

Managing conflict

To recognize conflict situations and deal with them before they get very bad is one of the responsibilities of anybody who is in a management position. A good number of personal qualities are necessary in order to handle conflict successfully.

First of all, you have to be sympathetic towards the two sides involved, and show that you really want to understand their problem.

It is often a good idea to try and solve the emotional side of the conflict first, because it is difficult for people to think or even express themselves clearly as long as they are full of feelings such as anger, fear or hatred. Of course, you yourself cannot become angry or upset, because if you run out of patience, you will only make things worse. As some people say, you should try and remain cool and calm at all times.

Secondly, a certain amount of creativity will also help you, as very often you cannot apply old solutions to new problems.

Another key quality is consistency. Indeed, if you change your behaviour or attitude depending on who you talk to, you will probably make enemies and may soon lose your credibility.



Ex. 1 Match the words in the list with their English equivalents from the text:

1. rozpoznać	• amount
2. odpowiedzialność	• anger
3. posada	• apply
4. radzić sobie	• attitude
5. złość	• consistency
6. cierpliwość	• credibility
7. ilość	• handle
8. stosować	• patience
9. rozwiązanie	• position
10. konsekwencja	• recognize
11. postawa	• responsibility
12. wiarygodność	• solution

Ex. 2 What collocations can you make with the words in these two boxes?

conflict / emotional / key / management / personal

position / quality / side / situation

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Ex. 3 Translate these sentences using words from the exercises above:

1. Praca na stanowisku menedżerskim wiąże się z (*involve*) dużą odpowiedzialnością.
2. Cierpliwość to ważna cecha osobista.
3. Złość nie pomaga w radzeniu sobie z sytuacjami konfliktowymi.

I know English idioms:

In this lesson we are talking about conflict at the workplace. English has a few nice idioms related to this topic:

- to fight like cat and dog – droczyć się jak kot z psem
- to bury the hatchet – zakopać topór wojenny
- to make a mountain out of a molehill – robić z igły widły

Phrasals, phrasals...

Our reading text contains this time a very popular and useful phrasal verb: to run out of sth (If you run out of patience...) which can be translated as “kończyć się” (Jeśli kończy ci się cierpliwość...)

But it is not only used in the context of emotions and emotional states! We can as well say:

- We are running out of time. – Kończy nam się czas.
- I'm running out of petrol. – Kończy mi się benzyna.
- She's running out of excuses. – Kończą jej się wymówki.

Grammar corner...

This lesson's reading text contains such as sentence:

It is often a good idea to try and solve the emotional side of the conflict first...

The beginning of which can be translated as: Często dobrze jest... - so in a very impersonal way. To express the idea of impersonality (bezosobowość) we need to remember to use in English the introductory “It”. Let's study other examples:

- It's dangerous to walk in the road. (Niebezpiecznie jest...)
- It's a pity that John couldn't come. (Szkoda, że...)
- It's not worth waiting any longer. (Nie warto...)

How would you say these sentences in English?

1. Łatwo jest narzekać (complain).
2. To daleko stąd.
3. Zimno dziś.
4. Ciężko pracować na własny rachunek (to be self-employed).

GLOSSARY	
to recognize	rozpoznać
to deal with	zajmować się, radzić sobie
responsibility	obowiązek
management position	kierownicze stanowisko
personal quality	cecha osobista
necessary	Konieczny
in order to	w celu
handle	zajmować się, radzić sobie
successfully	z powodzeniem
sympathetic	pełen współczucia, życzliwy
side	strona
involved	zaangażowany
to solve	rozwiązać
to express yourself	wyrażać się
anger	złość
fear	strach
hatred	nienawiść
upset	zmartwiony, w złym humorze
to run out of	kończyć się (o czymś)
patience	cierpliwość
to remain	pozostać
cool / calm	spokojny, opanowany
certain	pewien
amount	ilość
creativity	inwencja twórcza
to apply	(za)stosować
solution	rozwiązanie
key	kluczowy
consistency	konsekwencja
indeed	w rzeczy samej
behaviour	zachowanie
attitude	postawa, podejście
depending on	w zależności od
enemy	wróg
credibility	wiarygodność

ANSWER KEY:

Ex.1

1. recognize
2. responsibility
3. position
4. handle
5. anger
6. patience
7. amount
8. apply
9. solutions
10. consistency
11. attitude
12. credibility

Ex.2

1. conflict situation
2. emotional side
3. key quality
4. management position
5. personal quality

Ex.3

1. Working on a management position involves a lot of responsibility.
2. Patience is a key personal quality.
3. Anger doesn't help to handle conflict situations.

Grammar corner

1. It's easy to complain.
2. It's a long way from here.
3. It's cold today.
4. It's hard to be self-employed.

