The Credits & Debits of Conflict Management in Healthcare

presented by
Joe L. “Joey” Cope, J.D.
Executive Director
Duncum Center Solutions

What is it about “together” that makes everything more difficult?
What are the costs of conflict?

The United States will face a shortage of 46,000 to 90,000 physicians by 2025.

Association of American Medical Colleges (2015)

Costs to Replace One Physician

- Physician’s annual salary
- Recruitment costs
- Loss of gross billings
- Loss of inpatient revenue
- Loss of specialty referral revenue

Fibuch and Ahmed (2015)

Costs to Replace One Registered Nurse

$82,000 to $88,000

Li & Jones (2015, from a 2008 study)
Indirect Costs

Delayed Effect of RN Turnover

- For every 10% increase in RN turnover
- 4% increase in patients acquiring bed- ulcers in the subsequent quarter
- Hospital costs for care range from $17,495 to $28,272 per ulcer

Park, Boyle, Bergquist-Beringer, Staggs, & Dunton (2014)

CPP, Inc. (2008 - international study)

- 85% of employees deal with conflict to some degree
- 1 in 6 of employees report that they have unresolved conflicts

- 25% of employees report that conflict led to illness and absence from work
- An average of 2.8 course of a U.S. employee’s week is spent dealing with conflict

CPP, Inc. (2008 - international study)

- 95% of employees who received conflict management training reported that it helped them

CPP, Inc. (2008 - international study)
What’s so great about conflict?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
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<td>1. Produces anxiety</td>
<td>1. Highlights poor systems/processes</td>
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<td>2. Destroys morale</td>
<td>2. Identifies destructive behaviors</td>
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<td>3. Kills productivity</td>
<td>3. Reveals competitive advantages</td>
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<td>4. Increases absenteeism and employee turnover</td>
<td>4. Increases opportunities</td>
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MOVING CHANGE

Change is stimulated by diversity …

of thought of need

of experience of behavior
You can’t make just one CHANGE.

Change is what we do to address pressing needs or urgent crisis and to be successful and survive.

We are better at “changing the world” than we are at living with the change.

Things leaders must remember during change

- An individual’s strongest reaction comes from fear, not respect.
- Even the most rational person experiences an emotional drift during change.
- Making and accepting a rational decision doesn’t always end the individual “change trauma.”

Things leaders must remember during change

- Some in the organization will never accept the change but will continue to follow -- with murmuring.
- Some will elect to leave.
- Most will stay and will be content if they feel heard, cared for, and challenged to do greater things.
Good leaders must respectfully challenge those who follow to grow and progress.

If leaders adapt their functioning to the weakest in their organization, they enable dependency, encourage happy ignorance, and reinforce helplessness and discord.

When a workplace conflict arises, what questions do you ask?

The Investigation

WHO?
WHAT?
WHEN?
WHERE?
HOW?

The Revelation

WHY?
The investigation concentrates on the past

The revelation opens to the future

Perception

The organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information.

SEE
HEAR
TASTE
SMELL
TOUCH

PERCEPT
Occasionally, the key is just to listen

And then, of course, you have to join the conversation
Steps to a Meaningful Conversation

1. Gain agreement on the timing of the conversation.
2. Establish a comfort zone by sharing process.
3. Commit yourself to being a non-anxious presence.

The Conversation Process

1. Tell the other person what you have OBSERVED.
2. Share what you have THOUGHT about what you have observed.
3. Share what you have FELT about your observations and thoughts.
4. INVITE the other person to share observations, thoughts, feelings.
5. EXPLORE possible solutions together.

Positive Next Steps

1. Enact the things you have agreed on immediately.
2. Schedule a time to discuss the areas where conflict still exists.
3. If at impasse, bring in a neutral third party to mediate.
4. If mediation fails, respectfully approach a higher authority.
5. Be persistent in seeking resolution.

Focus on what you can bring to the table
Showing up with the right skills & providing a safe place at the table will pay off in the long term.