

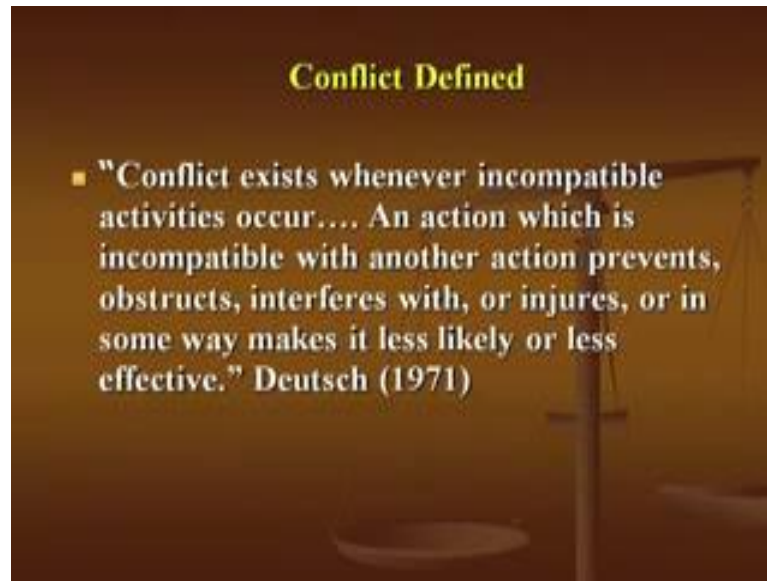
Soft Skills Development
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Lecture - 19
Groups, Conflicts and their Resolution

Hello. Today we are going to discuss very interesting topic related to conflicts group and resolution. First I will discuss little bit about what do we understand by conflicts and then what are the problems generally we face when we are having groups and we have to perform certain things in a group, and how we can manage or we can resolve conflicts. You know conflict is an area generally people look this something very negative, hence people do not appreciate, nobody wants to have conflicts; nobody would like that let us have conflicts. This is something which everybody try to avoid, but the fact is that this is inevitable whether we want or we do not want it will always be there. In fact, in other words one can say that it is just like unwanted friend, we can say or it will be there.

Now if the question is that if you have to live with the conflict, we have to survive with the conflict then what should be the best way to manage or to resolve conflict? So, this is the thing which we are going to discuss or this is; of course, a very broad area and lots of research lots of studies have been carried out in different contexts. My focus will be that through communication skills approach what strategies we make so that we can minimize the conflicting situations and how we can get our work done.

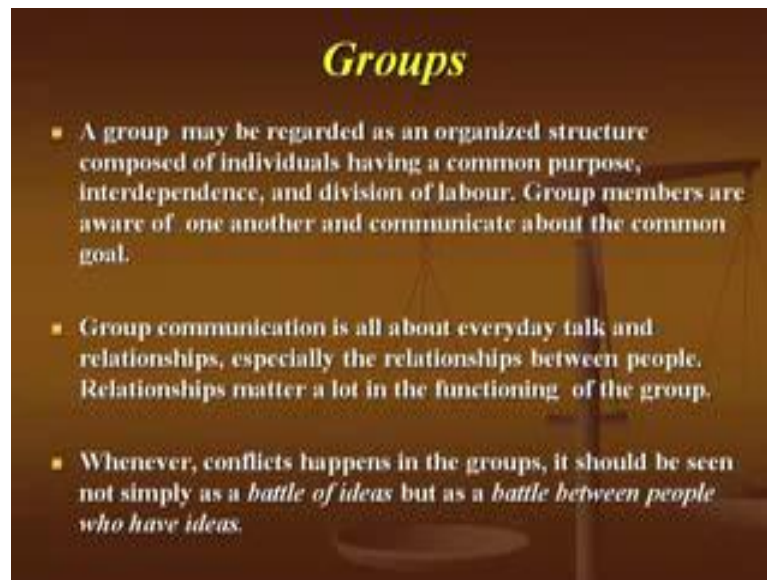
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Just I will read one or two definitions. So, how there is scholars in this area have looked at conflict, for example, one of the scholars Deutsch 1971. He writes that conflict exists whenever in compatible activities occur an action which is incompatible with another action prevents, obstructs, interferes with, or injures, or in some way makes it less likely or less effective. So, like that there are several such definitions in different contexts related to conflict.

But there are scholars in fact, who are the opinion that conflict should not be seen all the time something very negative and something which is unpleasant, but also conflict can be viewed something which might give something or further inside to think or some new ideas also might come. In other words one can see that they consider this in a very positive manner positive way, they think that conflict is not always negative rather it should be it may be helpful it may be something very positive for the growth, for the development of the organization also in other context this might be very useful.

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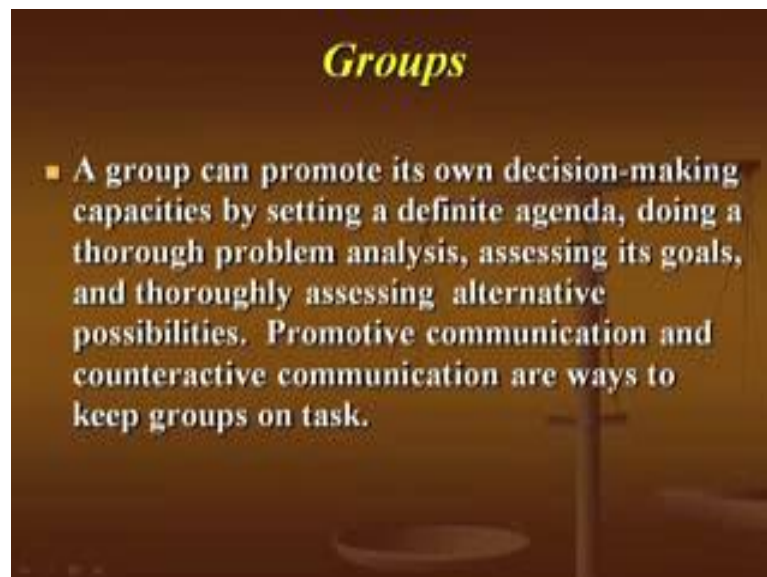
Just I will like to take these are some of the definitions which I would like to skip. When we talk about group, so generally people say that when we are working in a group, there is a goal which we have to achieve, but of course, no two individuals are having the same kind of nature and behaviour. So, at times because of several issues may be misunderstanding, maybe misinterpretation, maybe difficulties in understanding each other's views or some sort of conflicts occur in growth. So, what exactly is the group? A group may be regarded as an organized structure composed of individuals having a common purpose interdependence and division of labour. So, group members are aware of one another and communicate about the common goal.

In a group generally what is happening the people are having a common goal and with their best effort and understanding, they try to achieve that goal. Now whether it is group or in other context as well our communication behaviour is playing very, very vital role very important role group communication is all about everyday talk and relationship especially the relationship between people. Relationship matters a lot in the functioning of the group if the group which we form or is being formed, the members in the group if they are not one can say likeminded or having some good relationship with each other perhaps they may find it difficult to interact to communicate as result they cannot achieve the goal in the prescribed time frame or they cannot perform the way it should have been.

As I mention that it is quite possible that sometimes due to various regions some sort of conflict might occur in a group as well. So, whenever conflicts happens in the group it should be seen not simply as a battle of ideas, but as a battle between people who have ideas basically what is happening that many times because of the individual differences because of the liking and disliking, because of several factors which perhaps many times not known to us what others are thinking about me, what others are thinking about the group members and that causes lots of a problem lots of misunderstanding.

In a group working in a group this is very, very important that relationship matters a lot. If you are not having good relationship, if you do not understand each other properly, then there is a chance that we will be putting our self in conflict in situations. There might be difference of opinion and that can be taken in a very right spirit, but not necessarily that we can always fight and quarrel and try to show that I am better than you or I my ideas are better than you, it is nothing like that. If the group members have having a proper understanding and good relationship they will always try to understand each other's opinion and they will come up with something which is really very much acceptable to everybody.

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A group can promote its own decision-making capacities by setting a definite agenda, doing a thorough problem analysis, assessing its goals and thoroughly assessing alternative possibilities. Promoting communication and counter active communication

are ways to keep groups on task. What I can say that whenever we talk about group two things are very, very important working in a group and achieving the goal. One is that proper communication effective communication and second thing is that group members should have a good relationship. If these two things are happening then definitely group will function very nicely and achieve the goal.

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There are several types of in fact, conflict just quickly I will tell for our discussion convenience, for discussion these are the 5 con types - first one is intrapersonal and then we have interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, international conflict.

Intrapersonal conflict very simple many times it happens, that we are having inner conflicts means we are in a state of dilemma we are not able to take a decision what to do what not to do and this becomes really very difficult. What to do? This kind of situations come almost in everybody's life where nobody's there to suggest to recommend and we have to take a decision we are not in a position to say either yes or no to accept or not to accept or reject. Many such situations come in our life and that people try their level best to overcome and here of course, when we are in such kind of dilemma that is called inner conflict, we are in a position that we cannot make decision. So, this becomes, this goes for some time and one fine morning we take decision based on our experience and knowledge we think that OK, let us take this decision. So, that is called inner conflict or intra personal conflict.

Others are like interpersonal conflict this is also very simple. When 2 people are having conflicts or 2 groups are having conflict that is interpersonal conflict, sometimes within a group as I mentioned the people might be having conflict that is intrapersonal conflict and intergroup means when two groups have been formed.

Many times it happens that groups are also fighting initial with each other because they are having the feeling of group and then because they want to put other group down and they want to prove that the one group is better than other then of course, some conflicts might occur and international conflict is always there as we know that many countries are having border issues, border problems and they very often conduct meetings and then one meeting is postponed for another meeting. This is a continuous process, but conflict is there.

Beginning from intrapersonal from within to international level, this shows that is conflict is very much there we cannot avoid it is there we have to survive, we have to live with different kinds of conflicts. Now the question comes that, yes if conflicts are there is there any way.

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Before coming to the ways we can quickly have that sources of conflict, there are several sources of conflict beginning from a culture and religion. I would like to mention here that amongst many other sources the religion and the culture these are one of the very, very important sources of conflict, one can say that people become very sensitive the

moment we start talking or start attacking rather somebody's culture and religion. One should try to avoid to comment somebody's culture or religion and we can see that throughout the world these issues are becoming very, very serious based related to religion and culture.

Of course, there are many other sources for example; differences in ideology, educational differences, differences in experiences, competitions are there, perception how we perceive about others, inadequate or poor communication, misuse of power. These are some or some of the other sources of conflict which one can consider and try to overcome these. Communication related problems are there power if a person is in a powerful position then sometimes try to use this power or misuse the power with the subordinated with the colleagues and that causes lots of conflict.

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Now, I would like to mention that what are the strategies as a student's of communication one can try to overcome or resolve or manage conflict. So, this might be in two parts one is verbal communication strategies and for conflict management and other one is that nonverbal. First I will start with the verbal first, thing is that descriptive speech, what does it mean? Descriptive speech takes care of admitting one assertions, whatever we are speaking which we have to be very cautious very careful assertive we should not be in a dilemma that it should have some dual meaning or the meaning is not clear, people might

understand something else. Stating the issues and the problem in a very assertive manner this is very, very important very clearly.

Choice of word this is very important because the words are very, very powerful. Generally we advised that as far as possible we should not use negative words, generally people are in habit of using negative words rather than, positive words. I am not saying that one should not use negative words if required sometimes it can be used, but ratio should be something like 5 to 1 means I have been spoken 5 good words for something or for some people and then, if I am stating or using one negative words and with that also I say that if these things these things are very good a person is having all these good qualities. But he is lacking in something and if he can or she can improve in this area things will be far better.

Choice of words is very, very important because once we utter such words may be with our friends, colleagues, with family members or in any situation what has gone it can be never taken back and people take it otherwise and lots of misinterpretation and problems and issues come. So, it is better that whenever we are speaking or opening your mouth we should be very cautious very careful about our choice of words. Then, there are semantic obstacles of communication like sometimes knowingly or unknowingly, we are using slang and stereotype word that you cannot do or woman cannot do something like that are put people coming from some particular place cannot perform cannot do. So, we should not generalize, otherwise everybody will feel very bad there might be one or two exceptions, but that exception does not mean that we can say something for the whole nation, for the whole country, for the whole state, for whole people. So, we should try to avoid.

Automatic phrasing means there are some people they are in habit of using lots of you know such words what is called paralinguistic statesman's, while speaking some very often you know-you know, they will be using I mean, I mean, I mean or clearing the throat or using such words which might be little bit disturbing to the audience or others like ha ha, ho ho, he he means such type of words if a person is very frequently using or seeking support stating something and asking that is not it, am I right. They want indirectly seek the support of the audience and some of the people might not feel very comfortable. So, these things can be avoided.

So, for the syntactic selection is concerned impact of threat hostile joking and sarcastic remarks etcetera these things are also should be avoided. Unnecessarily one should not get threatening to the people, some people are in habit of just giving threatening or joking and sarcastic remark. So, these things can be avoided.

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If there is a problem then we should know how to identify the problem there is something very, very important many times it happens that problems lies somewhere else's and people are not able to go in too deep to identify the problem. So, this is really very difficult, but once we identify and identify the problem then we can propose the solution and from time to time we can also assess the solution. There should be spontaneity means this things should come in a very natural way, spontaneous way and we should have empathy for the people, equal chance we should give and whatever decision we take it should be in a provisional way it is not final and forever, means one can always think that yes with the time with the situation things might change. One should be ready to accept these facts.

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They are lots of you know nonverbal communication things like sometimes you know because of our appearance each culture has got its own what is called codes. That is already fixed by the society by the culture and if the moment we are violating the code about our clothing style, about our hair style, about our sitting walking, our appearance how do we appear. So, that also might cause if you are not able to adjust ourselves according to the social conditioning.

Kinesics means the movement of hands our body language and our gestures and postures also should be appropriate our eye contact is very, very important, our touching behaviour, how much space we maintain and use while talking with others. So, all such things are very, very important while talking interacting with others. If you are not very much cautious and aware then we might invite unnecessary problems and we might be put in conflicting situations.

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Now, finally, I would like to mention that yes conflicts are there. We have these verbal nonverbal strategies and now just a few styles are there are number of styles. So, for our convenience I am here mentioning a few - first one is avoiding style; that means, if the situation is such that we can avoid because many small things happens in our life, in our day to day interaction where we need not to put lots of emphasis and we can just simply avoid.

Suppose one day, one fine morning you will find that my subordinate, my colleague due to any reason he is not wishing or not saying good morning. So, I should not feel very bad it might be everyday he was doing, but today he has just forgotten or might be that he was under pressure or he was thinking something else just forgot. We should not take it very seriously that you see that he is my junior and he is supposed to salute me, he is supposed to say me good morning and so respect and he is not doing. So, is there something wrong and I should not form very bad opinion about him or her.

At many times it happens in school, colleges some of the friends also call by some nicknames and then students feel very bad, but we can avoid means unnecessarily we should not make the small issues big and this is very, very important in our family, in our society that if something has spoken something which perhaps at that particular moment it was not knowing or by mistake, unknowingly, unintentionally, something has come

up, so we should have patience to listen and just avoid, means we should not put unnecessary lots of emphases on these issues.

Another style is you know forcing style sometimes this is also very important that if a situation demands, we can force the people to get the work done suppose if I am the manager or head or director and I find that some of our colleagues are not listening not doing then perhaps, it becomes important because other colleagues are getting affected and they feel that why I should do, if others are one of them are just sitting idle and getting all the benefits.

This becomes my duty to force him and if required we can give him or her warning that look I have given you enough time, enough warning and if you are not able to perform, if you are not able to do our duties properly then some disciplinary action might be taken. So, like that we can make him understand or her understand that yes whatever he or she is doing its wrong and he is not supposed to do that and whatever is required is supposed to do. So, we have to force.

Many times it happens that we are forcing a very small children or students to do or perform certain things studies, sometimes they want to play they do not want to study, but we force no, no, we have to first complete this job only then you will get this. Like sometimes parents are telling to small kids that you perform, you complete your homework and then I will give you chocolate. Similarly in our professional life also it happened that we force directly or indirectly or intention is not bad only to avoid conflicts. The message should go to others that yes everybody is equal and everybody's supposed to perform

Then another style is accommodating styles, sometimes you know in our personal life or even in professional life we have to accommodate to avoid conflicts and many times we accommodate a good example might be that in our marital relationship we accommodate each other behaviour, habits, food habits, style of worship, having faith. We are just accommodating each other to avoid conflict. So, if necessary if the situation demands we can also use this type of style. Another one is collaborative styles as we are aware that there are lots of you know companies may be automobile company and also in insurance sectors or like that many firms, many companies are there and they were competing with each other and spending huge amount of money and time and energy.

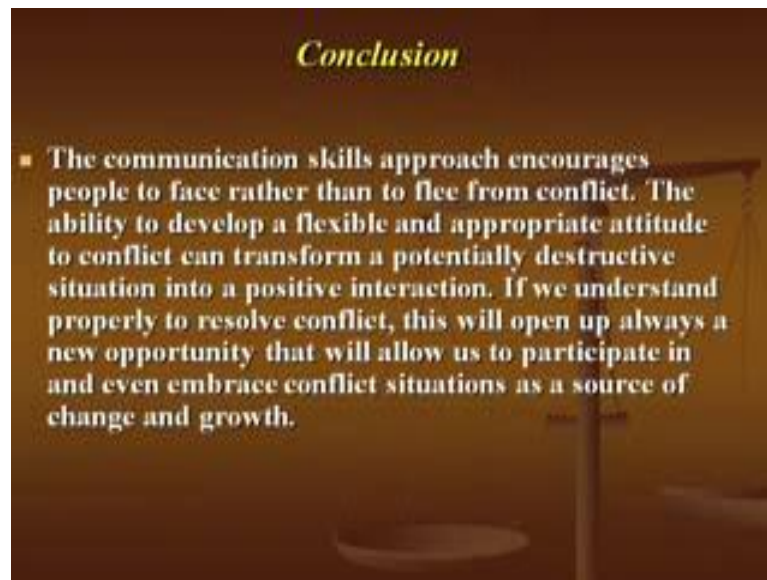
Nowadays one can find that lots of collaborative research, collaborative venture, joint ventures are going on and both the companies both the parties are in win-win situations. Lots of collaborative research are going on, earlier they were fighting with each other they were having lots of you know conflicts with each other, but they thought that this is unnecessary spending huge amount of money and the time and energy. So, it is better that let us come forward and shake hands and we will work together. So, both are benefited and both are in win-win situation. This is also one of the styles that if the situation is such that we can have collaborative research, collaborative work that is better.

The last one is compromising style sometimes you know in our life situation demands that you have to compromise there is no other way, we compromise with the situation many times in our life such occasions come that we do not have any other way to find out any other solution, but to compromise. So, considering that we also compromised and think that perhaps this is the base best way. So, I will not say that which one is the best one.

In fact, all these styles are good, it depends on us it depends on our knowledge and wisdom depending on the context and situation how we can apply this kind of styles and if we are little bit aware about these things I am not saying that for example, one should always avoid, no, no it is not like that always avoid if the problems come situation comes, anybody is coming passing any comment or creating problem for us so we keep on avoiding, no, it is not like that that all the time we keep on avoiding. There if the situation is such that we cannot avoid do not avoid, if the situation is that we need not to force do not force, if the situation is such that it is a we cannot accommodate do not accommodate, but if with peace of mind if you understand that no we can manage. So, let us manage, let us try. So, all these styles are good. So, depending on the situation we can use one of these styles and will find that we are able to manage conflicts if not resolved.

Because many times immediately we cannot get solution to the problem. So, we should not be very sad many times it happens that with the time some solutions come, let us wait and watch and then we can get some sort of solution to the problem.

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Finally, I would like to conclude that the communication skills approach encourages people to face rather than to flee from conflict. So, very clearly one can say that we should not flee, run away from the conflicting situations rather face, we have to face. The ability to develop a flexible and appropriate attitude to conflict can transform a potentially destructive situation into a positive interaction. If we understand properly to resolve conflict this will open up always a new opportunity that, will allow us to participate in and even embrace conflict situations as a source of change and growth.

Conflict should not be not consider or taken always something very negative rather it is also should be taken in positive way, because it might help for the change and the growth of our ideas of our personality for our organization. So, finally, I would like to just say that yes a conflict should not be considered always something very negative, it is an opportunity perhaps to know something different, something better some new ideas might come because in a group. Suppose there are some people and always they are yes sir, yes sir, yes man what is called yes man.

New ideas will never come somebody is coming with different ideas that particular moment, when difference of opinion, different views, different ideas, let it be there it is quite possible something better, something different might come and with that, if we work together perhaps we shall be in a better position and we shall be in a position to handle conflict slightly better than others. Communication of course, in any situation is

playing very, very important role. In any conflict two things are very important in a group 2 things are very important that is called our communication behaviour and relationship with others, in life relationship really matters a lot and we should try to maintain and advance our relationship. In my next lecture I will try to emphasize on how to build relationship.

Thank you very much.