

For the last two decades the perception of conflict has changed dramatically. It turned from authoritative approach with ignorance towards other parties to cultural awareness, value creation and skills in advocacy, listening and negotiation.

In classical approach any conflict was about negotiable interests. According to this point an individual should be socialized to resolve the conflict and might as well be punished for the lack of socialization or negotiation on the problem. While using the above stated approach, people came to realize that basic human needs cannot be negotiated as they provide security, personal identity and physiological satisfaction which may depend on socio-economic, gender, nationality, and other such traits (Birkhoff, 1998, para. 4).

Studies in labor relations and conflict management by Baur expanded “after the federal government passed collective bargaining legislation” (Birkhoff, 1998, para. 6). That gave start to diverse educational researches in the area of conflict management at workplace and new professions like mediators, who deal with conflict from a professional stand point.

Just as business plans help drive the success of a firm, researchers dwell upon strategies focused on individuals, values that drive their actions and understanding of other cultures to provide healthier work environments (Cavico, Orta, Muffler and Mujtaba, 2014). According to Korkindale, there are “points of difficult cultures” working together with “different assumptions, different values and beliefs” which make the workplace atmosphere more grueling (Corkindale, 2007, para 7).

Major equal employment opportunity acts such as Equal Pay Act (1963), Civil Rights Act (1964), Age Discrimination in Employment Act (1967), and Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) try to eliminate discrimination at workplace to reduce conflicts and present everyone’s values, abilities, beliefs and assumptions as equally important to provide a healthier diverse workplace environment. Notwithstanding that the laws emitted to fight discrimination exist, a lot depends on managers for effective implementation.

Role of Managers in Diverse Workplace Environment

“Organizations are collections of people who work together and coordinate their actions to achieve a wide variety of goals or desired future outcomes” (Jones & George, 2014, p.5). A good manager should provide possibilities for his/her employees to coordinate and cooperate within the organization. It means that they need to plan, organize, lead and control human and other resources to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently with the fewer conflicts, no impact of “glass ceilings” on minority workers, and other obstacles caused by stress and limited resources (Jones & George, 2014, p.5).

Linkedin CEO, Jeff Weiner, in his interview to *Wall Street Journal* calls his conflict management strategy “managing compassionately” and suggests that it begins with the understanding that people see things differently and might not be equipped with the same information about the situation or issue (Weiner, 2011). In his understanding, the move from the classic strategy to being trusted and transparent in conflicts is vital in achieving high organizational performance.

Today’s managers know that cultural awareness is a key component to effectively managing work tension and to increase the efficiency of human resources. The essential manager’s tasks should be well executed and appropriately conveyed to the team. In the stage of planning the manager should choose the strategy, the appropriate organizational goals and courses of action, while keeping in mind the diversity and different values of employees based on decisions that maximize value over time for all stakeholders (Pohlman and Gardiner, 2000).