RESOLVING CONFLICTS

Dear Reader,

Are conflicts a part of our everyday working life? Indeed they are, and there is certainly no benefit in the long term in simply evading or concealing everyday conflicts instead of trying to resolve them in an appropriate manner. Pretending for a while that everything is harmonious is also a dubious strategy, as it poisons the atmosphere even if people are not actually aware of it. Teamwork, which plays such a key role today, poses a challenge in this respect in every aspect of our work, but it is one that also offers many opportunities for resolving conflicts. Even though conflicts are an inevitable part of a professional environment, some people still see them as negative and destructive. Without question, there are always two sides to a conflict; there is no denying that there are dangers and risks. But isn't every risk also an opportunity? An opportunity to find new agreement after a period of conflict and tension. Such a chance does not come automatically. But there is a lot we can do to take advantage of it.

Is it possible to learn how to resolve conflicts? I think so, and addressing conflicts can even be enjoyable. One possibility takes the form of an argument. Yes, even though the word "argument" has negative connotations for many people. But if one understands it simply as a difference of opinion, an argument is neither good nor bad. The fact that there are no arguments is by no means a sign that a relationship is working well.

Does that mean that it is impossible to avoid arguments? What is decisive is how one argues. Arguments can be mature, fair and constructive, but they can also be destructive, hurtful and immature. Learning how to argue fairly is an important prerequisite for successfully dealing with conflicts at work and under stressful conditions. Not only will senseless conflicts that have no deeper background be automatically alleviated, there will be a greater focus on unavoidable conflicts, which can then be duly addressed and resolved.

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Stuttgart, April 2012