

Conflict Resolution in Christian and Business Environments

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Humans are dynamic, and not everyone has the same perceptions as others. This means that conflicts are inevitable. Living in a dynamic world requires people to interact. However, most of these interactions are received differently because the participants usually have varied thoughts. Therefore, having a divergent opinion from what your cohort believes in triggers chances of having a conflict. When a dispute arises, it is crucial that it is handled appropriately. Consequently, conflict resolution is a process that requires understanding from all the parties affected. One important thing to notice about conflicts is that they are predictable and occur amid natural situations when managing complex projects or establishments. This paper intends to explore major environments where conflicts are likely to arise. The primary objective of the paper would be exploring the topic by examining how Christian and secular establishments address their conflicts. Specifically, this paper will look into how churches and corporate establishments go about disputes.

Speaking from a Christian perspective, the Lord had a flawless plan for his places of worship. However, ever since the establishment of Christianity centuries ago, humans have been undergoing a process of growth and transformation to reach their intended state of perfection that Christianity requires. From what believers experience today, there is no such thing as a perfect environment where Christians can practice what is expected of them. This means that problems can arise within a church for various reasons. For example, believers among a congregation may have varied opinions even if the Bible requires them to have similar thoughts. According to 1Corinthians 1:10 the scripture states, “people must speak the same thing” in matters regarding Christianity and creed. However, it is also natural that there must be latitude for other things in the secular world that may come to haunt the church (Salami, 2010). Various stages of spiritual

growth, differences in personality, and misunderstandings are among the multiple factors that can cause tension resulting in conflict in the church. While Christians acknowledge that there might be personal frictions in the church, the New Testament requires that humans should be advocates of conflict resolution.

In 2018, the New Life Adventist Church in New York City experienced one of the most unexpected conflicts a Christian community could ever encounter. The church board members were influenced to be against a reverent traveling to East Africa to minister in one of the popularly known Seventh Day Adventist Church camp meetings. However, it was later noticed that the conflict was between two individuals, one of them being a board member and the other being the pastor who was to be sent to Kenya to preside over the camp meeting. So, the board member influenced others to restrict pastor Keen from traveling. This caused a conflict that almost made the church have divisions as a result of varied opinions from what the church board decided (Salami, 2010).

This conflict could have been solved before it resulted in further divisions in the church. The strategies of determining a conflict in the place of worship might be different from those used to address the encounters (Salami, 2010). The mediators of this church used the following conflict resolution strategies.

Firstly, the board member who had issues with Pastor Keen was advised to own up to his part of the conflict without involving others. Conflict is normally an individual's fault. Having a perception that others should be part of your problem often results in conflicts. One of the best expressions the board member was given to ascertain the extent to which others were not part of the conflict was: "What is it like to be the other side of you?" This was crucial in making the conflict resolvable and straightforward. Secondly, the mediators advised the board member that

he would have gone directly to the point and handled his issues with the pastor. Often, conflicting parties fail to control themselves because they talk about others rather than addressing them directly. Also, this conflict would have been avoided and resolved if the pastor could have believed in Christianity teachings that require believers to have faith in others (Resolving Church Conflicts, n.d.). Most of the people having church leadership find it easy to assign wrong motives to others. Instead, they should give their rivals the benefit of a doubt, especially when what is on the table is of less concern to them. Also, such people might not realize that their motives affect an entire congregation. Last but not least, the mediating panel advised the member that he could have explained his point of view rather than influencing others to restrict Keen from traveling. This could have triggered an understanding where the board would have aimed at resolving the issue without the knowledge of the entire congregation and global followers.

The business environment is another sector where conflicts are inevitable. Working with a group of people day after day is often encountered with situations of misunderstandings. Employees who were carefully screened and interviewed are not immune to such circumstances (Katz & Flynn, 2013). They may get themselves involved in conflicts that may occur in many ways. Some of the most common workplace conflicts at Forward Insurance Agency (FIA) include those that arise between employees, in a team, or between a worker and a supervisor. No matter how hard the situation may be, conflicts are usually resolvable.

Before working on in-depth matters regarding a workplace conflict in FIA, the human resource department believes that resolving a dispute would begin with advising those involved to embrace their issues. Pretending or assuming that nothing has happened is ethically and professionally unsafe because of the likelihood of tension building up. According to Katz and

Flynn (2013), dealing with uncomfortable situations in the workplace without hesitation is healthy for the organization's future. Secondly, the CEO directs that those involved in a conflict should find time and talk to each other before things take an ugly shape. It is also essential for them to note that the meeting is not an opportunity to attack, shame, or blame each other.

Another critical strategy this organization uses in resolving conflict is training its employees to have listening skills. According to Salami (2010), it is crucial to give complete attention to the person who is speaking while solving an issue. This means that the two antagonistic parties should consider turn-taking as an important aspect when resolving what has been affecting their social and professional relationship at the workplace. The parties should also understand that listening is all about gaining understanding. So, they should not let themselves become emotional about the other party's words or points of view. Finding an agreement is also an important objective in the mediators of this company's value in resolving workplace conflict.

Since the conversations of two antagonistic parties primarily focus on the disagreements, settling on possible points of agreements is supreme (Salami, 2010). For example, when a supervisor and an employee who conflict shed light on their commonalities, they are demonstrating their willingness to seek a solution towards building a solid workplace relationship. Furthermore, the human resource department of this company worked towards helping conflicting parties to have guidance on how they should act whenever they have encountered challenges. This was vital since it helped employees work out their problems before reaching extreme levels.

Based on these two contexts, the methods used to resolve conflicts are effective. The church board which acted as the mediators aimed at addressing the conflict without causing further division in the church. This was crucial because they wanted to retain the pastor, the board member, and the worshipers. Also, the strategies used in the workplace context were

effective. However, the organization should work towards developing a plan that would help in solving each type and level of conflict in the future.

In conclusion, these two organizations have used appropriate methods to resolve conflicts that occur in their backgrounds. However, their strategies would have been more sufficient if both of them would have formulated principles relevant to conflict resolution. These two organizations would have perceived that conflict is unavoidable but acts as a learning experience. Some of the elements that these two organizations should consider while formulating principles of conflict resolution include respect, self-control, understanding, and embracing communicating skills. Therefore, in such a dynamic world, people must interact, but conflicts are unavoidable. However, learning effective conflict resolution methods is essential.

References

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