

**LESSON NOTES 18**

**Year/Level: 13     Subjects: Office Technology**

<b>STRAND</b>	OT 13.3 Office Administration
<b>SUB-STRAND</b>	OT 13.3.2 Customer Service
<b>LEARNING OUTCOME</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain conflict resolution</li><li>• Identify different ways problem arises</li><li>• Identify types of conflicts</li></ul>

**CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS**

**Problem solving and conflict resolution**

- Establish the criteria for the solution of the problem. Brainstorming several ideas for solving the problem or discuss suggestions with several other people.
- Select the best alternative
- Implement the decision
- Evaluate the decision over time.

**NOTE:** This applies in both personal and group/team situations

**Identifying and resolving problems (conflict-resolution)**

Sometimes you may not be able to resolve a problem despite using the above techniques and you then have a conflict situation.

Five types of conflict situations in an organization have been identified:

- Conflict between individuals
- Conflict between individuals and groups
- Conflict between individuals and the organization
- Conflict between groups in the same organization
- Conflict between organization

Problems arise between people in **three** different ways:

1. **Interpersonal conflict** occurs when two or more people disagree over an issue or when they experience emotional opposition from one another.
2. **Substantive conflict** involves disagreements over resources, rewards, policies and procedures and allocation of roles.
3. **Emotional conflict** occurs when there are feelings of anger, dislike, resentment and distrust resulting in personality clashes'. We all experience the feeling of liking some people better than others. You often meet someone for the first time and either like them a lot or instinctively dislike them.

In a work situation there is always at some point conflict between people and this has to be solved through conflict resolution.

**Conflict resolution**

Conflict resolution solves interpersonal conflict in three ways, through lose-lose strategy, win-lose strategy or win-win strategy. How this operates is shown in the table below:

Conflict type	Possible solutions	Results
Lose-lose	Avoidance of conflict. <b>Smoothing</b> – recognizing both sides of conflict. <b>Compromise</b> – each party gives up something of value.	Conflict may appear to have been solved, disagreements are smoothed over; future conflict over the same issue will arise again.
Win-lose	<b>Competition</b> – conflict resolved through forces by someone with superior skill. <b>Authoritative command</b> – someone with authority specifies the outcome.	Only one person has gained anything and the problem is not resolved; future conflict over the same issue may arise again or lead to related conflict.
Win-win	Confrontation of the issues. Problem solving to resolve the conflict issues on both sides.	Conflict has been resolved on both sides; each person or side has won something and the conflict is unlikely to arise again.

The steps used to resolve this conflict on win/win basis (in which both sides win) are to:

- Explore the problem
- Search for mutually acceptable solutions
- Evaluate the solution with the customer
- Decide together whether the solution is mutually acceptable
- Follow up and evaluate the solution after it has been put into operation.

Some points to remember when dealing with a conflict situation are:

- If the customer is aggressive, try not to be aggressive in return.
- Do not take criticism personally and try not to get upset.
- Try to stay calm and in control of the situation.
- Use the 'boomerang principle'(what you send out you receive back).

### ACTIVITY

1. What is conflict resolution?

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2. Identify three different ways problem arises.

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THE END 😊