

Business Psychology

Case Study: Scenario 06

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The logo features a central diamond shape with a gold border. Inside the diamond, the letters 'MMAD' are stacked above 'CONSULTING'. The 'MMAD' text is in a light gold color, while 'CONSULTING' is in a dark grey color. Two small gold diamonds are positioned at the top and bottom vertices of the diamond border. The entire logo is framed by two L-shaped gold lines, one in the top-left and one in the bottom-right.

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Behaviourism

Behaviourist Learning Theory

Where learning can be defined as a change in behaviour to achieve desired results, and behaviour can be shaped through reinforcement (Behaviourism, 2019).

Behaviourism

Blank Slate Idea

- The teacher assumes the learner starts off as a clean slate and can be moulded as pleased (Blank Slate Idea, 2016).
- The teacher, believes the learner is essentially passive and can respond effectively to environmental stimuli (Blank Slate Idea, 2016).
- It is also believed behavior is shaped through reinforcement for example : rewarding ideal behaviour and punishing unfavorable behaviour (Tabula Rasa, 2019).

Classic Conditioning: Pavlov

- A stimulus is presented in order to achieve a response
- It involves reflexes and action by learners to achieve desired results (Pavlov, I. P., & Anrep, G. V. 2003)
- Mark offers a monetary reward in the form of a bonus of £300 to the pair who reaches the objective most effectively
- At first, performance is noticeably better with increased motivation, although it becomes problematic and increased sabotage which Mark choose to ignore

Critiques of Behaviourism

- **Mark** in this scenario was the "teacher" and the **dominant person** in the learning environment who took complete control.
- As long as the **desired results** were achieved by **classic conditioning**, conflict did not matter to Mark *"But performance is up and this makes Mark very happy."*
- Classic conditioning by Mark in this scenario , did not take into account for **processes** taking place in the minds of the learners that **cannot be observed**.
- "Mark that Karen and Lincoln (KL) only won because they had ignored safety regulations and had probably **sabotaged** Imran and Jeanne's (IJ) work" & "GH had been a bit **aggressive** towards IJ".

Kellerman (2004) Bad Leadership



*Is Mark a
bad
leader?*

Incompetent Leadership

Leader is inexperienced/ ignorant and can't operate the team successfully

Callous Leadership

The leader doesn't take into consideration their followers' opinion and needs. Purely self-focus and goal achievement

(B.Kellerman, 2014)

Incompetent Leadership

Lack of Experience

- “...**straight out of university** where he said he had organised several sporting events (he **had helped in two**, both very **limited success**, something he **glossed over** in the interview)”.
- “His team of 8 see him as a **Boy Scout**”

Incompetent Leadership

Mark's Perception

- "Sees himself as a dynamic leader"
- "He views his team members privately with contempt"
- "Organize competitions for sports they don't understand"
- Inability to cooperate
- Destruction of the team spirit
- Inability to see potential

Callous Leadership

- “He ignores the complains”
- “He sees improved performance as very useful for his own advancement”
- “Views his team members privately, with **contempt**, they are **old**, jaded and **worn out** from organising competitions for sports they **don’t understand** or even like and **spending way too much time in the pub”**

Mark’s Characteristics

Ignorant

Unkind

Self-Centred

Perceptual Defense

*Avoiding negativity
by excelling at
something else?*

Projection:

Others, but not ourselves, have the undesirable traits or impulses

Scapegoating:

Believing that failures or inadequacies are the fault of others

(Nolen J., 2019)

Perceptual Defense

Scapegoating & Projection

- “Geoff and Harriet **tell Mark** that Karen and Lincoln **only** won because they had **ignored** the safety regulations and had **sabotaged** Imran and Jeanne’s work”
- “Karen and Lincoln **complained** that Geoff and Harriet’s objective was set at **too easy** level, and that they were **aggressive** towards Imran and Jeanne”
- “There is **no proof of this**, Mark had **supervised the event**, so he **ignores** the complainism and sees **improved performance**”
- “But performance is **up** and this makes Mark **very happy**”

Conflicts between team members are the failure of the team members
Mark is a “leader” and his team have the undesirable traits



*What is
conflict?*

Definition:

The process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party

(Kreitner & Kinicki, 2010, p. 373)

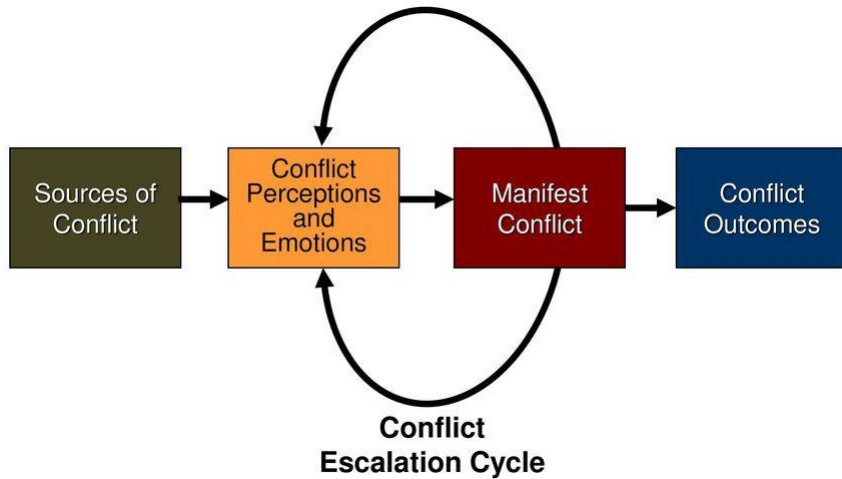
Definition:

A felt struggle between two or more interdependent individuals over perceived incompatible differences in beliefs, values, and goals, or over differences in desires for esteem, control, and connectedness

(Wilmot & Hocker, 2011)

Conflict Escalation Cycle

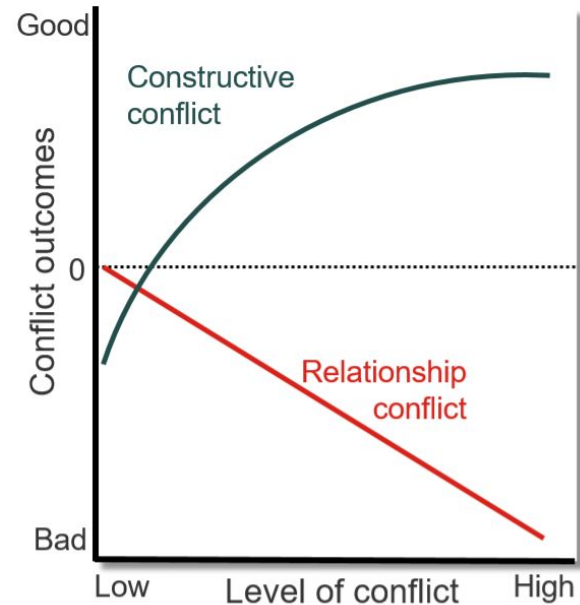
(McShane & Von Glinow, 2009)



Constructive vs. Relationship

(McShane & Von Glinow, 2009)

- Conflict aimed at issue vs. conflict aimed at undermining others



Starting Beliefs

Mark “views his team members privately **with contempt**, they’re **old, jaded and worn out**”

VS

The team had “been working together for years quite **happily until Mark came** along”

Sources of Conflict

Scarce Resources

- “Teams within teams **competed** against each other for a **bonus** of £300”

Ambiguous Rules

- “Geoff and Harriet (GH) tell Mark that Karen and Lincoln (KL) only won because they had **ignored** safety regulations”

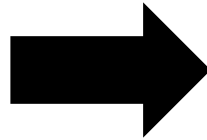
Perception

“KL **complained** that GH’s objective was set at too easy a level”

Manifestation

“KL complained that GH had been a bit **aggressive** towards IJ”

“GH tell Mark that KL had probably **sabotaged** IJ’s work”



Outcome

GH approaches Mark, their boss, to quit and work for the rival team in one week. They ask for a reputation.

Recommendation

Solution focused problems - facilitation approach

“GH comes to Mark’s office one day and tells him, ‘Look, we’re thinking of leaving, we’ve enjoyed so much working with you’”



Bill, head of HR UK is concerned that staff want to leave. He should advise Mark to mediate with GH to reach resolution, in order to continue working together in a positive environment.

Recommendation

Bad Leadership (Kellerman, 2004)

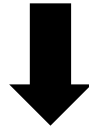
“Mark had supervised the event, so he ignores the complaints, and sees the improved performance as very useful for his own advancement”

Bill, UK head of HR should recommend Mark attend a Leadership Development course

Recommendation

Relationship Conflict

“From Mark’s perspective he views his team members privately with contempt, they’re old, jaded and worn out from years of being out in all weathers, organizing competitions for sports they don’t understand or even like”



As external consultants we recommend that Mark takes positive action and sends his team for a week of training development in the workplace that is sport related

This will lead to the team having a greater understanding and enthusiasm for the sports competitions they organise, in turn, raising morale.

Conclusion

References

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Wilmot & Hocker, 2011