

## **Unit 37: Manage Conflict within a Team**

**Unit reference number: K/506/1927**

**QCF level: 3**

**Credit value: 5**

**Guided learning hours: 25**

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### **Unit summary**

This unit focuses on the principles of conflict management and looks at how conflict can be reduced and dealt with in a team setting.

In this unit you will gain an understanding of the principles of conflict management. Teams come in many forms and exist for many purposes and, if properly managed, can contribute to improved organisational performance. Unfortunately, not all teams succeed as conflict can appear in many situations and this is especially true of the team situation.

You will gain an understanding of how this potential for conflict can be reduced. Conflict threatens group goals in organisations and so it is therefore of utmost importance that you can deal with and resolve conflict. You will learn how to assess the seriousness of conflict and its potential impact knowing that unresolved conflict costs organisations millions of pounds every year and come to a conclusion that allows you to effectively deal with conflict.

## Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

To pass this unit, the learner needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria outline the requirements the learner is expected to meet to achieve the unit.

| Learning outcomes   | Assessment criteria  |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Understand the principles of conflict management</p>           | <p>1.1 Evaluate the suitability of different methods of conflict management in different situations</p> <p>1.2 Describe the personal skills needed to deal with conflict between other people</p> <p>1.3 Analyse the potential consequences of unresolved conflict within a team</p> <p>1.4 Explain the role of external arbitration and conciliation in conflict resolution</p>   |
| <p>2 Be able to reduce the potential for conflict within a team</p> | <p>2.1 Communicate to team members their roles, responsibilities, objectives and expected standards of behaviour</p> <p>2.2 Explain to team members the constraints under which other colleagues work</p> <p>2.3 Review systems, processes, situations and structures that are likely to give rise to conflict in line with organisational procedures</p> <p>2.4 Take action to minimise the potential for conflict within the limits of their own authority</p> <p>2.5 Explain how team members' personalities and cultural backgrounds may give rise to conflict</p> |

| Learning outcomes                                    | Assessment criteria   |
|--|---|
| <p>3 Be able to deal with conflict within a team</p> | <p>3.1 Assess the seriousness of conflict and its potential impact</p> <p>3.2 Treat everyone involved with impartiality and sensitivity</p> <p>3.3 Decide a course of action that offers optimum benefits</p> <p>3.4 Explain the importance of engaging team members' support for the agreed actions</p> <p>3.5 Communicate the actions to be taken to those who may be affected by it</p> <p>3.6 Adhere to organisational policies and procedures, legal and ethical requirements when dealing with conflict within a team</p> |

## Unit amplification

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### **AC1.1: Evaluate the suitability of different methods of conflict management in different situations**

- *Conflict*: definition; conflict situations, e.g. substantive, affective, procedural
- *Methods of conflict management*: e.g. prevention, non-intervention, participative resolution, active resolution
- *Suitability based on context*: e.g. serious conflict, manageable conflict, trivial conflict

### **AC1.2: Describe the personal skills needed to deal with conflict between other people**

- *Personal skills*: e.g. professionalism, problem solving, effective communication, mediation, giving feedback

### **AC1.3: Analyse the potential consequences of unresolved conflict within a team**

- *Potential consequences*: e.g. impact on morale, decreased productivity, stress and anxiety of staff, increase in absenteeism, increase in grievances, increased employee turnover resulting in increase of recruitment and training costs, damaged organisation reputation

### **AC1.4: Explain the role of external arbitration and conciliation in conflict resolution**

- *Conciliation*: purpose, e.g. resolution of workplace disputes after mediation; principles, e.g. uses an independent impartial third party, parties involved retain power to decide on the outcome, parties must volunteer to use the process
- *Role of conciliation*: e.g. avoid permanent breakdown in working relationship, improve communications, provide technical assistance, interpret and discuss the issues in dispute, explore potential solutions
- *Arbitration*: purpose, e.g. resolution of collective disputes; principles, e.g. voluntary process, decision-making power is given to arbitrator
- *Role of arbitration*: e.g. deals with cases where conciliation has not succeeded, private alternative to attending a public court of law, imposes an independent and impartial decision that is binding on both sides
- *External arbitrators and conciliators*: independent and impartial third parties; private/commercial services; ACAS

## Information for tutors

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### Suggested resources

#### Books

Muller-Camen M, Croucher R and Leigh S – *Human Resource Management: A Case Study Approach* (CIPD, 2008) ISBN 9781843981657

#### Websites

[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) – Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS): provides free advice on many workplace related issues. A recommended publication is Advisory booklet – Managing conflict at work

[www.belbin.com](http://www.belbin.com) – information from Belbin Associates on Belbin’s team roles

[www.cipd.co.uk](http://www.cipd.co.uk) – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD): has a range of guidance on a range of HR, learning and development and employment law issues. A recommended publication is Guide booklet: Managing conflict at work

[www.managers.org.uk](http://www.managers.org.uk) – Chartered Institute of Management: provides practical advice on management issues with a range of online resources on management topics. Membership is required to access the materials

#### Other

*Management Today*, Haymarket Media Group Ltd – this journal has many articles on management topics

*The Economist*, The Economist Newspaper Ltd – this journal has a business section and articles that included specialist features and articles on management topics

### Assessment

To pass this unit the evidence that the learner presents for assessment must demonstrate that they have met the required standard specified in the learning outcomes and assessment criteria and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy.

To ensure that the assessment tasks and activities enable learners to produce valid, sufficient, authentic and appropriate evidence that meet the assessment criteria, centres should apply the *Unit assessment guidance* provided and the requirements of the Assessment Strategy given below.

Wherever possible, centres should adopt a holistic approach to assessing the units in the qualification. This gives the assessment process greater rigour and minimises repetition, time and the burden of assessment on all parties involved in the process.

#### Unit assessment requirements

Simulation is allowed for this unit and so the unit may be assessed either under real workplace conditions or in a Realistic Work Environment (RWE). Please refer to the Skills CFA Assessment Strategy for Business Administration, Customer Service and Management and Leadership in *Annexe A*, for further guidance on the use of simulation and RWE.

## Unit assessment guidance

This guidance supports assessors in making decisions about how best to assess each unit and the evidence needed to meet the assessment requirements of the unit. Centres can adapt the guidance for learners and the particular assessment context, as appropriate.

While simulation is allowed for this unit, evidence from the learner's performance in the workplace should be used as far as possible. As it is expected that the learner should act to minimise the potential for conflict in their teams as an on-going part of their management role, the evidence for learning outcome 2 should come from their performance in the workplace. Evidence to demonstrate achievement is most likely to come from a combination of examination of the learner's work products, witness testimony and professional discussion or reflective account. Learner work products could include relevant communications to team members and other colleagues (e.g. emails), minutes of team meetings where related issues were discussed, review reports on related systems, processes, situations or procedures and records detailing the actions taken to minimise conflict situations. The work products should be reviewed by the assessor and used to support the professional discussion to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance as well as the achievement of AC2.5. Within the professional discussion, the learner could explain how they went about identifying and reviewing the systems, processes, situations or procedures that could potentially cause conflict, the outcomes of the review and how these relate to the actions taken to minimise the potential for conflict (AC2.3 and AC2.4). Alternatively, a reflective account could be used in a similar manner to assess the underpinning knowledge and understanding. Witness testimony from colleagues and line manager should also be used to confirm that the learner has consistently met the requirements over a period.

For learning outcome 3, evidence to confirm competence can either come from the learner's performance in the workplace, where the work context allows this, or from simulation. Where simulation is used, it must be a structured exercise involving a specific task that reproduces real-life situations and that will allow the learner to meet the requirements of AC 3.1, AC3.2, AC3.3, AC3.4, AC3.5 and AC3.6. Assessors must be confident that the simulation replicates the workplace to such an extent that the learner will be able to fully transfer their occupational competence to the workplace and real situations. The simulation exercise should be agreed with the learner beforehand. Evidence to demonstrate achievement is most likely to come from a combination of examination of the learner's work products and professional discussion or reflective account. Work products could include communications to relevant team members, anonymised records of meetings and other formal records of the conflict resolution process. Where the evidence is from performance in the workplace, all efforts must be made to maintain confidentiality of the individuals involved. Professional discussion should be used to meet the requirements of AC3.4 and to evidence the knowledge and understanding underpinning the learner's performance. The professional discussion or reflective account could focus on the process used to assess the seriousness and potential impact of the conflicts and how the outcome of this affected the course of action taken to resolve the conflict (AC3.1 and AC3.3). Witness testimony may also be used to confirm competence, as appropriate.

Due to the cognitive demand of the assessment criteria in learning outcome 1, the evidence to confirm the achievement would best come from a reflective account. If reflective accounts are used for learning outcomes 2 and 3, then it would be best to integrate the assessment of this learning outcome, therefore providing the opportunity for the learner to link and apply their knowledge to the workplace activities. For example, the learner could comment on the method(s) of conflict management that they used, explaining their suitability relevant to the context and discussing the other methods of conflict resolution and the different situations in which they could use them in the future (AC1.1). The learner's reflective account to meet the requirements for AC1.1, AC1.2, AC1.3 and AC1.4 must be at a sufficient depth and breadth to meet the level of demand of the operative command verbs.

Evidence of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can also be used within the unit to confirm competence. Wherever possible, the learning outcomes in this unit should be assessed holistically.