5 Ways to deal with conflicts in team

Friction within a team is a boss's worst nightmare. Getting the warring team members transferred is often the last resort.

The team leader has to fix the cracks the moment they appear, or face the risk of the team being disbanded.

- ## Hold meetings often

  Hold frequent team meetings to discuss business goals and road maps, and iron out differences.

  Professional counsellors can also be asked to help if behavioural issues need to be addressed. 'Meetings bring out conflicting points in the open and everyone gets to voice their opinions.

  But if these don't work, then try a private huddle,' says SM Gupta, HR head, Aegis. Gupta asks his line managers and business heads to take the warring parties for a separate meeting and resolve the problem.

- ## Set ground rules

  A team needs to know that every member has a certain role to play and their contributions are integral.

  'Conflicts arise when boundaries are not clearly defined and goals become common,' says the CEO of an Asian recruitment company who does not wish to be named.

  Especially when looking for clients, all the members of a business development team should have their areas or type of clients demarcated as far as possible.

- ## Have a strong feedback system

  Feedback from the boss or team members help, especially after an offsite, says Kamal Karanth, MD of recruitment firm Kelly Services.

At his firm, a group of seven to eight members are made to participate in team-building exercises and give honest feedback about one another.

'The opinions can get brutal but they help to bring out any issue to the fore,' said Karanth.

- ### Send team for outbound training

  Outbound training under gruelling conditions and an external facilitator exposes the cracks in intra team relationships, says former CEO of Randstad India, E Balaji.

  Rappelling, or games where team members are blindfolded, build trust and inter-dependence while an external facilitator gauges each member from a neutral standpoint.

  One is more comfortable sharing feelings with a third party than a senior or colleague, he says.

- ### Put warring members together

  When members of the same team are on the warpath, putting them on assignments together can help.

  But the assignment and its impact on the team have to be well thought out because it is 'a high-risk-and-high reward' strategy, says Balaji.

  If both manage to get along, the team benefits, but in an important task, a fallout could bring down the efforts of the entire team.