



PROACTIVE
COMPLAINTS
MANAGEMENT

TRAINING • COACHING • CASE MANAGEMENT

How does conflict occur?

Conflict will occur when an individual's values, needs and / or identity are challenged or undermined

Have you ever entered a meeting to discuss and resolve a complaint only to find yourself in conflict with the other party?

Have you thought to yourself how did we get from a state of speaking calmly to a state of anger and hostility?

This article looks at the emotions and psychology of how we go from a state of calmness to a state of conflict in a short space of time.

Our individual Values, Needs and Identity are our underlying traits that define us as individuals. If these traits are challenged or questioned we will react in a way that seeks to realign our equilibrium and who we are as individuals.

Values:

- ✓ Refers to – *Principles, work ethic and integrity*

Needs:

- ✓ Refers to – acknowledgment of skills, expertise and respecting ones opinions and feelings

Identity:

- ✓ Refers to – integrity and reputation in the area you work in;
- ✓ Ability to understand and to see another person's/parties perspective;
- ✓ Being fair and honest

Values

- Our values are our core in built principles that guide us throughout life. Our values are extremely personal to us and come from different sources e.g. family, upbringing, education, religion, culture, friends etc.
- When someone questions or undermines these fundamental beliefs, conflict will often closely follow.
- When we ourselves don't adhere or meet these values we invariably encounter internal confusion and conflict and the main reason for this confusion and conflict is because this behaviour or attitude is not compatible with our true selves and what we believe in.

Consider the following:

Complete this sentence below:

- *When I think of my identity, the following comes to my mind...*

When it comes to conflict complete/consider the question below:

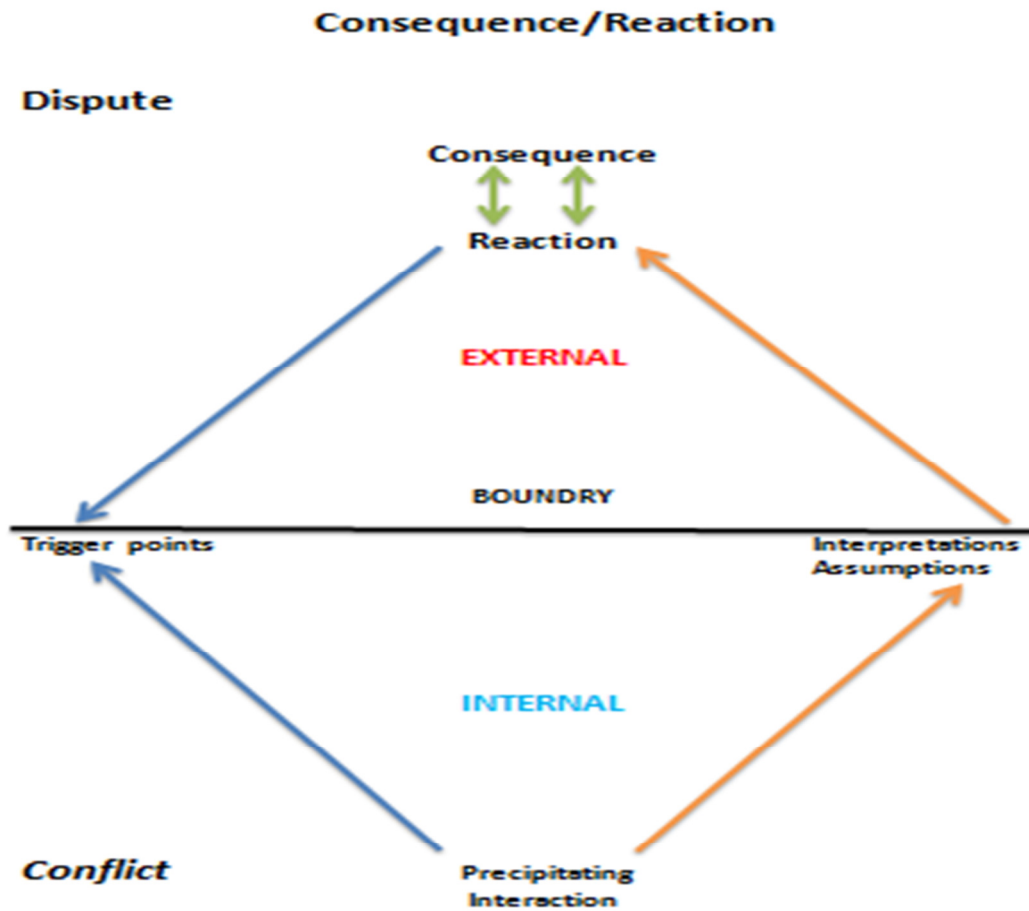
When I consider how I manage conflict, I describe myself as someone who.....

When it comes to conflict, I think people who observe me may describe me as someone who.....

How does Conflict begin?

The diagram below describes how conflict begins within us and what interpretations we give specific events.

Diagram 1



During the initial stages, conflict manifests itself in an internal way as we attempt to reconcile events and try to understand what values, needs and identity may have been breached – we refer to this process as internal conflict.

However when conflict crosses some personal boundary it may become visible to the other party which then falls into the category of a Dispute i.e. now other parties are aware that our personal boundaries have been crossed and our internal conflict manifest itself in a public showing of anger, grief, resentment or we dismiss other parties.

Each step of Diagram 1 has specific requirements are explained below.

Precipitating Interaction

- This part of the diagram refers to the event or events that places us at odds with another party i.e. what caused the problem from our perspective

Trigger Point

- You may also know trigger points as your “*Hot Buttons*”, which are behaviours, words, actions, styles that really bother you – these actions may bother you and/or offend you - i.e. what has the other person said or done to offend you?

Interpretations / Assumptions

- As human beings we attribute motives, intent, feelings, attitudes and other characteristics to the other person based on how we read the other person’s attitude, words, and manners when we interact with them – what characteristics or comments have we focused on that has caused us concern?

Boundary

- There is only so much each of us can tolerate when we are provoked and our values, needs and identity are undermined or challenged

The above is a brief explanation of how *Conflict* can arise during complaints handling, at Proactive Complaints Management we can provide you with the resources and training to identify how to manage your own behaviour when you experience these feeling of discomfort and frustration.

For a specific training session tailored to your specific organisational requirements please call Steve on +61 418313303 or email Steve steve@proactivecm.com.au for a free discussion or check out our web site for more information, you can find us at www.proactivecm.com.au

“They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel”