

Effective Communication Skills Workshop:

CHANGE/CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

MCG Communications Specialist Pty (Ltd)

INTRODUCTION

AIM: By the end of this workshop you should have a clear understanding of:

What's the problem?

What do we need to do to create harmony and a common vision within the department or unit?

What is your cheese?

What do we need to do to move through the maze with energy, gusto and fearlessness like Haw? (summary of story below)

WHO MOVED MY CHEESE

The mice: Sniff
Scurry

The little people: Hem
Haw

Sniff: Sniffs out change early

Scurry: Scurries into action

Hem: Denies and resists change as he/she fears it will lead to something worse

Haw: Learns to adapt in time when he/she sees that change leads to something better

All four characters share something in common: they need to find their way through the maze and succeed in changing times. The story goes that little people and mice all had a huge amount of cheese! A cheese mountain. Somehow that cheese ran out. The mice Sniff and Scurry, realized that and moved on to look for new cheese. The little people where Hem and Haw. Hem was in denial, wasted time not wanting to look for new cheese. Haw was faster, was afraid, but adapted and went to find new cheese without his friend Hem. Hem got hungry, angry, bitter, and stuck. Had to work towards going into the maze again to find new cheese. He did months, later, the mice and Haw had long been enjoying new cheese.

Cheese: A metaphor for what you want in life – a job, money, health, a big house or success

Maze: Where you spend your time looking for what you want. An organization, the community, relationships in your life.

What is cheese to you?

Have you found your cheese? If so, explain. If you haven't found it, tells us why not.

Identify which character best identifies you at this present time:

Ham
Haw

Scurry
Sniff

Why do you identify with the character you chose? Explain.

EXERCISE 1

Split into groups - Ham, Hew (little people) or scurry, sniff (mice)
according to your character choice

Discuss why you chose your character

Construct a detailed character profile

EXERCISE 2

The four characters symbolized management issues.

Identify five to ten management issues that can arise from being one of these
characters e.g communication, leadership, reward system
What's working? What isn't working

EXERCISE 3

Circle the most important management issues that pertain
to your organization

Place them in order of importance

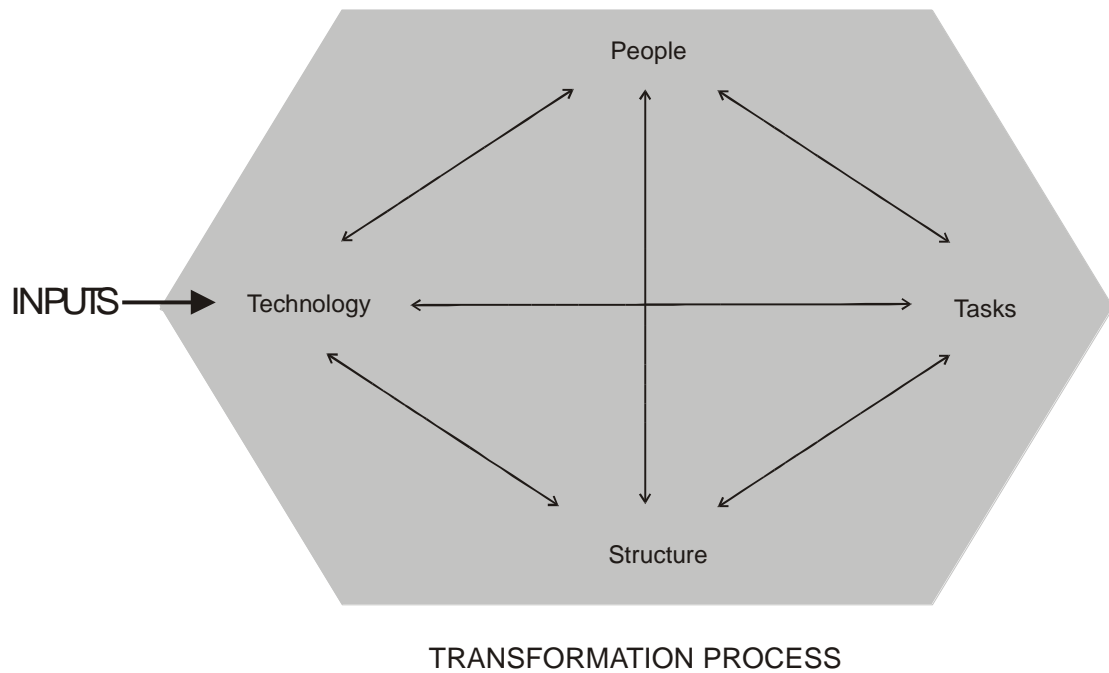
DEALING WITH THE MAZE

Models

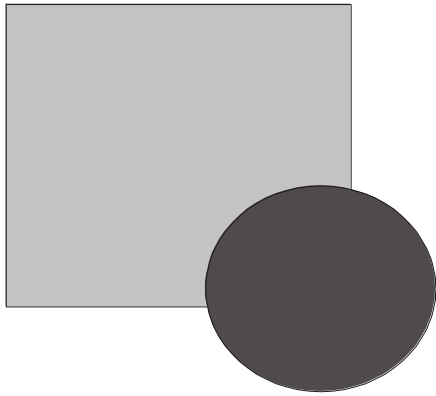
Organization Behaviour by Hugh S. Arnold

Systems views of organizations by Daniel C. Feldman

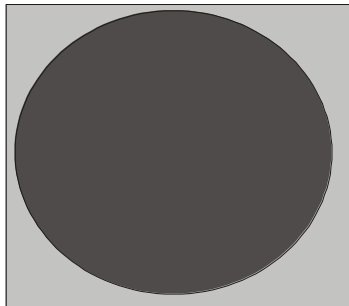
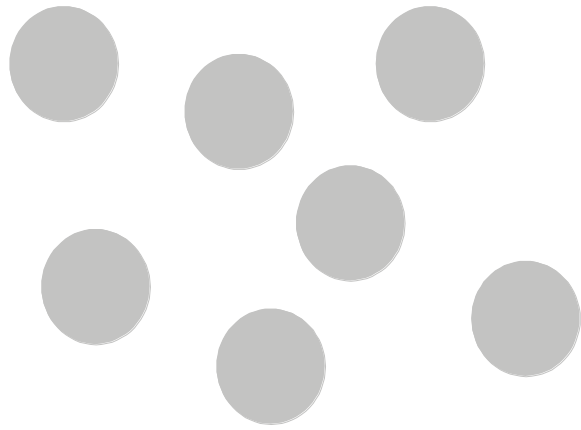
Systems view of organizations.



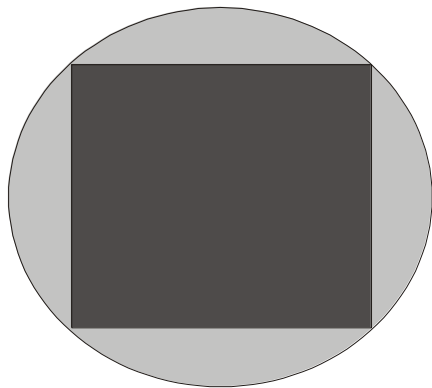
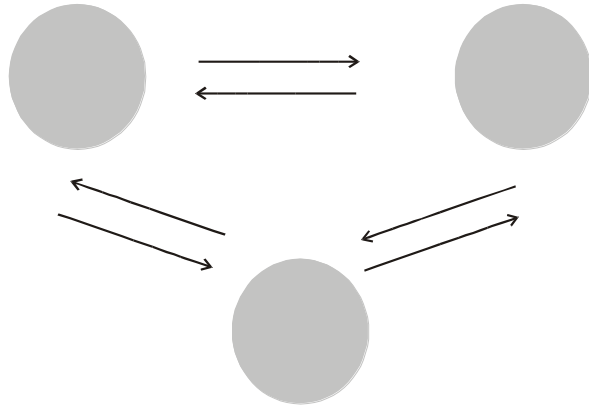
Factors influencing organizational effectiveness.



ORGANIZATION
1. Individual working
in pursuit of goals

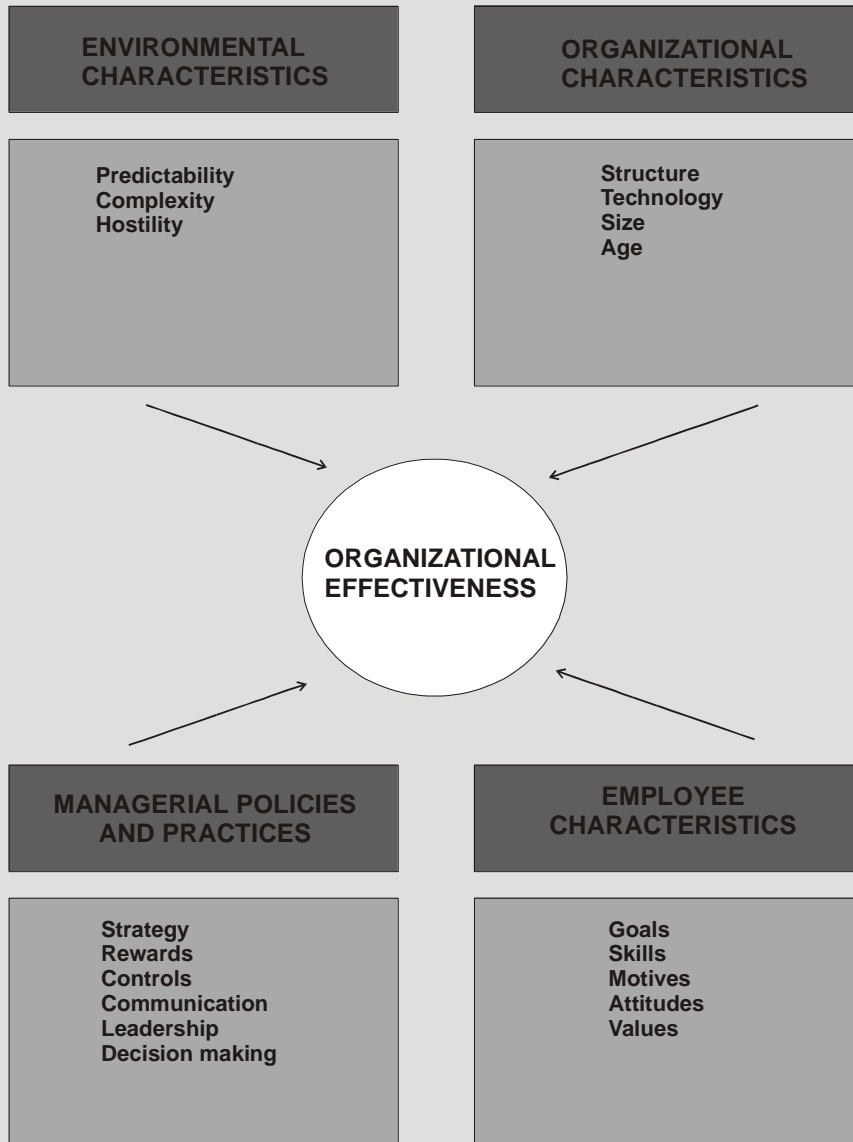


ORGANIZATION
2. Interacting teams, groups
and departments



ORGANIZATION
3. Whole organization

Three levels of analysis of organizational behaviour.



ORGANIZATION
3. Whole organization

EXERCISE 4

How effective is your department, unit or organization?

Use factors influencing organization effectiveness:

- Managerial policies and practices
- Employee characteristics
- Environmental characteristics
- Organization characteristics

Rate it from 1 – 10.

- 10 being the best thing about it
- 1 being the worst thing about it

In your own words, what's the problem?

**The more important
cheese is to you
The more you want
to hold onto it”**

What happened to the mice when the cheese was moved?

What qualities helped them through the change? (list them)

Checked for changes
Sniffed and scurried daily
They did not over analyze things
They visualized new opportunities

What happened to Ham and Haw?

What qualities were obstacles to their success?

Didn't pay attention to small changes
Rented and raved at the injustice around them
Felt depressed – future plans were based on cheese
Felt entitled to the cheese
Didn't see the difference between activity and productivity

Let's look at the organization as the cheese this time.

Is mold growing on the cheese?

What does mold symbolize to you?
List the weaknesses within your organization.

How can you get rid of the mold?
List possible solutions to the problems you stated.

Smell the cheese often to know when it's getting old

What is your organization's mission?

What is your organization's vision?

EXERCISE 5

Pair into groups and share ideas.

**The quicker you let
go of old cheese
The sooner you find
new cheese**

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

Conflict: Dissension; divided loyalties; friction; power struggle; difference; Disagreements; bad blood; antagonism; opposition of incompatible wishes

Oxford Dictionary

The question to ask ourselves is this: Is there really conflict?

INTERGROUP CONFLICT

Refers to disagreement or differences between two groups over authority issues, goals, territory or resources.

Conflict areas can be from misunderstandings, racial tensions, internal structures or interpersonal relations.

When conflict affects organizational processes, people become negative. Distrust and suspicion develops, people react defensively.

CONFLICT LEVELS

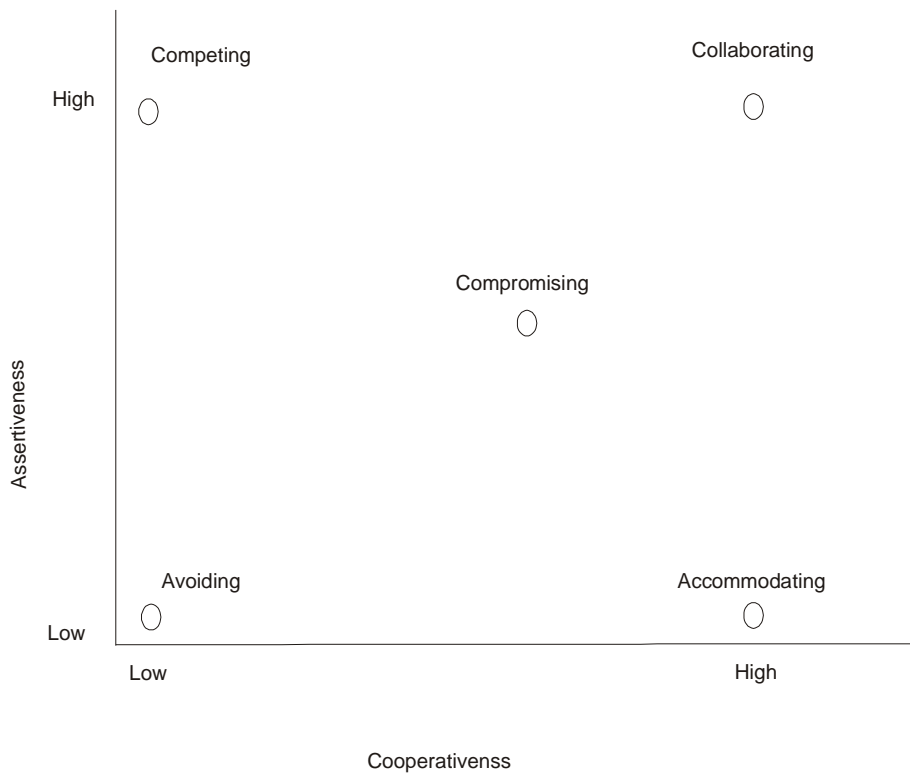
Latent conflict: Source, e.g. competitiveness between peers

Perceived conflict: Realizing that there is conflict, but you are not upset by it, e.g. senior management being close to someone (you may think they will benefit more than you... may not be true).

Felt conflict: People are upset about a situation, but no one does anything to resolve the conflict. Stress and tension occurs

Manifested conflict: What we imagine when we think of conflict. Things like sabotage and aggressive negative thinking about a person.

Which level of conflict are you expressing at the moment?



1. **Avoiding**: An unassertive, uncooperative approach in which both groups neglect the concerns by sidestepping the issue or postponing the conflict by choosing not to deal with it.
2. **Competing**: An assertive, uncooperative mode in which the groups attempt to achieve their own goals at the expense of the other through argument, authority, threat or even physical force.
3. **Accommodating**: An unassertive, cooperative position where one group attempts to satisfy the concerns of the other by neglecting its own concerns or goals.
4. **Compromising**: An intermediate approach in which partial satisfaction is sought for both through a “middle-ground” position that reflects mutual sacrifice. This stance is thus intermediate between assertiveness and cooperativeness because each group makes some concessions but also receives some concessions from the other.
5. **Collaborating**: An assertive, cooperative mode that attempts to satisfy the concerns of both groups. Such mutual satisfaction involves an agreement to confront the conflict, identification of the concerns of the different groups, and problem solving to find alternatives that would satisfy both groups.

Observable Consequences of Intergroup Competition

.....
Within Competing Groups

Between Competing Groups

1. Groups become more cohesive.	1. Each group perceives other groups as the
---------------------------------	---

	enemy, not as a neutral group
2. Group norms demand more loyalty from members; deviance is not tolerated	2. Each group perceives the best in themselves and the worst in other groups – “groupthink” and negative stereotypes occur.
3. Group climate becomes very businesslike – task needs increase and social needs are left unattended.	3. Hostility increases, while communication decreases.
4. Group members tolerate more task-oriented, autocratic leadership as opposed to democratic leadership.	4. When competing groups are forced into interaction, group members listen to their own spokespersons and arguments, and not those of the competing group.
5. Group structure becomes apparent; roles are more formalized.	

Source: Adapted from Edgar Schein, *Organizational Psychology* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980) pp. 172-76.

However, there are positive things that can be derived from conflict. It’s a catalyst for change! It’s also helps you to reset your goals and prioritize.

Confrontations can remove sabotage and blow-off steam.

It’s important to allow optimum levels of conflict to surface to enhance to enhance organizational effectiveness like what we doing today.

<p>Movement in a new direction Lets you find new release</p>

DEFENSIVE COMMUNICATION

- 1). The message is received as threatening to the reader
- 2). The message is delivered in a hostile manner

Cognitive dissonance says people have reactions to information that is consistent with what they believe and reactions to information that is inconsistent with their beliefs.

KEY:-

Avoid exposure to it. Research showed that who people stopped reading newspapers or articles disagreed with the views. They stop reading when they disagree with the information.

Reject its validity. They question the credibility of the information

Forget it quickly. They sooner forget it, than remember what they don't like

Distort the information in memory. They later recall the information inaccurately.

This explains why people have such a hard time with receiving negative feedback. Most important and useful negative feedback is blocked out!

Guidelines for Nondefensive Communication

1. *Discipline your subordinates in private.* It is difficult enough for people to deal with negative feedback without receiving it in front of others.
2. *Don't attach the employee personally.* Focus on the specific behaviours you want the individual to change, not on his or her personality. People become defensive when they feel you are making global personality assessments about them on the basis of a very small sample of their behaviour.
3. *Get the facts first.* Before confronting a subordinate, it is important to know as many specifics of the situation as possible. It is unwise to base your communication on hearsay evidence or "general impressions."
4. *Don't act while angry.* Very few people can act sensibly and objectively when they are angry. Therefore, it is a good idea to calm down before confronting your subordinate. It is also a good idea not to initiate a serious negative conversation while he or she is very angry.
5. *Get the other side of the story.* It is always a good idea to let your subordinate fully explain what happened and why it happened. You may find there were mitigating circumstances, or that he or she wasn't aware of the problem.

Source: Adapted from: Bittel, L.R. (1985). *What every supervisor should know*. New York: McGraw-Hill, pp. 295-299.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

To eliminate conflict one needs to understand and communicate effectively with people. How?

Be willing to listen to the entire message/complaint without interrupting the speaker.

Observe the non-verbal clues that they are sending

Learn to paraphrase and give effective feedback. The session should end with a summary so that you leave with the same understanding

EXERCISE 6

A misunderstanding just broke-out in your department. You are furious because you are blamed by your senior manger and no facts were gathered. Express your anger to your colleague for this sabotage. (You have proof that they have done this).

COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

Learn to get the to the point, especially with negative feedback. Small talk creates anxiety. Conclude by stating what you would like to see happen (moves to resolution mode)

Always be prepared to receive a rebuff yourself: listen, pause, reflect. Consider the receiver's readiness to hear the feedback.

CHANGE

Dealing with conflict requires courage. It wants us to be ready for new cheese, often what needs addressing, opens wounds, and requires us to think or act differently.

We have to be willing to laugh at ourselves like Hew did once he found his cheese at cheese station N. Sometimes finding new cheese takes time. The little people moved from station C to station N!

“The biggest inhibitor to change lies within ourselves, and nothing gets better until we change.”

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Change Happens
They Keep Moving the Cheese

Anticipate Change
Get Ready For the Cheese To
Move

Monitor Change
Smell The Cheese Often So You
Know When It Is Getting Old

Adapt To Change Quickly
The Quicker You Let Go Of Old
Cheese,
The Sooner You Can Enjoy New
Cheese

Change
Move With The Cheese

Enjoy the Change!
Savor The Adventure And
Enjoy The Taste Of New Cheese!

Be Ready To Change Quickly
And Enjoy It Again
They Keep Moving The Cheese

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Diversity: assortment, difference, dissimilarity, distinctiveness, medley, variety, range, variance

Oxford Dictionary

A wonderful word. We all come from various cultural backgrounds which influence the way we view ourselves, our world, our community, our colleagues at work. Stereotypes and belief systems are key to this. We are influenced by two negative emotions. Fear and anger when it comes to race. We all have stereotypes we have of people.

EXERCISE 7

Phase I

Choose a race of people you have stereotypes about.

Black/ Asian/ White/ Coloured

Reflect on the following.

Look at their values –

What do you dislike about them

What do they bring to the party (into our diverse country)

What issues are key to them

Heaven: tell story with the forks!

Phase II

What racial issues are there within your organization?

Trust issues?

Language issues?

Respect issues?

Personality issues?

Superiority complex issues?

Competence issues?

Power issues?

(Mind Map exercise)

Phase III

Change something about someone next to you. Stand opposite each other. Change whatever you like about them.

RACIAL STRIFE

We must transcend the illusion of separateness by recognizing that there can be unity in diversity and that diversity can be a strength.

How do we overcome racial strife and prejudice? Whenever we catch ourselves prejudging, that is the time to overcome that tendency “Prejudice” and not just let it slide, even if it’s a joke or a comment that includes prejudice.

When someone draws a circle to include only those of their race, or friends – you can do better by drawing a larger circle that includes you and them. The higher and more expansive your ideas become, the richer your life.

In the high mountains of the Andes there are narrow ledges where only one pack of animals can walk. When two pack animals meet, one kneels and lets the other walk over him. In that way, both are safe and both go on their way. They become part of the road. You can be part of a winning team if you are willing to kneel for each other – for each other’s views and decisions. You cannot force anyone to see things your way, whether it be good for them or not. This means that you cannot force your opinions on them no matter how good or true they may be. You must be willing to give and take – and that entails humility.

FEEDBACK

- Power issues - Need more self-government and leadership issues
- Authority - Reward system
- Role clarity - No misunderstanding
- Confidence - Authentic power

SUMMARY

What's our problem?

What do we need to do to create harmony and a common goal?

What's our cheese?

What do we need to be doing to move through the maze with energy, gusto, fearless like Haw?

Any additional comments
