**Conflict resolution mentoring – a guide for managers**

This is a guide to having a conflict resolution dialogue with one of the parties in a conflict. The mentor (manager) must be impartial and show empathy for BOTH parties.

The objective of the dialogue is to:

* Help one of the parties understand the conflict better, including his/her own reactions, feelings and needs – as well as the other party’s.
* Help the person in question feel hopeful and come up with constructive ideas to deal with the conflict based on a win-win mindset (compromise and/or transformation).
* Help the person in question feel confident enough to engage in a constructive conversation with the other party about the conflict.

How to prepare for the conflict resolution dialogue:

* Find a quiet location without distractions. Make sure you both have time for the meeting and that you are both feeling composed. A mentoring dialogue can last between a few minutes and several hours. Have a flip chart or a whiteboard at hand in case you need to write anything down.
* Set the framework: Offer the dialogue. Do you have time? Explain what you will and will not do in your role as conflict resolution mentor (align your expectations).
* What would you like to get out of this dialogue with me?

**The dialogue**

**Ask about:**

**How the person views the conflict**

* **Facts:** What happened?
* **Interpretation:** Why do you think x said/did that?
* **Feelings:** How do you feel about that? How are you now?
* **Needs / values:** What do you need? Why is it important that the other person does ...? (action)
* Alternatively: Try to assess the person’s feelings and needs, especially if he/she is not able to describe them.

**How the person thinks the other party views the conflict**

* **Facts:** What happened seen from the other party’s point of view?
* **Interpretation:** How do you think the other person understands the situation?
* **Feelings:** What do you think the other person is feeling?
* **Needs / values:** What do you think the other party needs?
* **Actions / requests:** What would you like the other person to do? How can you contribute to this – so that both you and the other person get your needs met?
* Are you ready to talk to the other person / your colleague now?

**Values and conditions for conflict resolution mentoring**

* The parties take part in conflict resolution mentoring voluntarily
* The dialogues are confidential
* The parties own the conflict. They are responsible for managing it and have the knowledge to do so. The mentor does not give advice
* The role of the mentor and the conflicting parties should be clearly defined
* The conflict mentor is impartial: Be aware of your own allegiances and attitudes and put them to one side – or ask somebody else to be the conflict resolution mentor