

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

THE RED ELEPHANT FOUNDATION

meaning of conflict



A conflict occurs when two or more people, groups, units or divisions cannot agree on something.

Conflicts take place from time to time, and it is inevitable. Sometimes, we may disagree on certain things, or, sometimes, we may have misunderstandings that may lead to a difference of opinions.

why does conflict occur?



We experience conflicts from time to time. It happens at all levels - from the interpersonal, to the international levels.

Conflict happens because it is impossible for all of us to agree all the time, or to meet minds on everything.

Sometimes, it might be a result of two people wanting the same thing and there not being enough for both.

Sometimes, it might be a result of an action one took that impacts the other in a harmful manner.

When these kinds of situations happen, there is no meeting of minds - or, no agreement.

why is conflict inevitable?



Conflicts are inevitable, because we are inherently different people, with different likes, preferences, choices and approaches, thoughts and beliefs, faiths and ideologies. While we can all coexist, there is always room for some form of friction - and when friction is not managed, it can become disruptive and difficult to handle.

On the positive side, conflicts help us grow, to evolve and to become better versions of ourselves, to build stronger teams and to be cohesive. When conflict is managed well, it is also a means to help us balance power.

why is conflict inevitable?



We must work towards a balance of power, and it is only conflict that can achieve this. Otherwise, when power is in the hands of few, there can be peaceful times for some time, but, the concentration of power that remains unchecked can result in dangerous consequences.

Similarly, when we have room to debate, to discuss, to engage and to allow a constructive use of friction, we can create better results in all that we seek to do.

what are the forms of conflict?



There are two forms of conflict: positive, and negative.

Positive Conflict refers to a situation where a difference of ideas or opinions can be productive in a team environment.

When conflict helps encourage creative solutions to problems and generate innovation, variety and increased communication, it is positive conflict.

For example, a competition to choose the best in something is a positive conflict. Similarly, when there is a debate about whether a law should be passed or not, it is a positive conflict if both sides are able to offer constructive feedback on how to improve the law.

what are the forms of conflict?



Negative conflict is conflict that is not productive - that is, conflict which causes destruction, or goes out of hand, or causes more trouble because it has not been settled down. When conflict causes a breakdown in the processes followed, or results in an impediment in the execution of any impactful work, it is negative conflict.

For example, while passing a law, if parties are opposed to each other and are not willing to listen, the law doesn't go forth to be passed. This is an impediment in the process.



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