LOOKING BACK: **ORACLE**

Oracle versus SAP

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Competition for customers can be quite steep in many industries which can, unfortunately, drive some organizations to break the law. In 2007, Oracle filed suit against TomorrowNow, a provider of third-party maintenance and support services for Oracle's enterprise software and its parent company SAP. Although not quite a household name in the United States like Oracle, SAP stands on its own as a business management software company holding contracts with most of companies on the Fortune's top 500 list. Oracle's suit was based on claims that SAP made hundreds of thousands of illegal downloads and several thousand copies of Oracle's software to avoid paying licensing fees and steal customers. Apparently, TomorrowNow had a program to automate software downloads from Oracle's websites, which at one point crashed Oracle's computer systems.

Three years later, the suit went to trial and Oracle was awarded $1.3 billion, the biggest ever for copyright infringement.[99] Don't count SAP out though. It had a record fourth quarter 2010 and grew twice as fast as Oracle's forecast.[100]

Chapter Summary

1. Conflict management skills are keys to management success. The manager's task is to stimulate functional conflict and prevent or resolve dysfunctional conflict.
2. Structural causes of conflict include specialization, interdependence, common resources, goal differences, authority relationships, status inconsistencies, and jurisdictional ambiguities.
3. Personal factors that lead to conflict include differences in skills and abilities, personalities, perceptions, or values and ethics; emotions; communication barriers; and cultural differences. The increasing diversity of the workforce and globalization of business have potential to increase conflict arising from these differences.
4. The levels of conflict include interorganizational, intergroup, interpersonal, and intrapersonal.
5. Individuals engaged in interpersonal conflict often display aggressive, compromise, or withdrawal defense mechanisms.
6. Ineffective techniques for managing conflict include nonaction, secrecy, administrative orbiting, due process nonaction, and character assassination.
7. Effective techniques for managing conflict include appealing to superordinate goals, expanding resources, changing personnel, changing structure, and confronting and negotiating.
8. In negotiating, managers can use a variety of conflict management styles, including avoiding, accommodating, competing, compromising, and collaborating.
9. Managers should strive to create a conflict-positive organization, one that values diversity, empowers employees, and seeks win-win solutions to conflicts.