



Cutting the Costs of Conflict

ProActive ReSolutions Inc. specializes in helping organizations assess, prevent and manage discord between people at work.

As experts in identifying and managing conflict, we conduct detailed assessments of how exposed your business is to conflict. The conflict may involve the Board or governance level, management, employees and your customers.

The direct costs of conflict (e.g. time off work, quitting, low morale or mental health problems) amount to at least 5% of your organization's annual salaries and wages bill. We can help you identify where you are wasting your money and help you minimize your loss.



In this issue...

Why are some conversations much more difficult to have than others?

Why do workplaces avoid the conversation with the top sales performer who violates company policies and procedures?

Welcome to this problem and some of the other key employment and behavioral issues affecting workplaces in this Spring/Fall 2005 issue of our quarterly newsletter.

One of the most difficult work and life behaviors is confronting our colleagues or family when we choose to feel they have done something to annoy or irritate us.

Why do we fail to have these difficult conversations? On the other hand, when we do have them why is it that they often go so badly?

This quarter we take a closer look at those difficult conversations, and in our next issue, we will present some guidelines on how to initiate and respond to a difficult conversation.

The ProActive ReSolutions' team wants to keep you up to date with current trends in the key issues affecting people at work. Check out our *What's News?* section on page two.

To all our valued clients this quarter...
THANK YOU!

Judy Brooks
Managing Director



Australia Spring/ Canada & USA Fall 2005:

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**NEW Season
NEW Look**

Our ProActive ReSolutions Newsletter has a new look!



We thought it would be a great time to ask you—our clients & readers—what information you would like us to bring you each quarter. New Topics? New Studies? Articles? Exercises?

We welcome your e-mails at:
info@proactive-resolutions.com

WHAT'S NEWS?



Our article in the Autumn/Fall/Spring Issue this year on “Simply the best...workplaces in Australia” prompted some interest from readers. Here’s one of their questions.

Q: Are there different cultural assumptions that influence and direct peoples’ behavior at work?

Answer: Research shows that some concepts have very different meanings. For example, the concept of “quality”.

- In Germany:** Quality is an obsession with Standards
- In Japan:** Quality is the pursuit of Perfection
- In France** Quality is viewed as Luxury
- In the USA:** Quality means ‘It Works’
- In Australia:** Quality implies, Quality of Relationship – First

Something to think about... There is nothing permanent except change. Heraclitus

OUR VALUED CLIENTS

Each quarter, we are very fortunate to work with great companies, great teams, and great individuals. Thank you to ALL our valuable clients and companies this past quarter.

- CANADA**
 - Canfor Fort Nelson, B.C.
 - City of Prince George Prince George, B.C.
 - Correctional Services of Canada, Fraser Valley Institution Abbotsford, B.C.
 - EV Logistics Langley, B.C.
 - Government of Canada—Agriculture—Agri Foods Canada Ottawa, Ont
 - Great Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Vancouver, B.C.
 - Methanex Corp. Kitimat, B.C.
 - The Integrity Group Vancouver, B.C.
- AUSTRALIA**
 - ANSTO Menai, NSW
 - Australian Sports Commission Bel Connel, ACT
 - Australian Taxation Office Canberra, ACT
 - Centrelink Woden, ACT
 - Department of Defence, Air Lift SPD Richmond, NSW
 - Fairfield City Council Wakeley, NSW
 - Illawarra Area Health Services Wollangong, NSW
 - NSW Department of Corrective Services Sydney, NSW
- USA**
 - Conoco Phillips Anchorage, AK
 - Saint Gobain Containers Muncie, IN
 - State of Iowa Des Moines, IA
 - University of Massachusetts CCSS Shrewsbury, MA
 - Venture Holdings Corporation Fraser, MI
 - WCB Icecream Northvale, NJ
- UK**
 - KVM Kumla Riksmottagningen, Sweden

Is this you?

Having trouble preventing minor disagreements from escalating into greater conflict and violence?

Experiencing trouble intervening or responding to incidents of serious conflict and violence?

Looking to restore management and employee confidence in an organization that has over-promised and under-delivered a change program?

Putting up with poor performance and/or poor behavior from employees and managers who focus on their intention for good results rather than the outcome of their behavior?

Did you answer **YES** to any of the above questions?

We can help.

ProActive ReSolutions has an international proven track record in delivering specific, measurable results that will reduce the financial and human costs of conflict.

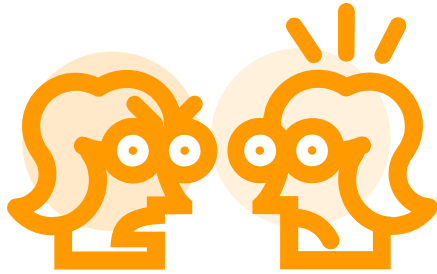
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Avoiding Difficult Conversations

Two fears we are born with are the fear of loud noises and the fear of falling. Every other fear we have we learn – including the fear of conflict.

Avoiding what needs to be said at work can grow to become a major barrier and obstacle to excellent performance. Avoiding difficult conversations is something that many of us learn from our experiences of the pain felt when we confront someone’s behaviour. The solution of course is to avoid additional pain and not say what needs to be said.

What really happens is that we do not have the conversation we need to have with those with whom we need to have it. We have the conversation with anyone except the person with whom we need to have the conversation!



Sound familiar?

There is a person in your open plan office who rarely achieves deadlines and who talks loudly and often. Talks about their social life, talks about how easily others take offence, talks about – well anything really.

Do we confront this person?

Usually not. We will talk to others though about the behaviour that we are choosing to feel upset about. We may even let others know that we could achieve more work if we did not have to put up with this person. Over coffee our talkative colleague becomes a monster, the reason we cannot perform, the cause of all workplace problems and in Australia the cause of the

worst drought in history.

On days when our talkative colleague is not in the office we all talk about that, “Quiet in here today isn’t it?”, and we laugh about it with each other.

So, why are we so afraid to have the difficult conversation with our talkative co-worker?

Some reasons we choose to have for avoiding difficult conversations are:

- We convince ourselves that talking about the problem will make the problem worse rather than resolving it
- The cure may be worse than the disease
- We do not want to feel bad
- We do not want the other person to feel bad
- We may hear things in the conversation about ourselves that we do not want to hear
- We and/or the other person may get emotional
- We are not sure where the conversation will end
- We fear the consequences, retribution

Next issue of our newsletter we look at the consequences of not confronting problems at work. What happens when we do not have those difficult conversations?

In addition, we will have some tips on how to have difficult conversations while reducing the chances of making things worse.



Until then, if you want to discuss how we can help your organization prevent and manage discord at work please contact us at info@proactive-resolutions.com or visit our website at www.proactive-resolutions.com

MEET OUR TEAM



Kelly Watt

Specialty: Threat Assessments & Sexual Violence Risk Assessments

Kelly has worked with **ProActive ReSolutions** since January 2005. A true Vancouverite who loves the city’s respect for its outdoors, cultural diversity, beauty, growing sense of identity and community, and moderate weather. Moderate weather? Kelly is currently a doctoral candidate in Clinical/Community Psychology at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana (where the weather is cold and humid!).

What was your best decision?

To move to England. It was a huge turning point in my life. I let go of many things in my life and gained so many more.

What do you spend most of your time doing?

Sadly, I can tell you exactly what I spend most of my time doing lately. I just did an exercise in a course I took where we had to determine how we spend the hours of our life. The winner was sleeping!

What kind of leader are you?

Most recently I exercised leadership in the undergraduate internships I taught at UIUC. I think my students would say fair, firm, fun, and slightly bossy!

What phrase do you use most often?

According to my American friends “eh” and “In Canada...”

What drives you?

A desire to do the best that I can... and if I am going to be honest also a desire to do better than many others. I do have a quiet competitive streak.

What inspires you?

Seeing people do things that make a positive difference in the lives of others—big or small.



The Back Page

A Health & Wellness Newsletter



BodyLogic™
Health Management

As the end of the year fast approaches, most of us are in disbelief that the year has gone by so quickly! From this point forward, we start to focus on wrapping up the year with Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year celebrations. However, for BodyLogic the end of the year brings another big event – The Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index. The index has become the standard for injury data; and we would not be surprised if the numbers are similar to last year.

Over the last 12 years, the focus of BodyLogic's work continues to prove that "soft tissue" injuries are the main area for concern for today's industries and businesses. In the November 18, 2004 Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index press release the top three workplace injuries were:

- 1. Overexertion:** Injuries caused from excessive lifting, pushing, pulling, etc.
- 2. Falls:** On the same level
- 3. Bodily Reaction:** Injuries from bending, slipping or tripping without falling

The top three injury causes account for 50% of the total costs of workplace injuries. In 2002, these injuries cost employers about \$25 billion dollars or \$500 million a week! These three categories were also the fastest growing in terms of cost with increases of 16.4%, 25.7%, and 28.7% from 1998 to 2002, respectively.

WHAT TO DO?

"If you want to dramatically cut workers compensation costs, follow the numbers not the headlines," notes Dr. Tom Leamon, Director of the Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety, who presented the 2004 Index's findings at the National Workers Compensation and Disability Conference. "Understand why your employees get hurt and address these sources, rather than the latest safety fads. The top causes of injuries identified by the Index may not make the front page, but they're probably driving your costs."

THE SOLUTIONS

- :: Identify injuries that are driving your costs
- :: Prioritize for a starting point
- :: Set clear targets
- :: Decide how to – tactics and training
- :: Track progress and re-evaluate

In our next Issue of The Back Page, we will bring you the results of the 2005 Liberty Mutual Workplace Safety Index Results *PLUS* How To Calculate Your Company's Costs Due To On-the-Job Injuries

For more information, contact us at info@backlogic.com
Toll Free: 1.800.887.8018 www.backlogic.com

What is Carpal Tunnel Syndrome?

Carpel Tunnel Syndrome (CTS) is a type of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI).

RSI is a general term for anything that causes excessive wear and tear on the body including the hand and wrist.

CTS symptoms are the result of constant repetitive pinching and gripping, prolonged unnatural positioning of the hand and wrist, and vibrations that can cause the muscles of the forearm to become tight, sore and tired from overuse.

Can it be treated? YES.

Workstation review.
Icing.
Stretching.
Strengthening.

Available at
www.backlogic.com:
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome—A Practical Guide to Repetitive Strain Injury Prevention

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