievements. An excess of optimism can create unbalanced approaches and send mixed signals, it can lead team members to lose sight of the current realities facing the organization, and can unintentionally send a message that dissonance is not allowed. Additionally, this can lead to inflexibility and "...hamper your team's ability to do great work." (p. 72)

Chapter IV in Tweets:

- Employees cannot take ownership of their results until they know the importance of their work.
- No one person is more important than the team.
- Optimism bias keeps you from seeing what you don't want to see.
- Inflexibility occurs when you become too comfortable with the way things are accomplished.

Favorite Quotes:

"If you fall prey to the temptation to constantly search for something positive to grab on to in hopes of eliminating, hiding, or concealing negative emotions, you will lose in the game of life." - Todd Kashdan and Robert Biswas-Diener, *The Upside of Your Dark Side*

"While discord is uncomfortable, its presence combined with harmony helps create an honest understanding of the messy realities inherent in our relationships." (p. 67)

If you would like to read along and share any thoughts or reactions to "Chapter 5: Values-Based Leadership" be sure to contact us!

LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

[Supervisor Development Series: FMLA and ADA Supervisor Responsibilities](#)

This training is available on-demand via Blackboard. Please click on the linked course name above to access this session.

This session provides supervisors with high-level information about how to identify a potential leave or accommodation request from an employee, and clarifies a supervisor's role in complying with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This training takes approximately 45-minutes and will save your progress if you are unable to finish in one sitting.

[Supervisor Development Series: FLSA/Time-Reporting](#)

While no sessions are currently being scheduled, we highly encourage you to visit our FLSA resources webpage and review the information at <https://hrs.uni.edu/supervisors/flsa>. Additionally, you may review OBOs time reporting resources at <https://obo.uni.edu/payroll/time-reporting>.

COMING SOON

[Supervisor Development Series: Fundamentals of Supervision](#)

Save the Dates! Friday, October 6, 2023 & Wednesday, April 3, 2024
Registration will open up one month prior to session dates.

[Supervisor Development Series: Addressing Performance Deviations](#)

[Supervisor Development Series: Managing Conflict Effectively](#)

[Supervisor Development Series: The Power of Gratitude and Recognition](#)

HRS is excited to announce we will be partnering with our Employee Assistance Program to host three virtual workshops for supervisors this upcoming academic year. All sessions will take place via Zoom from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Registration for each of these events will be shared one month prior to each session date.

Save the Dates!

November 8, 2023
Behavioral Health: What Leaders Need to Know

January 30, 2024
Communicating in Challenging Situations

April 25, 2024
Leading With Your Best Self

027 Gilchrist
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

hrs-performance@uni.edu

(319) 273-6219

Our Vision

All employees will be positively engaged in achieving their greatest potential while contributing to the success of the university.

Our Mission

Human Resource Services fosters an environment of integrity and collaboration through innovative solutions and communications contributing to the successful recruitment, development, and retention of university employees.