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where psychology meets the law for conflict resolution

Workplace Conflict Resolution for HR and Managers

1) Identify conflict as soon as possible.

- Generally speaking, the earlier you attempt to resolve workplace conflict, the more efficient and effective the resolution process. This saves you time, money and workplace relationships.

2) Decide who you need to speak to.

- Are there only two individuals involved? Or are the issues affecting the whole team?

3) Plan how to approach the individuals involved.

- What will you do to ensure they are comfortable giving you their view of the issues? Do you need to give them advanced warning? When is the most appropriate time to approach them? Do you need to offer them the opportunity to bring a support person?

5) Be conscious of the language you use when discussing the issues.

- People involved in conflict are more sensitive to mixed or ambiguous messages. How will you ensure they don't feel that you are taking sides?

6) Try to maintain an open mind when listening to both views.

- It is easy to be influenced by the first person you speak to, or the most senior person. This can lead us to stop listening. When we stop listening we limit our ability to assist with resolve the issues.

7) Refrain from making judgements about who is wrong and who is right.

- Perception is reality. Different perceptions does not equate to deceit. Two people may have interpreted the same events totally differently based on their previous experiences, and worldviews. It is not necessary to know everything that happened to resolve the conflict.

8) Maintain emotional composure when speaking to those involved.

- Your emotions impact on others, especially if you are in a more powerful position than them. Displaying emotions may increase the anxiety levels of those involved.

9) If you think you can help resolve the issues plan your dispute resolution process:

- Beware of conflicts of interest. Will you be able to maintain confidentiality if you hear something in a mediation that impacts upon your role as manager / HR practitioner?

10) If you don't think you can assist with resolving the issues seek the assistance of a professional as soon as possible.



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