



TenStep Supplemental Paper

14 January 2004

Managing Personality Clashes

With today's diverse workforce, organizations are encountering more differences in opinions, thinking and styles of work. With all of these differences, difficulties can sometimes occur between employees. These personality clashes have a definite effect on the company's productivity.

HR managers can successfully tackle this issue with the assistance of other managers by focusing on the issue of behavioral change in the workforce. Here are some tips for handling challenges:

- Fix the problem before it escalates. The best way to solve problems is to inform managers about them immediately.
- Approach the situation in a non-accusatory manner. Explain the issue objectively and listen to all employees who show concern and interest.
- Help employees deal with problems and avoid any dramatic behavior.
- Tackle problems amicably. Respond to the problems with dignity and set behavioral limits.
- Maintain confidentiality. Avoid discussing a problematic employee with other employees. This minimizes tensions while solving problems.
- Consider employees' rights and responsibilities. Keep these in mind while solving problems.

Rights of the employees include:

- Setting behavioral limits when dealing with disruptive behavior.
- Expecting others to deal with the problem courteously.
- Expecting management to solve a problem without involving the employees concerned.

Responsibilities include:

- Approaching colleagues in a non-threatening way.
- Avoiding actions that could worsen the situation.
- Willingness to accept that there is a problem that requires attention.
- Listening to the views of colleagues without being judgmental.
- Seeking outside help in a dignified, open and constructive manner.

Problems should be resolved amicably without adversely affecting the productivity of the organization.