

Meaning of Conflicts

Disputes between individuals and between groups are characteristic of human behaviour. Conflict (dispute) is a type of behaviour which occurs when two or more parties are in opposition or in battle.

The Disputes:

- (i) Adversely affect the effectiveness of individuals or groups,
- (ii) May break down the relationship between individuals or groups, and
- (iii) May result in acute neurosis of strike.

This makes difficult to achieve objectives of the organisation.

Hence it is very essential to eliminate disputes by:

- (i) Adequate job definition,
- (ii) Detailed specifications of relationship between various positions,
- (iii) Careful selection of people to fill up various posts, and
- (iv) Through training of people for the job assigned to them.

Organisational conflicts are a disagreement between two or more members or groups of the organisation.

The conflict may arise due to:

- (a) Sharing of scarce resources or work activities.
- (b) Different status, goals, values and perceptions.

(c) Disagreement over facts and methods.

(d) Social, economic and psychological reasons.

Sources of Conflict:

In any organisation, large numbers of potential sources of conflict exist.

Some of such sources of conflict are:

1. Competition for Limited Resources
2. Diversity of Goals
3. Task interdependence
4. Organizational ambiguities
5. Differences in values and perception
6. Poor Communication
7. Aggressive nature of people
8. Introduction of change.

Stages of Conflicts:

Conflict may have following stages:

1. Latent Conflict:

This is the conflict which is anticipated by the participants. These may be due to competition of scarce resources, drive for autonomy, role conflict and divergence of subunit goals.

2. Perceived Conflicts:

These are due to misunderstanding of each other's true position. Such conflicts can be removed by improving communication.

3. Felt Conflict:

Such conflicts arise when differences become personalised.

4. Manifest Conflict:

At this stage conflict becomes open. It may be in the form of aggression, sabotage, apathy, withdrawal etc.

5. Conflict aftermath:

If the conflict is resolved to the satisfaction of all, it may become a base for more cooperative relationship. But if the conflict is merely suppressed, the latent condition of conflict may be aggravated and explode in more serious or violent form at a later date.