

Reducing Conflict 93 Address Problems Early

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There are a number of ways to reduce conflict, and an important one is to address problems early.

This article describes how to spot problems early and deal with them before they blow up.

Problems often occur between people and groups, but they also show up in any of the processes we use.

Some people have a talent for detecting problems when they first show up on the horizon. They have a significant advantage if they deal with the issues promptly and get a resolution.

Keep an eye out for things that are not working correctly

Monitoring processes, systems, and activities can help identify potential problems before they become more serious. Be alert for small changes that could be forecasts of bigger issues to come. If something has shifted, find out why.

Key performance indicators can detect problems in the early stages

Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) can help track progress and identify potential problems early on. By setting measurable goals and tracking progress, you can identify areas that need improvement before they grow. One precaution is to make sure your indicators are really measuring the phenomenon you are trying to control.

Feedback and ideas can spot future problems

Encouraging feedback and ideas from customers, employees, or other stakeholders can help identify potential problems early on. This practice can help address issues before they escalate and improve the overall quality of your products or services. Sometimes ideas come in the form of complaints. Remain open to all forms of feedback and do not punish people who complain. Thank them for the tip.

Risk assessment

Conducting risk assessments can help identify potential problems and their likelihood of occurring. By identifying potential risks, you can take steps to mitigate them and prevent

them from becoming bigger problems. Reinforce people who point out risks as potential problems.

Conclusions

Spotting problems early requires a proactive approach that involves regularly measuring and analyzing activities to identify potential issues. By identifying and addressing issues early, you can prevent them from becoming bigger problems with more significant impacts.

The other piece of advice is to not let problems grow before your eyes. Make sure to deal with the **root cause** of problems and don't just try to reduce the symptoms. Sometimes it takes a bit of digging to get to the root cause. One technique that is helpful is to ask "why" five times.

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