

Avoiding Conflicts in the Workplace

Whether you are self-employed or working for someone, you may have experienced conflicts in your work environment. An argument with your boss or employee over performance, responsibility, pay raise or meeting deadlines. Conflicts create tension, lower morale, reduce productivity, and affect the emotional, mental and physical health and well-being of not only the people at work, but also their families and friends.

When someone or something is bothering you at work for whatever reason, it affects you mentally, emotionally and physically. The affects can last days or weeks and can carryover into your personal life as well. There is usually a story surrounding the situation about how life or the situation was unfair, it was not your fault because it was something beyond your control, and they don't understand what you had to go thru. Whether these are conscious or unconscious thoughts and feelings, they have an adverse effect on not only your peace of mind, but also on your relationships at home and in the workplace. There is truth behind the saying that "you shouldn't take your work home with you." Don't let the pressures of work affect your relationships with family and friends.

Employees are hired to perform specific tasks for the business. Their duties are spelled out in the job description for each position. If the employees perform their jobs competently, then the operations of the business should run smoothly. If there are problems with the employee's performance, the business as a whole suffers. Someone will have to clean up the mess and the employee will usually find another line of work shortly thereafter.

Many conflicts in the workplace occur when the parties are unable to distinguish their job from the personal relationships that they have established at work, they are in their beliefs, or they are consciously or unconsciously bring their personal and family relationship problems to

work with them. Someone who is giving people a hard time at work may be experiencing things that have nothing to do with the work itself. The tension and expressions of frustration or anger may be caused by some influences outside the work environment. They may be having problems with their children or spouse. Or they could be spinning in *its not fair, not good enough, can't get it right*, or some other belief.

Understanding that the anger or frustration expressed has nothing to do with you and everything to do with the person getting angry or frustrated goes a long way towards avoiding conflicts in the work place.

Understanding that their expressions of anger or frustration has nothing to do with you means that you are not taking things personally. By focusing on your job and its responsibilities, you avoid getting sucked into what is commonly called office politics.

Conflicts in the workplace can be avoided when you are able to distinguish your job from your interpersonal relationships at work. Your job has a clear set of rules whose boundaries are defined by the job's duties and responsibilities. When communicating with your fellow employees, realize that any discussion about your job is not personal. When you are able to distinguish and separate the different types of relationships at work, it will lead to greater harmony and efficiency in the workplace.