

MANAGING CONFLICT IN TEAMS DURING TIMES OF CHANGE

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THE TASK OF THE MANAGER

by

HAROLD KOONTZ

“The task of the manager is to establish an environment for effective and efficient operation of individuals working together in groups.

This environment is characterised by a common purpose, an intentional structure of roles, the removal of obstructions to performance, and the motivation of individuals to contribute to group goals.”

In times of change the role of the manager has particular focus on ensuring the environment remains conducive for individuals to feel supported whilst retaining participation in the bigger picture (group goals)



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CHANGE IS NORMAL

- Change is normal, individuals and society
- Embed change as a cultural norm
- A way to do this is to role model change in our own learning as managers
- Encourage staff understand their own growth and extend this understanding into the organisation
- Trust is a critical enabler

let's talk.

change



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HELPFUL CULTURE/PRACTICE THAT'S SUPPORTS CHANGE

- Values based culture
- Culture which values what the group can produce, driving towards a shared goal
- Culture that is honest and transparent
- Trustworthy leadership, we do what we say
- Leadership willing to engage in the challenging conversations



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COMMUNICATING CHANGE & INCLUSION OF STAFF IDEAS

'People will be more creative if you give them freedom to decide how to climb particular mountains. You needn't let them choose which mountains to climb'

Teresa M. Amabile - Harvard Professor of
Business Administration



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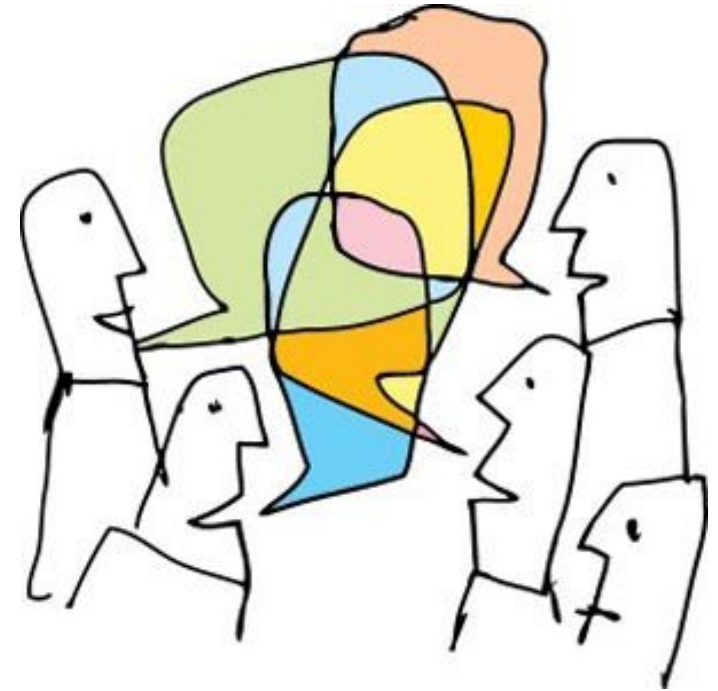
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CHANGE PREPARATION

- Communication and feedback opportunities, ensure follow up
- Forecasting impacts on staff, maximising staff readiness
- Ensure supports are increased
- Inclusion – is everyone informed
- Normalising negotiation



**CHANGE
AGENT
NETWORK**

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TEAM INTERVENTIONS

Interventions designed to improve team cohesion in response to change include:

- team building — structured experiences to help team members set goals, improve interpersonal relations and become a better functioning team
- Balance individual and team needs - mindful of diversity and motivators



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CHANGE and CONFLICT

In times of change conflict can and does occur. In managing conflict it is important that:

- Understand that functional conflict is healthy
- Managers have an established framework that is clear to all staff
- Provide a consistent approach that also takes into account individual differences



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EXAMPLE #1



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EXAMPLE #1

- Team in conflict –reform
- 2 quoted felt bullied.
- Met individuals-initial hearing openly
- Outline of process, query what was needed to feel safe
- My work- Prepare what organization needed.
- In advance ask them articulate behavior found distressing, and what would look better



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EXAMPLE #1

- Facilitated session, begin with agreement of process with respect
- Each has opportunity to talk about behavior disturbing, and what they requesting of each other.
- Gained a commitment of shared behavior, including organizational commitment.
- We share new space, not organization, not them individually but us



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EXAMPLE #2 Conflict within a matrix management model



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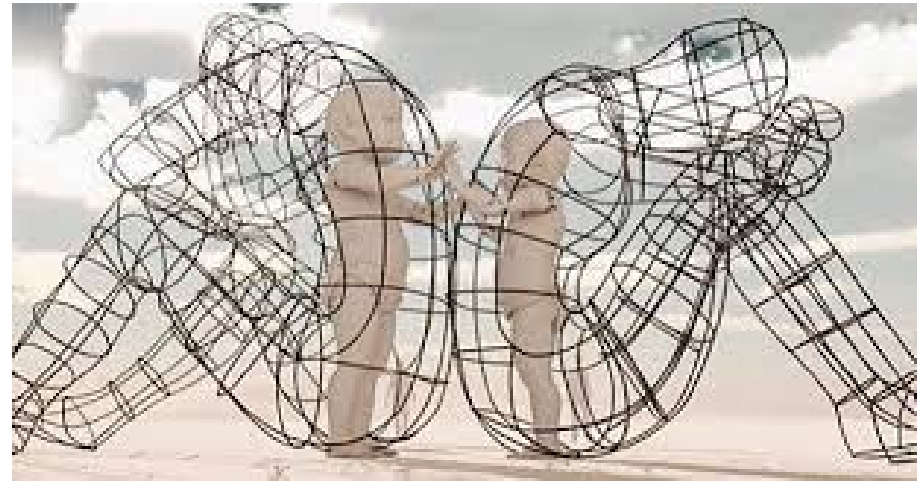
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HIGH CONFLICT

- Utilise established framework known to staff
- Plan your role, do homework
- Clarify process, ensure safety,
- check in on goals for the individuals and organization, focus on behavior.



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HIGH CONFLICT

- Beginning the session with alignment with organization values, develop a shared commitment to participate with respect
- Follow a plan for the session, be clear about process. Summarize at the end. Stay out of white water.
- Be prepared to provide a written summary back to staff outlining shared commitments
- Have a support framework to refer staff into such as EAP



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LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

- Isolated structure, managers can be relationally isolated
- Mentors, supervision and networks
- Work life balance
- Clear line management supervision. Ask for your needs to be met.



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