
Dispute Resolution in the Workplace

Conflict is an inescapable part of human interaction. Are you able to recognise it early, approach it constructively and deal with it effectively?

If you need help, Thought Partners can provide you with independent, experienced and trusted conflict specialists.

Are you in any of these roles?

- A manager handling the behavioural situations that create challenge
- An HR advisor, supporting managers by knowing where to access specialists
- A lawyer advising a client in a workplace dispute and seeking a fair process
- A union advocate advising a member and also seeking a fair process
- A party in a workplace dispute, knowing what options you could agree to participate in so that a way forward can be found
- A colleague or friend of someone in conflict, being able to provide counsel and know more about what's possible.

Thought Partners offers:

Two conflict engagement specialists – Lynn Blake-Palmer and Ani Waaka, both of whom are LEADR-accredited mediators who can provide you with skilled service in:

- Independent investigation of complaints, e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination
- Investigation where no formal complaint has been made but conflict is apparent and is affecting people and productivity
- Facilitation of well-managed dialogue to open up channels of communication, air differences and find agreement on ways forward
- Mediation, where each party has something to gain by resolving their differences
- Individual and team work for re-entry to workplace following leave (stress, sick, special)
- Exit interview following a dispute.

Ani and Lynn also work jointly with Māori and Pākeha processes in pursuit of resolution.

The benefits to you

- Ability to quickly access independent, experienced and skilled conflict specialists
- Support for your team, organisation, client, member to resolve disputes with an appropriate approach and fair process
- Minimise the cost to people and your organisation of unresolved disputes and unchallenged behaviour
- Demonstrate good faith in addressing difficult issues early rather than letting them drag on.

The cost to you of failure to address issues of behaviour

In 2009 Pearson & Porath¹ published their study of toxic behaviour in the workplace:

48% of respondents reported a decrease in their work effort	47% decreased their time at work
66% reported a decline in their performance	38% decreased their work quality
78% reported a decline in their commitment to the organisation	80% lost time worrying about an incident
	63% lost time avoiding the 'offender'

In our own work it's commonplace for habitual offenders to be let off the hook. If you hear yourself saying things like

'That's just how X is'

'We can't afford to lose X'

'I don't like to get involved in personal matters'

'X doesn't really mean any harm, she's just...'

'Just ignore him – he's really OK underneath all that'

'Talk to HR – it's not my responsibility',

it may just be the time to talk to us.

For more information please contact Thought Partners:

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¹ Pearson, Christine & Porath, Christine (2009) *The Cost of Bad Behaviour* How Incivility is Damaging Your Business, Penguin Group, London.