

Chapter 3

Conflict

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- Conflict may be real or imagined.
- Incompatibility is necessary for conflict to exist.
- Incompatibility may be real or imagined.
- Interdependence is necessary for conflict to exist.
- Interdependence may be real or imagined.

CONFLICT IS EVERYWHERE

Conflict Approach

- One's approach may be positive or negative.
- One's approach affects perceptions, strategy, and results.

Schools of Thought

- Traditional view: Conflict should be avoided; because it is bad.
- Human relations view: Conflict is natural; and, it is sometimes good and sometimes bad.
- Interactionist view: Conflict is inevitable; and, it is necessary for healthy development.

- Conflict serves a communication function.
- Conflict may aid in consensus and integration.
- Conflict may create disintegration and destruction.

Chaos and Complexity Theory

- Systems—dyads, triads, groups, organizations—maintain an invisible order.
- Systems sustain themselves—optimal or not.
- System intervention can create desired level or order.
- System intervention can create positive conflict and results.

Systems Theory

- The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- The systems contains subsystems.
- The system and its subsystems dynamically interact with each other and with the external environment.
- Systems theory is the study of parts, elements, relationships, and processes.

Systems Thinking

- Look for parts, roles, and relationships.
- Analyze processes.
- Examine how the system sustains itself.
- Diagnose system conflict as constructive or not.
- Use sociograms or other depictions.

Conflict Strategies

- Manage
 - Use
 - Resolve

Through Negotiation

- Managing conflict is using it for positive, constructive outcomes.
- Resolving conflict is getting rid of it.
- Avoiding conflict is doing nothing—at the moment.

- Avoiding conflict may be managing it!
 - If the conflict is constructive, letting it function may be a sound strategy.
 - If the time for intervention is wrong, temporarily avoiding may be a sound strategy.

Three Basic Choices

- Try to change the other person.
- Try to change the situation.
- Change yourself.