

CORP CATCH UP

JULY 2015

Did you know...CORP can facilitate Workplace Conflict Assessments?

Increasingly Organisations are recognising human and financial costs of unresolved conflict. Retention of employees and customers, productivity, reputation and profitability are all at risk if there is no effective, integrated system for the prevention, management and resolution of workplace conflict.

CORP can work with your Organisation to develop a flexible customised, comprehensive range of options to minimise the hidden costs of preventable conflict, strengthen staff competencies in resolving conflict and reduce and effectively manage organisational conflict.

CORP Conflict Management empowers employees to engage constructively to resolve conflict.

What is Workplace Conflict Assessment?

Typically a workplace conflict assessment involves teams, work units and larger groups where there are a range of issues. Processes may include:

- Briefings and meetings to agree process
- Individual interviews
- Mediation(s) as required
- Facilitated group discussion
- Team development e.g. Charter of Agreed Behaviours
- Individual Coaching and counselling referrals
- Can involve follow up and on-going support
- Education sessions e.g. Prevention of Bullying and Harassment



Workplace conflict assessment interviews are usually conducted to determine the source of the problem within the workplace. Interviews can be conducted via teleconferencing or face to face. Individual interviews can take up to 1.5 hours and the information sourced is used in the development of a report.

The conflict assessment report is collated at the conclusion of the interview process and outlines main issues of concern felt by the parties involved, and recommendations. The report is provided to the organisation and can be used to assist in moving the workplace towards a conflict-free environment.



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Fears of Engaging in Conflict.....

Common Fears

In my conflict management coaching practice, clients often share a range of fears about their experience of conflict, and about participating in an ADR process or managing their situations on their own with coaching. Loss is one of the fears. This may have to do with the fear of losing face, the relationship, control, and what they want as an outcome. Other common fears are of reprisal, and of letting themselves and others down.

It is usual for clients to also fear the possible emotional repercussions. These are often related to previous experiences with conflict, not only what they are feeling about their current situation. That is, some people have histories of being unable to regulate their emotions, or have been continually frustrated with their inability to express themselves when upset. Or, in the past (and possibly in their present situation) they have been overwhelmed by the other person's reactions to them. Clients in these circumstances may be inclined to shut down, give in, accommodate, and try to avoid conflict altogether.

On the other hand, some people are habitually combative and confrontational. For these clients there may be fears about repeating such reactions in the current situation, and facing negative consequences that have typically followed previous interactions.

Apprehensions of the nature described above - and more - are often combined with self-limiting beliefs about the general ability to engage in conflict effectively. These and a host of contextual factors contribute to the 'fear factor' for some of our clients, and as a result their openness and willingness to participate in processes meant to assist them are compromised before they begin.

Fears about Participating in Coaching, Mediation, and Other ADR Processes

Despite complex histories with conflict, or perhaps because of them, it is increasingly common, I find, for clients to seek one-on-one coaching with the goal of gaining proficiency to handle conflict more effectively. Objectives may be to learn ways of being in the heat of the moment - to be able to prevent conflict from escalating unnecessarily. Other goals may be to strengthen their skills to engage in conflict independently, confidently, and competently when it arises. Some clients seek coaching to be well prepared for mediation or other process, or for a challenging conversation or meeting expected to be contentious. Other coaching clients may want to improve their resilience and manage lingering reactions they experience in the aftermath of disputes, whether or not they have been resolved.

Fears that arise for coaching clients - even with well-intentioned goals to improve their conflict competence in these ways - are about failing and the ramifications if they do not succeed. Some clients also fear change and how to sustain new and different ways of relating, communicating, and interacting. When it comes to mediation parties, starting point fears for many are also about whether the outcome will be successful and durable. Daunted by fears about interfacing with the person (or persons) about whom they have negative emotions may add to their concerns. Again, historical experiences with conflict and each other engender fears about participating effectively in the mediation forum.

In addition to these fears, it is natural for people to be concerned about what they do not understand. For example, sometimes verbal descriptions we provide about the process are given at times our clients are least able to take in information. For others, written descriptions are often general and do not necessarily cover their concerns. In either case, language and literacy issues may pose challenges. As a consequence, there are clients who do not fully comprehend what to expect, what their role is, what to say or do, and how they are to interact in the process. Pride, fear of sounding ignorant, and other reasons may mean some people are reticent to say so and come to the process with uncertainties and insecurities that impede their comfort and confidence.

Another fear factor is about us. We (the practitioners) are an unknown entity. Who we are, what we do, and how we do it are questions that may concern some clients. Although we make our best efforts and strongly believe in our skills and the processes we conduct, our clients may not feel trust or a connection with us. They may be reluctant to disclose this out of deference, embarrassment, or other reasons. Some also feel pressure to participate or view us as an agent for their organizations (when we provide our service in workplaces).

Certainly not all people experience fears of the nature described here. However, I do not think our clients, or we for that matter, are always conscious that fears of some sort exist. Nor are we aware of how their apprehensions impact them and their participation in the processes we facilitate.

Courage

Reflecting further on this topic of fears led me to consider the concept of courage. I recently asked members of a peer group about their own experiences about being in conflict – not in their role as practitioners. My specific inquiry was, “When you are in conflict under what circumstances do you find you need courage?” What follow are some of the most common sentiments in response to this question. Some are based on the practitioners’ observations of and discussions with coaching or mediation clients. Others are from personal experiences. I have framed them as ‘we’ statements since we shared many.

It takes courage to listen to and observe another person’s pain directed at and about us. It takes courage to regulate our emotions. It requires courage to take responsibility for our own contribution to the discord. We want courage to take risks and express our perspectives, needs, and interests despite concerns about the person’s reactions. We also want courage to hear and acknowledge the other person’s needs, interests, and hopes. It requires courage to accept disappointment when our expectations about the relationship and the outcome are not realized. It takes courage to listen with curiosity and accept differences of views. We need courage to not make conflict about right and wrong, or win and lose. It takes courage to initiate a discussion with the other person with whom we are in conflict. It takes courage to be on the receiving end of a conflict conversation that the other person initiates.

We want courage to face the perceived challenges and stretch outside of our comfort zone by participating in a forum in which we face the other person. It takes courage to deconstruct our conflicts and disputes – to understand them and ourselves. It takes courage to face and accept where the other person is coming from. We need courage to check out assumptions and let them go if we realize they are inaccurate. It requires courage to change or give up strongly-held positions.

It requires courage to empathize, to humble ourselves, and to trust ourselves, the other person, and the process we engage in. We want courage to admit mistakes and accept blame. It takes courage to speak our truths. It takes courage to be open to learning and to try different ways of being in conflict. We need courage to swallow our pride and set our egos aside. It takes courage to give the other person the benefit of the doubt, to apologize, to forgive, and to move forward. It takes courage to walk away. We want courage to speak up and face situations head on knowing things may not mend – but rather end – the relationship. We need courage to be vulnerable.

In Summary

Unlike the contestants on the now defunct show “Fear Factor”, anxieties may impede the willingness and ability of our clients to fearlessly engage in conflict and processes designed to help them. It is therefore helpful for those who feel vulnerable and apprehensive to have the opportunity to identify, discuss, and overcome as much as possible what is challenging for them. Incorporating techniques that assist people move from reactive to reflective ways of thinking and feeling facilitates this.

More happens too when we help prepare clients to be in conflict. Trust and connection that builds when practitioners devote time and energy to our clients help fortify their skills and confidence which has a direct impact on their comfort with the process. Our openness, understanding, and support further serve to increase our clients’ ability to participate effectively in conflict, whether they do so independently - with coaching - or as a party in mediation or other forum. Together with a positive, future-focused, and compassionate approach practitioners help to normalize the experience of being in conflict and ultimately strengthen our clients’ courage to find their way through conflict in ways they may not have imagined.

<http://www.mediate.com/articles/NobleC12.cfm>

What Conflict Services does CORP offer?

- **Mediation**
- **Workplace Conflict Assessment**
- **Group Facilitated Discussion**
- **Charter of Agreed Behaviours**
- **Conflict Coaching**
- **Growing from Conflict-It’s not all about you! *CORP Talk!***
- **Mediation and Facilitation Skills for Managers– Full Day Public Workshop**



Public Workshop Calendar Darwin and Alice Springs July—December 2015



Date	Workshop	Duration
Weds 8 th July	Customer Service – The Competitive Edge	Half Day
Thur 23 rd July	Resiliency and the Art of Bouncing Back	Half Day
Thur 30 th July	Working with Difference - Blue eyes Vs Brown eyes- CORP Talk!	One Hour
Weds 5 th Aug	Getting your Message Across: Key Communication Skills	Full Day
Thurs 13 th Aug	5 Easy steps to Build a Team - Helping Managers address Team Building needs CORP Talk!	One Hour
Wed 19 th Aug	Get to the Point – Communication for Managers	Full Day
Weds 26 th Aug	Family and Domestic Violence	One Day
Wed 2 nd Sept	Emotional Intelligence –Part 1	Half Day
Weds 9 th Sept	The Neuroscience of Leadership CORP Talk!	One Hour
Wed 16 th Sept	Mindfulness and Managing Stress 1 Day Retreat – Rydges Resort	Full Day
Wed 30 th Sept	Mediation and Facilitation Skills for Management	Full Day
Wed 7 th Oct	Discover 7 strategies for Pain free Change- CORP Talk!	One Hour
Fri 16 th Oct	Difference and Diversity- working in a mixed team effectively	Half Day
Wed 21 st Oct	Appropriate Workplace Behaviours- Creating a Safe Workplace for all.	Half Day
Thur 29 th Oct	Busting Stress through Mindfulness– CORP Talk!	One Hour
Wed 4 th Nov	Emotional Intelligence –Part 2	Half Day
Thur 12 th Nov	Critical Incident and Trauma Response for Managers	Half Day
Thur 19 th Nov	Growing from Conflict- It's not all about you! - CORP Talk!	One Hour
Wed 25 th Nov	The Neuroscience of Leadership	Half Day
Tues 1 st Dec	Let's get you meditating –Quick tips for longer life, less stress and greater happiness - CORP Talk!	One Hour
Wed 2 nd Dec	Getting your Message Across: Key Communication Skills	Full Day

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Full Day Workshops
8:30am – 4:00pm
(1 day) Lunch provided
\$265– Darwin
\$285- Alice Springs

Half Day Workshops
8:30am – 12:00pm
\$140– Darwin
\$140 – Alice Springs

CORP Talks !
\$39 –Darwin
\$45—Alice Springs

Locations:

Level 2 Highway
Arcade, 47 Stuart
Highway, Stuart
Park

Jock Nelson Building
10/16 Hartley Street

Public Workshop Calendar

Katherine Jan –Nov 2015



Date	Workshop	Duration
Thurs 26 th Feb	Resilience and The Art of Bouncing Back	Half Day
Weds 11 th March	The Neuroscience of Leadership. CORP Talk Free	One Hour
Thurs 26 th March	Getting your Message Across: Key Communication Skills	Full Day
Weds 29 th April	Dealing with Dysfunctional People in the Workplace	Half Day
Thurs 28 th May	Mindfulness and Managing Stress	Half Day
Weds 24 th June	Appropriate Workplace Behaviours (Staff)	Half Day
Thurs 30 th July	Work Life Balance	Full Day
Thurs 27 th August	Customer Service	Half Day
Tues 29 th Sept	Mediation and Conflict Skills for Managers	Full Day
Thurs 29 th Oct	Critical Incident and Trauma Response for Managers	Half Day
Weds 25 th Nov	Mindfulness and Managing Stress	Half Day

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Full Day Workshops

8:30am – 4:00pm

\$285 (1 day) Lunch provided

Half Day Workshops

8:30am – 12:00pm

\$175

Location: Katherine Regional Training Centre,
19 Second Street,
Katherine

All Public Workshops require a minimum of 6 participants in order to be confirmed. CORP has a 72 hour cancellation policy. Please contact us as soon as possible if you are unable to attend a workshop you are enrolled in, or charges may apply.

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