



CHAPTER 15 MANAGING CONFLICT AND STRESS

Learning Objectives

1. Define conflict.
2. Discuss the useful effects of conflict.
3. Outline the stages of conflict development.
4. Name the five major types of conflicts based on the entities involved.
5. Name five approaches to resolving interpersonal conflict.
6. Name and briefly discuss one method of positively managing conflicts created by diversity in the workforce.
7. Define stress and technostress.
8. Define burnout.
9. Describe what is a sabbatical.
10. Outline the basic elements of a violence-prevention program.
11. Explain the three basic types of employee assistance programs.
12. Explain wellness programs.

Chapter Overview

One of the most damaging occurrences that can strike an organization is conflict. However, because of the complexity of modern business, intense competition, and the need to constantly improve and change, conflict is very likely to occur. Contemporary management must, therefore, learn to deal with conflict, reduce the negative impact of conflict, and find ways to use conflict for beneficial gain. In order to do this, conflict must be studied as a process, and the manager must know the stages of development that conflict goes through.

Once the various forms of conflict have been recognized, management must prepare a plan, provide instruction, and obtain feedback on how to deal with interpersonal and organizational conflict. Studies have shown that organizations that respond in a positive and enlightened manner toward conflict are much better prepared to control conflicts' effects and reduce the impact on productivity, team building, and cost effectiveness. If conflict goes unbridled, it can become part of the organizational culture and become very difficult to deal with in a reasonable and efficient manner.

There are several contemporary side effects of conflict. Stress and burnout are among the most common forces that attack the productivity and creativity of managers. In order to deal with the psychological and physical effects of conflict, stress, and burnout, human resource departments have developed employee assistance programs and wellness programs. It is believed that these programs are excellent devices to aid



employees and the organization to maintain a healthy attitude toward the work environment and themselves. Since the employee is one of the organization's most valuable resources, it is in the best interest of the organization to protect and nurture that resource.

Lecture Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. **Conflict** is an overt behavior that results when an individual or group of individuals thinks a perceived need or needs of the individual or group of individuals has been blocked or is about to be blocked.
 - B. Conflict occurs because individuals have different perceptions, beliefs, and goals.
 - C. Management often approaches conflict with the following assumptions:
 - 1. Conflict is avoidable.
 - 2. Conflict is the result of personality problems within the organization.
 - 3. Conflict produces inappropriate reactions by the persons involved.
 - 4. Conflict creates a polarization within the organization.
 - D. However, conflict is perfectly natural, should be expected to occur, and must be dealt with.
 - E. The destructive effects of conflict
 - 1. Overall work suffers.
 - 2. Loser may withdraw or resign.
 - 3. Health may be affected.
 - F. The constructive effects of conflict
 - 1. Energizes people.
 - 2. Form of communication.
 - 3. Outlet for tension.
 - 4. Educational experience.

Key Term #1; Learning Objectives #1, 2; Review Questions #1, 2, 10; Figure 15.1

- II. Progressive Stages of Conflict
 - A. Conflict passes through a series of progressive steps as tension builds
 - 1. Latent conflict—basic conditions are present.
 - 2. Perceived conflict—cause is recognized by one or both parties.
 - 3. Felt conflict—tension builds, but no real struggle has begun.
 - 4. Manifest conflict—open and apparent struggle.
 - 5. Conflict aftermath—conflict ends with resolution or suppression.



- B. Conflict does not always pass through all stages.
- C. The parties in conflict may not be at the same stage simultaneously.

Learning Objective #3; Review Question #3

III. Analyzing Conflict

A. **Intrapersonal conflict** is internal to the individual.

1. Can result when barriers exist between the drive and the goal; consequences may be withdrawal, aggression, excessive drinking, drug abuse, and more subtle responses.
2. May also result when goals have both positive and negative aspects and when competing and conflicting goals exist
 - a. Three major forms of conflicting goals—mutually exclusive positive goals, positive-negative goals, and negative-negative aspects
 - b. **Dissonance**—feeling of conflict felt by the individual when trying to make a decision.
3. Related to goal conflict are *cognitive conflict* (ideas or thoughts are perceived as incompatible in a given situation) and *affective conflict* (feelings or emotions are incompatible and the result is usually anger at the other person).
4. The level and amount of conflict can be increased by task interdependence, scarce rewards, communication failures, individual differences, and inadequate reward systems.

B. **Interpersonal conflict** is between two or more individuals; caused by many factors:

1. Opposing personalities.
2. Prejudice based on personal background or ethnic origin.
3. Dissatisfaction with one's role relative to the role of others,

C. **Intergroup (structural) conflict**—results from the organizational structure; may be relatively independent of the individuals occupying the roles within the structure.

1. Goal segmentation and rewards—the reward system may help reduce goal conflict.
2. Mutual departmental dependence—units are dependent on each other to accomplish goals.
3. Unequal departmental dependence—one group is more dependent on another group.
4. Functional unit and the environment—different tasks are performed and different parts of the environment are dealt with.
5. Role dissatisfaction—often results from low perceived status.
6. Role ambiguities—when credit or blame for success/failure cannot be determined.
7. Common Resource Dependence—competition for resources.
8. Communications problems—different languages, communication barriers, etc.



- D. **Organizational Conflict**—conflict between employees and the organization itself; produced by policy changes, reorganizations, downsizings, layoffs, and expense tightening.
- E. **Political Conflict**—purposeful conflict that is often undertaken with an elaborate battle plan; usually results from the promotion of self-interests on the part of an individual or a group.
 - 1. Rewards are pursued with vigor.
 - 2. Can degenerate into unfair play when participants try to win at all costs.

Key Terms #2, 3, 4, 5, 6,; Learning Objective #4; Review Questions #4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9; Figures 15.2, 15.3; Management Illustration 15.1

IV. Managing Conflict

- A. Although some conflict may be beneficial to the organization, unresolved conflict or conflict that is resolved poorly usually results in negative consequences.
- B. Managers should act as referees and counselors by helping the participants reach an acceptable solution.
- C. Approaches to Resolving Conflict Situations
 - 1. Methods for resolving interpersonal conflict include:
 - a. Compromise by both sides giving up something they want.
 - b. Smooth over the conflict by pretending it doesn't exist.
 - c. Withdraw one or more of the participants.
 - d. Force the conflict to a conclusion by third-party intervention.
 - e. Have a confrontation between the participants in an effort to solve the underlying source of conflict.
 - 2. Confrontation is thought to be the best method, and forcing the conflict to a conclusion.
 - 3. Resolving structural conflict
 - a. Decouple conflicting units by reducing common resource dependencies.
 - b. Use a “linking” position between dependent departments.
 - c. Design the work flow to develop logical and complete work units.
 - d. Utilize the matrix organization.
- D. The Conflict Interface
 - 1. Managers can help participants with the cause of the conflict and its underlying issues.
 - 2. Managers can obtain needed information.
 - 3. Managers can establish ground rules for constructive confrontations.
 - 4. Managers may be able to regulate the frequency of contacts and establish a problem-solving climate.
 - 5. Managers need to keep individuals working toward a true resolution.



E. Conflict and Diversity

1. Conflict can result from differences in thinking styles, speech patterns, lifestyles, national origins, ethnicity, religion, age, functional expertise, company experience, etc.
2. **Organizational diplomacy**—the strategies used to minimize conflict in a diverse workplace, in both domestic and international settings; based on a proactive, unifying approach, as opposed to a reactive and superficial approach.

Key Term #7; Learning Objectives #5, 6; Review Questions #11, 12, 13; Figures 15.4, 15.5

V. Workplace Stress

- A. **Stress** is the mental and/or physical condition that results from a perceived threat of danger (physical or emotional) and the pressure to remove it.
- B. Stress is manifest in employees through cynical attitudes, increased absenteeism, job turnover, lower productivity, mistakes on the job, and physical and psychological problems.
- C. The workplace stress audit determines the specific sources of stress, and then solutions can be explored.
- D. Organizational guidelines for managing stress
 1. Organizations can take many actions to reduce the amount of job-related stress experienced by their employees.
 - a. Shortening hours of direct contact with customers.
 - b. Granting special leaves (sabbatical programs).
 - c. Introducing early retirement programs.
 - d. Installing on-site exercise facilities.
 - e. Actively involving employees in the decision-making processes.
 - f. Fulfilling the realistic expectations of employees.
 - g. Introducing flextime or telecommuting where possible.
 - h. Insisting that employees take vacation time.
 - i. Clearly defining employee jobs.
 - j. Providing well-thought-out training programs.
 - k. Introducing changes gradually.
 - l. Integrating wholesome humor into the workplace.
- E. Managing personal stress
 1. Managers need to determine if their lives are reasonably balanced.
 2. Use the five-step approach to regain balance.
- F. **Technostress** is personal stress generated by reliance on technological devices, a panicky feeling when they fail, a state of nearconstant stimulation, or being constantly “plugged-in.”



- G. **Burnout** is a condition that occurs when work is no longer meaningful to the worker; caused by chronic stress; myths about burnout have surfaced.
1. Burnout is a new notion that just gives lazy people the excuse not to work.
 2. As long as people enjoy their work, they can never experience burnout.
 3. Individuals know when they are burning out and all they have to do is take some time off.
 4. Individuals who are physically and psychologically strong will not experience burnout.
 5. Job burnout is always job related.
- H. **Sabbatical** is a word derived from Sabbath and literally means a recurring period of rest and renewal.
1. Most sabbaticals granted by today's organizations allow the recipient to take time off, often with some pay cut, while retaining benefits.
- I. **Workaholism** is working to the exclusion of everything else in one's life. It is an addiction that causes a person to become obsessed with work so that the person is crippled emotionally and physically.
- J. Workplace violence
1. Dangers—extreme violence, nonfatal assaults, verbal threats, harassment and intimidation, sexual harassment, and other erratic behaviors.
 2. Prevention programs should include
 - a. A written policy statement.
 - b. A management response team.
 - c. A meaningful reporting and response mechanism.
 - d. Clear standards of behavior.
 - e. A wide array of other security, employment, legal, and administrative practices.
 - f. Periodic employee training.
- K. **Employee assistance programs (EAPs)** are sponsored by the organization that attempts to help employees with stress, burnout, and other personal problems that include alcohol and drug abuse, depression, anxiety, domestic trauma, financial problems, and other psychiatric/medical problems.
1. Based on cost savings (productivity, absenteeism and tardiness, insurance programs, etc.)
 2. An EAP must be accepted by employees, and they must not be afraid to use it.
- L. **Wellness programs** are company-implemented programs to help employees prevent illness and in general improve their well being.
1. Medical exams, stop-smoking clinics, education, hypertension detection and control, etc.
 2. Benefits include fewer sick days, reduced coronary heart disease, and lower major medical costs. Employee productivity may also increase.



Key Terms #8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14; Learning Objectives #7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12; Review Questions #14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Figures 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9, 15.10, 15.11, 15.12; Management Illustrations 15.2, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5

Barriers to Student Understanding

1. The first barrier to understanding comes from a general misconception of what conflict is and what it is not. Students normally think of conflict as being fighting or something related to personal dislike. The chapter presents many examples of conflict, their sources, the types, and how negative situations might develop. After the students have defined the term, the instructor should ask them to indicate with examples when conflict can be bad and when it can be good. In addition, give examples of how conflict occurs in organizations and between labor and management.
2. The next barrier occurs when the students are faced with describing how a conflict occurs and what management should do about it. By going through the five stages of conflict (ask them to provide examples of each stage), they will have a better understanding of how management might intercede. Using examples from jobs at fast food or retail establishments, the students should be able to adequately begin a discussion about conflict.
3. An additional barrier comes from not understanding how most conflicts arise from goal conflict. By discussing goals, the discussion can turn to the differences between intrapersonal, interpersonal, and intergroup conflict. What management strategies are useful for dealing with conflict at these three different levels? What is the difference between these different types of conflict?
4. Lastly, students tend to relate stress to their college learning experience and their social lives. It is necessary to explain how stress develops on the job and how management deals with stress in the work place.

Key Terms

1. Conflict
2. Intrapersonal Conflict
3. Dissonance
4. Interpersonal Conflict
5. Intergroup (Structural) Conflict
6. Organizational Conflict
7. Organizational Diplomacy
8. Stress
9. Technostress
10. Burnout



11. Sabbatical
12. Workaholism
13. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
14. Wellness Programs

Suggested Answers to Analyzing Management Skills

- Why do you think conflict arises between parties that have had a good relationship for years? What might have happened if UPS had used press coverage and other means to portray its drivers negatively during and after the strike?

Conflict may arise because of changes in expectations, goals, structural elements, organizational factors, or self-interest. Negatively portraying drivers would likely have further strained working relations after the strikers returned to work; it might also have damaged relations between customers and the drivers and/or company.

Suggested Answers to Applying Management Skills

- Have you ever witnessed a dispute between friends or co-workers that turned out badly? Outline a set of guidelines that might be followed to help resolve a dispute.

You may want to suggest that students review the section entitled “Approaches to Resolving Conflict Situations.”

Answers to Review Questions

1. What is conflict?

Conflict is overt behavior that results when an individual or a group of individuals think a perceived need or needs of the individual or group has been blocked or is about to be blocked.

2. Describe some potentially useful effects of conflict.

Conflict may resolve problems, clear the air, raise standards after resolution and/or raise morale and loyalty levels.

3. Identify the five stages of conflict.

The stages of conflict development are latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, and conflict aftermath.

4. What causes intrapersonal conflict?



First, barriers may exist between a drive and a goal. Second, goal conflict can take three forms: mutually exclusive positive goals, positive-negative goals, and negative-negative goals.

5. What are some typical defense mechanisms used when an individual is frustrated?

Compensation, conversion, displacement, fantasy, negativism, rationalization, regression, repression, resignation, apathy, boredom, flight, and withdrawal are all defense mechanisms.

6. What are some causes of interpersonal conflict?

Interpersonal conflict may be caused by opposing personalities, prejudice based on personal background or ethnic origin, or dissatisfaction with one's role relative to the role of others

7. Name at least four types of intergroup conflict.

Goal segmentation and rewards, mutual departmental dependence, unequal departmental dependence, functional unit and the environment, and role dissatisfaction are all types of structural conflict.

8. What is organizational conflict?

Organizational conflict is conflict between employees and the organization itself; it is produced by policy changes, reorganizations, downsizings, layoffs, and/or expense tightening.

9. What is political conflict?

Planned, deliberate conflict to achieve political gain (benefits) for one group or party over others.

10. What are some methods that can be used to resolve interpersonal conflict?

There are five general methods of resolving interpersonal conflict: (a) withdraw one or more of the participants; (b) smooth over the conflict and pretend it does not exist; (c) compromise for the sake of ending the conflict; (d) force the conflict to a conclusion by third-party intervention; and (e) have a confrontation between the participants in an effort to solve the underlying source of conflict.

11. Outline some key questions that need to be answered in conflict resolution.

- What perceived loss or threat of loss has led each party to perceive a conflict?
- How does each party define the conflict issues?
- How does each party pursue his or her objectives in dealing with the other party?
- How is each party's behavior influenced by the behavior of the other?
- If things proceed as they are, what are likely to be the short-term and long-term results—both substantive and emotional?



- Does the general makeup of either party predispose him or her toward the use of specific conflict-handling modes?
- Is either party acting as a representative for a larger set of individuals?
- Who are the other, relatively neutral, onlookers?
- What is the relative importance and frequency of competitive issues versus common problems in the relationship as a whole?
- Are there many rules that dictate or constrain settlements on specific issues?
- How are the behaviors of the parties shaped by the format of their negotiations?
- What provisions are there for involving third parties?

12. What is organizational diplomacy?

Organizational diplomacy is the strategies used to minimize conflict in a diverse workplace, in both domestic and international settings; it is based on a proactive, unifying approach, as opposed to a reactive and superficial approach.

13. Name several ways that stress can manifest itself in the workplace.

Stress is manifest in employees through cynical attitudes, increased absenteeism, job turnover, lower productivity, mistakes on the job, and physical and psychological problems.

14. What is a workplace stress audit?

A workplace stress audit determines the specific sources of stress, then solutions can be explored.

15. List several actions an organization can take to reduce job-related stress of its employees.

Organizations are attempting to help employees with stress, burnout and other personal problems in the form of employee assistance programs (EAPs). Several forms exist, including diagnosis and treatment of the problem are provided, second, the organization hires a qualified person to diagnose the employee's problem; then the employee is referred to the proper agency, and third, a coordinator evaluates the employee's problem only sufficiently to make a referral to the proper agency or clinic for diagnosis.

16. What is technostress?

Technostress is personal stress generated by reliance on technological devices, a panicky feeling when they fail, a state of nearconstant stimulation, or being constantly "plugged-in."

17. What is burnout?

Burnout is a person's adaptation not only to stress but also to a variety of work-related and personal factors. **Burnout** is a condition that occurs when work is no longer meaningful to the worker; caused by chronic stress.



18. What are sabbaticals?

Sabbatical is a word derived from Sabbath and literally means a recurring period of rest and renewal. Most sabbaticals granted by today's organizations allow the recipient to take time off, often with some pay cut, while retaining benefits. The length and terms of sabbaticals vary considerably among those organizations that offer them.

19. What is workaholism?

Workaholism is working to the exclusion of everything else in one's life.

20. What is a workplace violence-prevention program?

A workplace violence-prevention program is established to greatly reduce the probability of a problem. A comprehensive program should include a written policy statement, a management response team, a meaningful reporting and response mechanism, clear standards of behavior, a wide array of other security, employment, legal, and administrative practices, and a system of periodic employee training.

21. What are the three basic types of employee assistance programs (EAPs)?

In one type of EAP, diagnosis and treatment of the problem are provided directly by the organization. In a second type, the organization hires a qualified person to diagnose the employee's problem and then refers the employee to a proper agency or clinic for treatment. The third and most common type employs a coordinator who evaluates the employee's problem only sufficiently enough to make a proper referral to the proper agency or clinic for diagnosis.

22. What is a wellness program?

Wellness programs are preventive programs such as fitness classes, lifestyle classes, seminars, and so on, to protect the life and health of employees, improve their performance, and reduce organizational costs.

Suggested Answers to Skill-Building Questions

1. Should managers attempt to avoid conflict at all times? Explain.

No. Conflict is perfectly natural and should be expected to occur. The general consensus is that conflict itself is not undesirable; rather, it is a phenomenon that can have constructive or destructive effects.

2. "Conflict is inevitable." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Discuss.



Agree. Individuals will almost always have different perceptions, beliefs, goals, self-interests, personalities, prejudices, dissatisfactions, and organizational positions.

3. How can managers reduce destructive stress in organizations?

First, conduct a workplace stress audit. Second, use the results to develop solutions to reduce the organizational stressors. For example, organizations can provide training for employees who experience job mismatch. Organizations can also clarify roles and make reasonable demands upon employees.

4. How would you handle a situation in which you have two people working for you who “just rub each other the wrong way”?

As the manager, I might attempt to limit their contact. However, it would probably be more effective to provide a forum for a constructive confrontation to discuss what is bothering each of them and to help them find a solution.

5. Examine your personal situation and identify some ways that you might reduce stress in your day-to-day activities.

Encourage students to think about not only the sources of their stress but also about the real causes of their stress. For example, not having enough time to accomplish tasks might be the source of stress; however, the true cause might be procrastination or poor time management skills, which are both correctable.

Skill-Building Exercise 15.1

The Workplace Stress Scale

This exercise offers an analysis on workplace stress, and helps form an evaluation of factors that contribute towards workplace stress. If feasible, it would be worthwhile to encourage students to have people from different professions fill out the form and compare the results.

Skill-Building Exercise 15.2

Self-evaluation: The Glazer-Stress Control Lifestyle Questionnaire

This exercise offers a self-diagnostic questionnaire, which may surprise some of your students. If feasible, it would be worthwhile to have a friend or spouse fill out the form for the person and compare the results. Self-perception may differ from how others see us!



Skill-Building Exercise 15.3

Social Readjustment Rating Scale

This exercise gives students an opportunity to take the time to assess their own personal stress level.

Suggested Answers to Case Incident Questions

Case 15.1 The Young College Graduate and the Old Superintendent

1. Why is this conflict occurring?

The conflict is occurring probably because Ralph resents Kevin's assuming of the production scheduling, and Kevin resents Ralph for not being open to his new system of scheduling.

2. What method did the manager use in dealing with this conflict situation? Was it effective?

The manager is overlooking the reason that the new position was not strategically introduced, and the conflict is personal and growing into a company-wide production disruption. Instead, the manager stepped in to temporarily solve immediate disagreements and threatened Kevin and Ralph's survival in the company. It obviously was not effective.

3. Recommend an approach for resolving the conflict.

Now, the plant manager should meet with Kevin and Ralph individually and show sincerity towards their feelings. He will learn the reasons underlying the conflict and be able to explain his reasoning for upgrading and expanding the production scheduling, which in turn made it necessary to create a new position to fill. He should then arrange to meet with Ralph and Kevin at the same time to discuss why it is so important for them to communicate effectively and why each of their positions relies on the other's. If this approach to conflict resolution fails, restrictive and progressive disciplinary measures may have to be used based on the plant's performance levels, which will most likely decrease?

Case 15.2 Problems at the Hospital

1. Is Randy's reaction uncommon? Explain.

Unfortunately, no. Conflict is a normal part of life within an organization.

2. What type of conflict exists between Kaye and Randy?

Interpersonal in the form of prejudice. Kaye's problem is she's a woman, at least according to Randy.

3. What methods would you use to reduce or resolve the conflict?



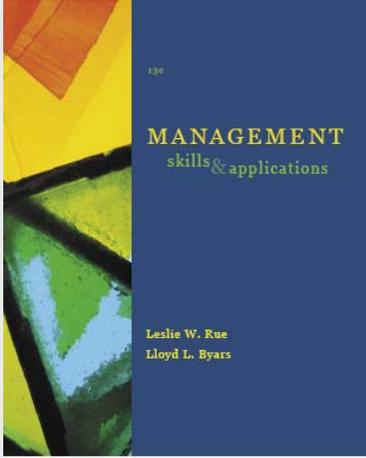
Randy needs to confront and deal with his prejudice, a tall order for anyone. Maybe if he could be shown how to get around his boss and deal with real issues he might change. His attitude has roots somewhere; now it needs to be rooted out.

4. Could Kaye have done anything in advance of the meeting to maximize her chances of success? Explain.

She might have brought some male colleagues along with her to present the proposal as a team. She would have faded into the background a bit that way. Also, she could have involved the board members in the review of alternative plans. If the board members had participated in the review process and selection of a firm—or at least been kept informed—they would have been less likely to resist.

Suggested Student Projects

1. Find a manager of a small to medium sized firm, and interview him/her about conflict in the workplace. You might ask: What does conflict mean to you? What is the chief form of conflict that you face as a manager? What is the most common way of resolving conflict? Do you have any training programs for employees concerning conflict? Add other questions at your discretion. Summarize your findings, and present them to the class or your instructor.
2. Find three workers (they could be managers, line employees, or staff), and interview them concerning their feelings toward stress. You might ask: What is stressful to you? What is the chief source of stress in your life? How does stress make you feel? How does stress affect you? How do you cope with stress? How does your company encourage you to deal with stress? Does the company have any training in the stress management area? Add other questions at your discretion. Summarize your findings, and present them to the class or your instructor.
3. After researching contemporary business literature, write a short three-page report on either conflict or stress. (You might begin by looking at the bibliography attached to this chapter.) Explain the concepts, give different views on how to manage the area(s), comment on how the concept(s) relate to a total quality environment, discuss how management must manage the area(s), and relate a personal experience with conflict or stress. Finally, what do you think will be the future direction of the management of either conflict or stress, whichever you have chosen?



**Chapter
15**

**Managing
Conflict and
Stress**

McGraw-Hill/Irwin

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Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define conflict.
2. Discuss the useful effects of conflict.
3. Outline the stages of conflict development.
4. Name the five major types of conflict based on the entities involved.
5. Name five approaches of resolving interpersonal conflict.
6. Name and briefly discuss one method of positively managing conflicts created by diversity in the workforce.

15-2

Serving to Promote the Potential Of People & Organizations



Learning Objectives (cont'd)

After studying this chapter, you will be able to:

7. Define stress and technostress.
8. Define burnout.
9. Describe what is a sabbatical.
10. Outline the basic elements of a violence-prevention program.
11. Explain the three basic types of employee assistance programs.
12. Explain wellness programs.

15-3

Conflict Management

- Conflict
 - An overt behavior that results when an individual or a group of individuals thinks a perceived need of the individual or group has been blocked or is about to be blocked.
- Typical assumptions:
 - Conflict is avoidable.
 - Conflict is the result of personality problems in the organization.
 - Conflict produces inappropriate reactions by those involved.
 - Conflict creates a polarization within the organization.

15-4

Serving to Promote the Potential Of People & Organizations

Myths and Truths about Conflict

Myth	Truth
Conflict in the workplace is always dysfunctional.	Conflict is a normal part of life within an organization.
All conflicts can be resolved.	Most conflicts can be managed.
Conflict tends to go away if it is ignored.	Conflict can motivate change.
Conflicts always result in winners and losers.	Conflict can help build relationships between people.

Source: Jerry Wisinski, *Resolving Conflicts on the Jo* (New York: American Management Association, 1993).

Figure 15.1

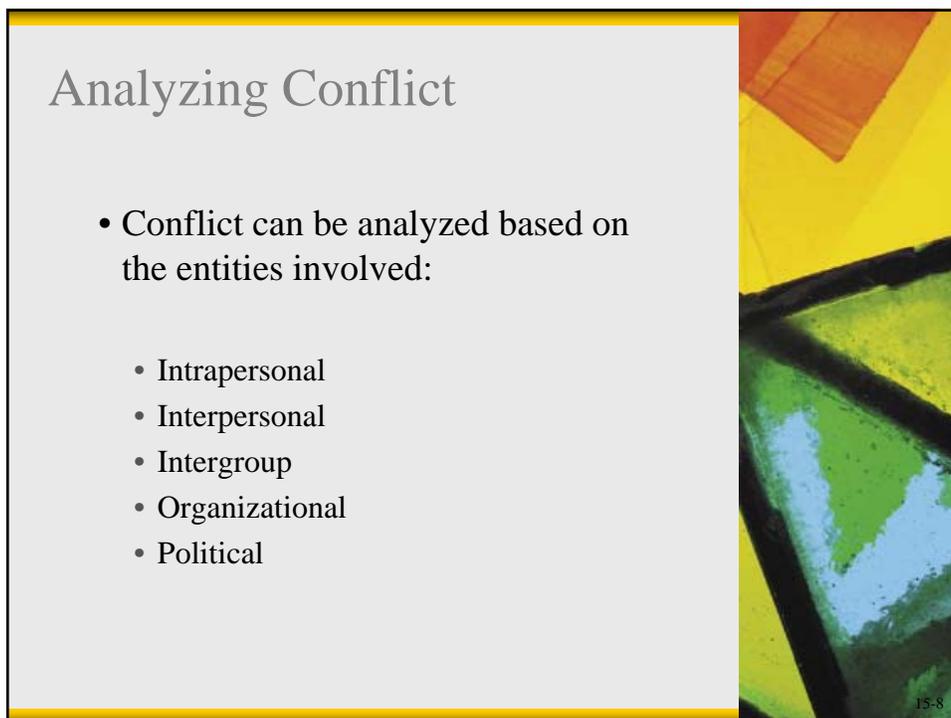
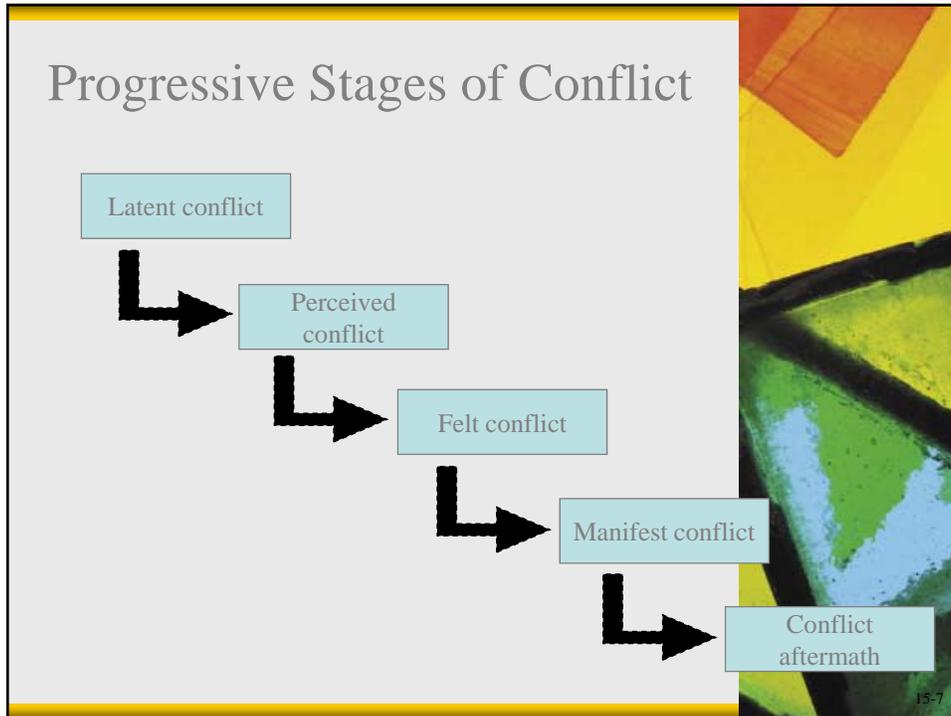
15-5

Potentially Useful Effects of Conflict

- Conflict energizes people. Even if not all of the resulting activity is constructive, it at least wakes people up and gets them moving.
- Conflict is a form of communication; the resolution of conflict may open new and lasting channels.
- Conflict often provides an outlet for pent-up tensions, resulting in catharsis. With the air cleansed, the participants can again concentrate on their primary responsibilities.
- Conflict may actually be an educational experience. The participants may become aware and more understanding of their opponents' functions and the problems with which they must cope.

15-6

Serving to Promote the Potential Of People & Organizations



Serving to Promote the Potential Of People & Organizations



Intrapersonal (Goal) Conflict

- **Conflicting positive goals.**
 - Example: A person is offered two equally attractive jobs.
- **Goals with both positive and negative aspects.**
 - Example: An employee is offered a job promotion that requires the employee to relocate.
- **Goals that have only negative aspects.**
 - Example: A person working in a job he or she dislikes but may consider looking for another job just as undesirable.

15-9

Intrapersonal (Goal) Conflict (cont'd)

- **Dissonance**
 - Feeling of conflict felt by individual trying to make a decision.
- **Goal conflict includes:**
 - **Cognitive conflict**
 - Ideas or thoughts are perceived as incompatible in a given situation.
 - **Affective conflict**
 - Feelings or emotions are incompatible and the result is usually anger at the other person.
- **Managers must learn to identify intrapersonal conflict not only within employees but also within themselves.**

15-10

Serving to Promote the Potential Of People & Organizations



Reactions to Frustration and Anxiety

Adaptive Reactions	Psychological Process	Illustration
Compensation	Individual denies himself or herself to a pursuit with increased vigor to make up for some feeling of real or imagined inadequacy.	Zedric, hardworking president of the 25-Year Club who has never advanced very far in the company hierarchy.
Conversion	Emotional conflicts are expressed in muscular, sensory, or bodily symptoms of disability, malfunctioning, or pain.	A disabling headache keeping a staff member off the job the day after a checked project had been missed.
Displacement	Reacts part-up emotions toward persons, ideas, or objects other than the primary source of the emotion.	Roughly rejecting a simple request from a subordinate after receiving a rebuff from the boss.
Fantasy	Daydreaming or other forms of imaginative activity provide an escape from reality and negated satisfactions.	An employee's daydream of the day in the staff meeting when he corrects the boss's mistake and is publicly acknowledged as the real leader of the group.
Negation	Active or passive resistance, operating unconsciously.	The manager who, having been unsuccessful in getting out of a committee assignment, picks apart every suggestion anyone makes in the meetings.
Rationalization	Justifies inconsistent or undesirable behavior, beliefs, statements, and motivations by providing acceptable explanations for them.	Pushing the expense account because "somebody else is."
Regression	Individual returns to an earlier and less mature level of adjustment or the lack of frustration.	A manager, having been blocked in some administrative project, busies himself with details of dates or technical details more appropriate for his subordinates.
Regression	Completely excludes from consciousness impulses, experiences, and feelings that are psychologically disturbing because they arouse a sense of guilt or anxiety.	An employee "forgetting" to call his boss the circumstances of an embarrassing situation.
Resignation, apathy, and boredom	Breaks psychological contact with the environment, withholding any sense of emotional or personal involvement.	Employee who, receiving no reward, praise, or encouragement, no longer cares whether or not he does a good job.
Flight or withdrawal	Leaves the field in which frustration, anxiety, or conflict is experienced, either physically or psychologically.	The salesman's leg under falls through, and he takes the rest of the day off, convinced what he expects by superior and colleagues pushes an able employee toward being a star and ignoring whatever friendly gestures are made.

Source: From *Psychology in Administration: A Research Orientation*, by T. W. Costello and S. S. Zalkind.
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Figure 15.2

15-11

Interpersonal Conflict

- In many instances, role conflict occurs because of job overload (especially at the managerial level).
- Can be caused by:
 - Opposing personalities.
 - Prejudices based on personal background or ethnic origin.
 - When individuals become dissatisfied with their roles relative to the roles of others.
- While attempting to deal with role conflict arising from job overload, employees may:
 - Cut themselves off from peers and support groups
 - Suffer high anxiety
 - Reduce their productivity
 - Become de-motivated.

15-12

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Goal Segmentation and Rewards

- Factors inhibiting reward implementation:
 - Insistence on an objective criterion.
 - Example: Rewards are linked to one objective when in fact many objectives come into play.
 - Overemphasis on highly visible behaviors.
 - Example: Difficult to observe concepts such as team building are rarely rewarded.
 - Hypocrisy
 - Example: Having a reward system that actually encourages one type of behavior while claiming to encourage another.
 - Emphasis on morality or equity rather than efficiency
 - Many situations are not just either-or situations.

15-13

Mutual and Unequal Departmental Dependence

- Mutual dependence
 - Sometimes two departments or units of an organization are dependent on each other to accomplish their respective goals, creating a potential for structural conflict.
- Unequal dependence
 - Often departmental dependence is unequal and fosters conflict.

15-14

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Functional Unit and the Environment

- Functional units perform different tasks and cope with different parts of the environment.
- Four basic dimensions describe differences between functional units.
 - Structure
 - Environment orientation
 - Time span orientation
 - Interpersonal orientation



15-15

Role Dissatisfaction and Role Ambiguity

- Role dissatisfaction
 - Often results when a group that has low perceived status sets standards for another group.
- Role ambiguity
 - When the credit or blame for the success or failure of a particular assignment cannot be determined between two departments, conflict is likely to result.



15-16

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Common Resource Dependence and Communication Barriers

- **Common Resource Dependence**
 - When two organizational units are dependent on common but scarce resources, potential for conflict exists.
- **Communication Barriers**
 - Semantic differences can cause conflict.
 - also occurs when a physical or organizational barrier to effective communication exists.



15-17

Types of Structural Conflict

Type	Example
Goal segmentation and reward	Different inventory levels are desired by different functional departments.
Mutual departmental dependence	Marketing department's sales are dependent on the volume of production from the production department.
Unequal departmental dependence	Staff departments are generally more dependent on line departments.
Functional unit and environment	The environment faced by an applied research department and a sales department are different and can lead to conflict between these departments.
Role dissatisfaction	Professionals in an organizational unit who receive little attention.
Role ambiguities	When the credit or blame for the success or failure of a particular assignment cannot be determined between two departments.
Common resource dependence	Two departments competing for computer time.
Communication barriers	Purchasing agents and engineers may use different language to describe similar materials, and conflict can result from those semantic differences.

Figure 15.3

15-18

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Organizational Conflict

- Organizational conflict
 - Conflict between employees and the organization itself.
 - Organizational conflict pits employees or groups of employees against the organization.
- Source: Changes in policies that negatively affect employees.
 - Reorganizations
 - Corporate
 - Downsizing
 - Layoff of employees
 - Tightening of expenses

15-19

Political Conflict

- Political (sometimes called *strategic*) conflict is started purposely and is often undertaken with an elaborate battle plan.
 - Usually results from the promotion of self-interests on the part of an individual or a group.
- The goal is usually to gain an advantage over the opponent within the reward system.
- Political conflict does not always imply that the participants are dishonest or unethical.
- Could degenerate into unfair play because the participants cannot resist the temptation to win at all costs.

15-20

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Managing Conflict

- Five approaches to address interpersonal conflict:
 - Compromising
 - Smoothing over the conflicts
 - Withdrawal of one or more participants
 - Forcing the conflict to a conclusion
 - Confrontation

15-21

Tactics for Managing Interpersonal Conflict with Difficult People

Hostile-Aggressives

Stand up for yourself.
Give them time to run down.
Use self-assertive language.
Avoid a direct confrontation.

Complainers

Listen attentively.
Acknowledge their feelings.
Avoid complaining with them.
State the facts without apology.
Use a problem-solving mode.

Clams

Ask open-ended questions.
Be patient in waiting for a response.
Ask more open-ended questions.
If no response occurs, tell clams what you plan to do, because no discussion has taken place.

Superagreeables

In a nonthreatening manner, work hard to find out why they will not take action.
Let them know you value them as people.
Be ready to compromise and negotiate, and do not allow them to make unrealistic commitments.
Try to discern the hidden meaning in their humor.

Negativists

Do not be dragged into their despair.
Do not try to cajole them out of their negativism.
Discuss the problem thoroughly, without offering solutions.

When alternatives are discussed, bring up the negative side yourself.
Be ready to take action alone, without their agreement.

Know-It-Alls

Bulldozers:
Prepare yourself.
Listen and paraphrase their main points.
Use the questioning form to raise problems.

Balloons:

State facts or opinions as your own perceptions of reality.
Find a way for balloons to save face.
Confront balloons alone, not in public.

Indecisive Stallers

Raise the issue of why they are hesitant.
If you are the problem, ask for help.
Keep the action steps in your own hands.
Possibly remove the staller from the situation.

Figure 15.4

15-22

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Conflict Interface

- The following rules can be followed for constructive conflict confrontations:
 1. Before the confrontation begins, review the past actions of the participants, and clarify the issues causing the conflict.
 2. Encourage the participants to communicate freely. They should get their personal feelings out in the open and should not hold back grievances.
 3. Don't try to place blame. This only polarizes the participants.
 4. Don't surprise either party with confrontations for which either party is not prepared.

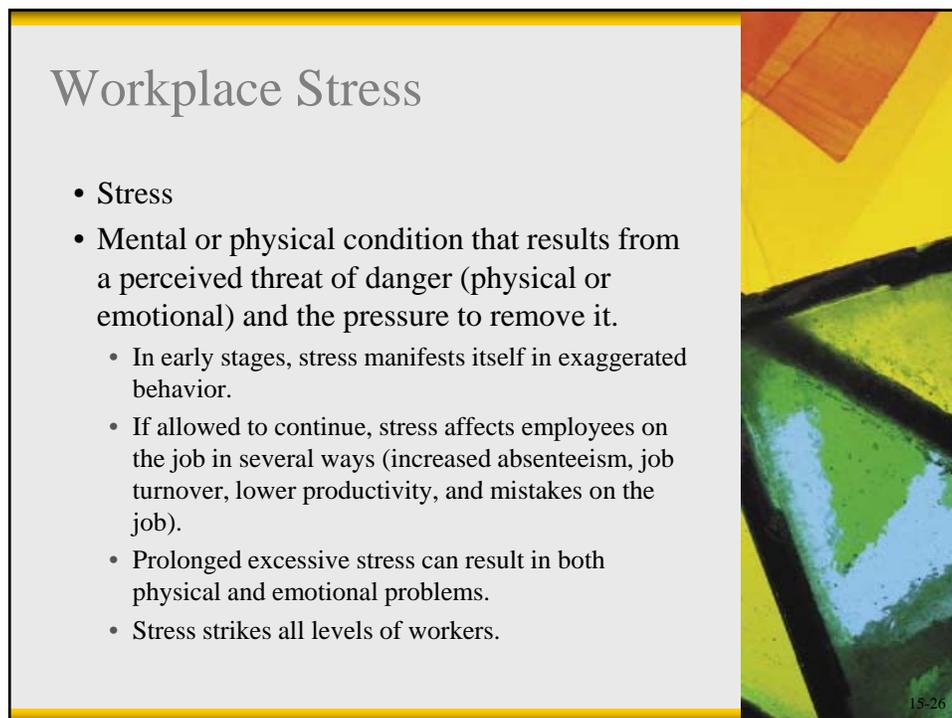
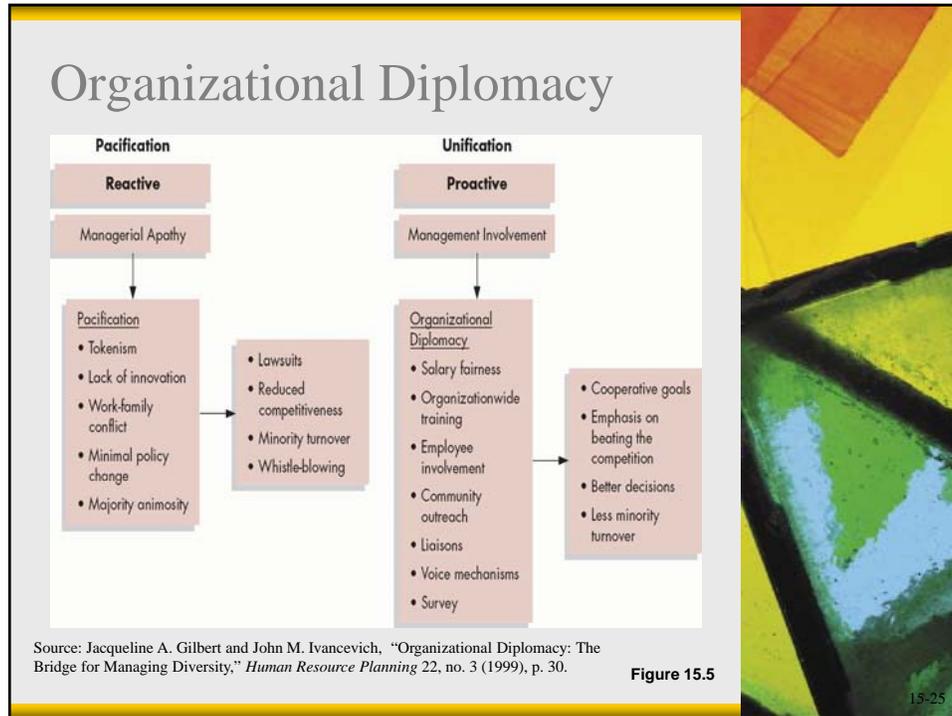
15-23

Conflict Interface (cont'd)

- The following rules can be followed for constructive conflict confrontations:
 5. Don't attack sensitive areas of either party that have nothing to do with the specific conflict.
 6. Keep to specific issues; do not argue aimlessly.
 7. Identify areas of mutual agreement.
 8. Emphasize mutual benefits to both parties.
 9. Don't jump into specific solutions too quickly.
 10. Encourage all of the participants to examine their own biases and feelings.
 11. Maintain the intensity of the confrontation and ensure that all participants say all they want to say.

15-24

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Common Sources of Organizational Stress

Common Sources	Suggested Causes
Job mismatch	Job demands skills or abilities the employee does not possess (job incompetence). Job does not provide opportunity for the employee to fully utilize skills or abilities (underutilization).
Conflicting expectations	The formal organization's concept of expected behavior contradicts the employee's concept of expected behavior. The informal group's concept of expected behavior contradicts the employee's concept. The individual employee is affected by two (or more) strong influences.
Role ambiguity	Employee is uncertain or unclear about how to perform on the job. Employee is uncertain or unclear about what is expected in the job. Employee is unclear or uncertain about the relationship between job performance and expected consequences (rewards, penalties, and so forth).
Role overload	Employee is incompetent at job. Employee is asked to do more than time permits (time pressure).
Fear/responsibility	Employee is afraid of performing poorly or failing. Employee feels pressure for high achievement. Employee has responsibility for other people.
Working conditions	The job environment is unpleasant; there is inadequate lighting or improper regulation of temperature and noise, for example. The requirements of the job may unnecessarily produce pacing problems, social isolation, and so forth. The machine design and maintenance procedures create pressure. The job involves long or erratic work hours.
Working relationships	Individual employees have problems relating to, or working with, superiors, peers, or subordinates. Employees have problems working in groups.
Alienation	There is limited social interaction. Employees do not participate in decision making.

Figure 15.6

15-27

Stress Audit

- Attempts to identify any work-related causes of stress.
- Can be undertaken by:
 - Outside consultants.
 - Internal personnel.
 - Online.
- Can also be in the form of questionnaires
- Information can be gathered on factors like:
 - Absenteeism.
 - Sick leave.
 - Tardiness.

15-28

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Managing Stress

- Shortening hours of direct contact with customers
- Granting special leaves (sabbatical programs).
- Introducing early retirement programs.
- Installing on-site exercise facilities.
- Actively involving employees in the decision-making processes.
- Fulfilling the realistic expectations of employees.



15-29

Managing Stress (cont'd)

- Introducing flextime or telecommuting where possible.
- Insisting that employees take vacation time.
- Clearly defining employee jobs.
- Providing well thought-out training programs.
- Introducing changes gradually.
- Integrating wholesome humor into the workplace.



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Technostress

- Personal stress generated by reliance on technological devices, a panicky feeling when they fail, a state of near-constant stimulation, or being constantly “plugged-in.”
- Technostress is stress resulting from interacting with high-technology devices.
- The effects of technostress are essentially the same as those resulting from any other type of job-related stress.

15-31

Burnout

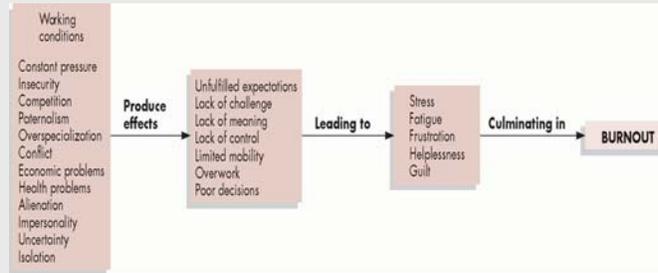
- Burnout occurs when work is no longer meaningful to a person.
 - Research shows that chronic stress, and prolonged personal contact tend to bring about the highest degrees of burnout.
- There are several myths associated with burnouts.
 - Guidelines used for workplace and personal stress can be used to deal with burnout.
 - A second step in reducing burnout is to identify those jobs with the highest potential for burnout.
 - For top- and mid-level managers, a chief source of burnout is the “career plateau”.
 - Identifying these can dramatically reduce burnouts.

15-32

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The Path to Professional Burnout



Source: Reprinted by permission from *State of Business Magazine*, "Helping Employees Cope with Burnout," by Donald P. Rogers, October–December 1984. Copyright © 1984 by the Robinson College of Business, Georgia State University, Atlanta.

Figure 15.7

15-33

Methods for Increasing Career Motivation

1. Review your accomplishments and give yourself credit for them.
2. Take a moderate risk—one from which there will be some benefit.
3. Show others you can cooperate but that you also have your own ideas.
4. Inquire about how well you are doing.
5. Ask for information about career opportunities.
6. Set specific career goals for next year and general goals for the next five years.
7. Create your own job challenge by redesigning your job and generating new assignments.
8. If you want to be a leader, try it. Initiate and delegate work.
9. Take actions toward your goals.

Figure 15.8

Sources: M. London and E. M. Moore, *Career Management and Survival in the Workplace* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1987), p. 5; and K. N. Wexley and J. Hinricks, eds., *Developing Human Resources* (Washington, DC: BNA Books, 1991), pp. 51–59.

15-34

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Sabbaticals

- Derived from Sabbath and literally means a recurring period of rest and renewal.
 - Most sabbaticals granted by today's organizations allow the recipient to take time off, often with some pay cut, while retaining benefits.
 - Length and terms of sabbaticals vary considerably among those organizations that offer them.



15-35

Sabbatical Plans Offered by Different Companies

<i>Procter & Gamble</i>	Eligible for an unpaid sabbatical of up to 12 weeks after only one year, and every 7 years thereafter. Employees continue to receive benefits.
<i>Newsweek</i>	Reporters and editors are eligible for 6 months of sabbatical at half-salary after 15 years.
<i>Random House</i>	Available to North American employees who have over 10 years service. After 10 years they get 4 weeks off; after 20 years, they get 5 weeks off and so on.
<i>Nike</i>	Eligible for 5 weeks off after 10 years; after first sabbatical employees are eligible for future sabbaticals every 5 years from the start of the last one.
<i>Intel</i>	Employees get 8 weeks for every 7 years of service.

Figure 15.9



15-36

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Workaholism

- Working to the exclusion of everything else in one's life.
 - An addiction that causes a person to become so obsessed with work that he or she is crippled emotionally and physically.
 - A workaholic environment creates stress, burnout, and low morale.
- Workaholics are often not the most efficient employees because they frequently engage in doing unnecessary things.

15-37

Workplace Violence

- Workplace violence comes not only from extreme violence, like shootings, but from other sources.
 - Nonfatal assaults.
 - Verbal threats.
 - Harassment and intimidation.
 - Sexual harassment.
 - Other erratic behaviors suggesting emotional instability.
- Establishment of a workplace violence-prevention program can greatly reduce the probability of a problem.

15-38

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Violence Incidents in the Workplace

Incidents	Percentage
Verbal threats	41
Pushing/shoving	19
Burglary/robbery	9
Fistfight	9
Stalking	9
Bomb threat	7
Shooting	1
Stabbing	1

Figure 15.10

15-39

Workplace Violence-Prevention Program

- A written policy statement that communicates a clear commitment to promoting a workplace safe from violence, that prohibits threats and violence of every sort, and requiring employees to immediately report to management all circumstances that create a concern for safety from violence.
- A management response team that represents diverse segments of the organization.

15-40

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Workplace Violence-Prevention Program (cont'd)

- A meaningful reporting and response mechanism that establishes clear lines of communication and responsibility for issues involving violence and ensures that the organization is both promptly notified of potential security risks and can take immediate steps to resolve underlying concerns.
- Clear standards of behavior that prohibit threats and violence of every sort and that require prompt, appropriate discipline of employees who breach safety rules.

15-41

Workplace Violence-Prevention Program (cont'd)

- A wide array of other security, employment, legal, and administrative practices can help an organization prevent and manage on-site threats and violence.
- A system of periodic employee training addressing such issues as workplace policies; warning signs of violence; the requirement that employees report threats to management; methods for properly investigating complaints made under the workplace violence policy; defusing hostile situations; and strategies for addressing domestic violence.

15-42

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Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

- Program sponsored by the organization that attempts to help employees with stress, burnout, and other personal problems that include alcohol and drug abuse, depression, anxiety, domestic trauma, financial problems, and other psychiatric/medical problems.

15-43

Ten Critical Elements of an EAP

Element	Significance
Management backing	Without this at the highest level, key ingredients and overall effect are seriously limited.
Labor support	The EAP cannot be meaningful if it is not backed by the employees' labor unit.
Confidentiality	Anonymity and trust are crucial if employees are to use an EAP.
Easy access	For maximum use and benefit.
Supervisor training	Crucial to employees needing understanding and support during receipt of assistance.
Union steward training	A critical variable is employees' contact with the union—the steward.
Insurance involvement	Occasionally assistance alternatives are costly, and insurance support is a must.
Breadth of service components	Availability of assistance for a wide variety of problems (e.g., drugs, alcoholism, family, personal, financial, grief, medical).
Professional leadership	A skilled professional with expertise in helping who must have credibility in the eyes of the employee.
Follow-up and evaluation	To measure program effectiveness and overall improvement.

Figure 15.11

15-44

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Wellness Programs

- Company implemented program designed to prevent illness and enhance employee well-being.
- Documented results of wellness programs include fewer sick days, reduced coronary heart disease, and lower major medical costs.
- Includes:
 - Periodic medical exams and stop-smoking clinics.
 - Education on improved dietary practices.
 - Hypertension detection and control.
 - Weight control, exercise and fitness.
 - Stress management and accident-risk reduction.
 - Immunizations and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training.

15-45

Specific Company Benefits of Wellness Programs

- DuPont Corporation reported absences from illness unrelated to the job declined 14 percent at 41 individual sites where the company offered a wellness program. This compared to a 5.8 percent decline at the 19 sites where a wellness program was not offered.
- Pacific Bell found that absentee days decreased by 0.8 percent after its FitWorks program was put in place. This resulted in a \$2 million savings in one year. Employees who participated in the program spent 3.3 fewer days on short-term disability, saving the company an additional \$4.7 million.
- The Coca-Cola Company reported a \$500 reduction in annual health care claims for each employee who participated in its Health Works fitness program.

Figure 15.12

15-46

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