

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict occurs at various levels within the individuals, between the individuals in a group and between the groups.

NATURE OF CONFLICT:

- Conflict occurs when individuals are not able to choose among the available alternative course of action.
- Conflict between two individuals implies that they have conflicting perceptions, values and goals.
- Conflict is a dynamic process as it indicates series of events. Each conflict is made up of a series of interlocking conflict episodes.

SOURCES OF CONFLICT:

- Competition for limited resources.
- Diversity of goals.
- Task interdependence.
- Differences in values and perception.
- Organizational ambiguities.
- Introduction to change.
- Nature of communication.
- Personality of an individual

DIFFERENT VIEWS OF CONFLICT:

Traditional View of Conflict:

Traditionally, conflict in organizations has been viewed very negatively. It has been considered dysfunctional primarily because of the adverse effects it could have on organizational performance and productivity. The classical writers believed that conflict is ***inherently bad and so it must be curbed.***

Behavioral View of Conflict:

This school of thought was dominant during the 40's and mid 70's. The behaviorists argued that conflict is logical and inevitable outcome in any organization and considered it as harmful- something to be resolved once it arose. Hence the manager's role in resolving conflict to restore understanding, trust and openness between people.

Interactionist View of Conflict – Modern View

This view is based on the belief that conflict is not only positive force in a group but is also necessary for a group to perform effectively. However they maintained that conflict must be regulated so that it does not get out control producing dysfunctional consequences.

Inference could be that conflict can be both positive and negative impact on individuals, groups and organizations.

As a result of inter group conflict certain changes occur within groups and between groups.

Changes within Groups:

- Group cohesiveness increases.
- Group becomes more task-oriented.
- Leadership becomes directive (authoritarian)
- Organizational structure becomes rigid.
- Group unity is stressed.

Changes between Groups due to prolonged conflict:

- Groups become antagonistic towards each other.
- Perceptions are distorted.
- Communication ceases to exist.
- Groups apply double standards.

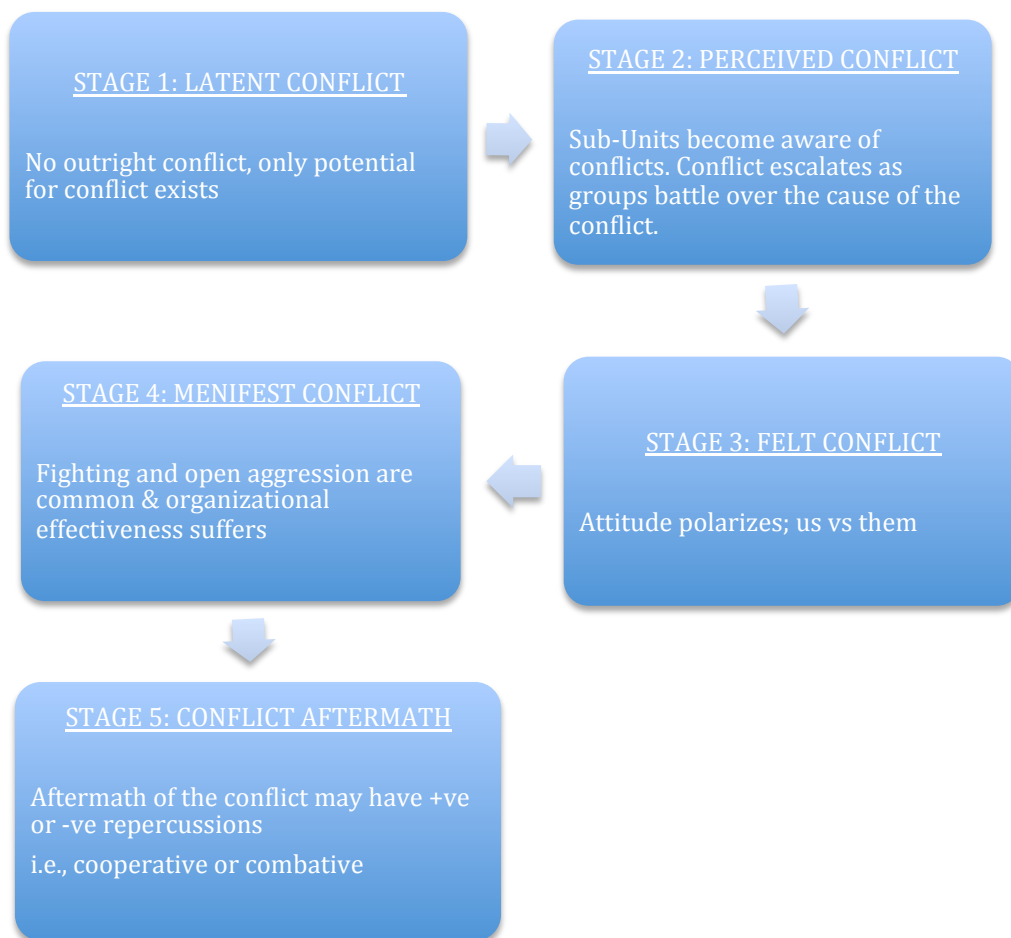
Balanced View of Conflict:

Looking into the effects of Conflict we can take balanced view to conclude that conflict is inherently neither good nor bad but has a potential to improve or impair the organization's performance through its consequences.

Conflicts that result in increased organizational performance and help organization to attain its goals is termed as **functional conflict**. On the other hand conflict that hinders organization's growth and prevents its from achieving its goals can be termed as **dysfunctional conflict**.

PONDY'S MODEL OF ORGANISATIONAL CONFLICT

Louis R. Pondy has given a model, which provides many clues about how to control and manage conflict in an organization. Pondy views conflict as a process that consists of five sequential episodes or stages. No matter how or why conflict arises managers can use Pondy's model to interpret and analyze a conflicting situation and take action to resolve it.



CONFLICT RESOLUTION STRATEGIES:

1. Avoidance strategies

- Ignore the conflict
- Physical separation

2. Diffusion strategies

- Smoothing
- Compromise
- Identifying the common enemy

3. Power intervention strategies

- Regulation
- Political maneuvering

4. Resolution Strategies

- Intergroup interactions
- Superordinate goals
- Problem Solving
- Structural Changes