



ORCHESTRATING CONFLICTS

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**STEPS OF
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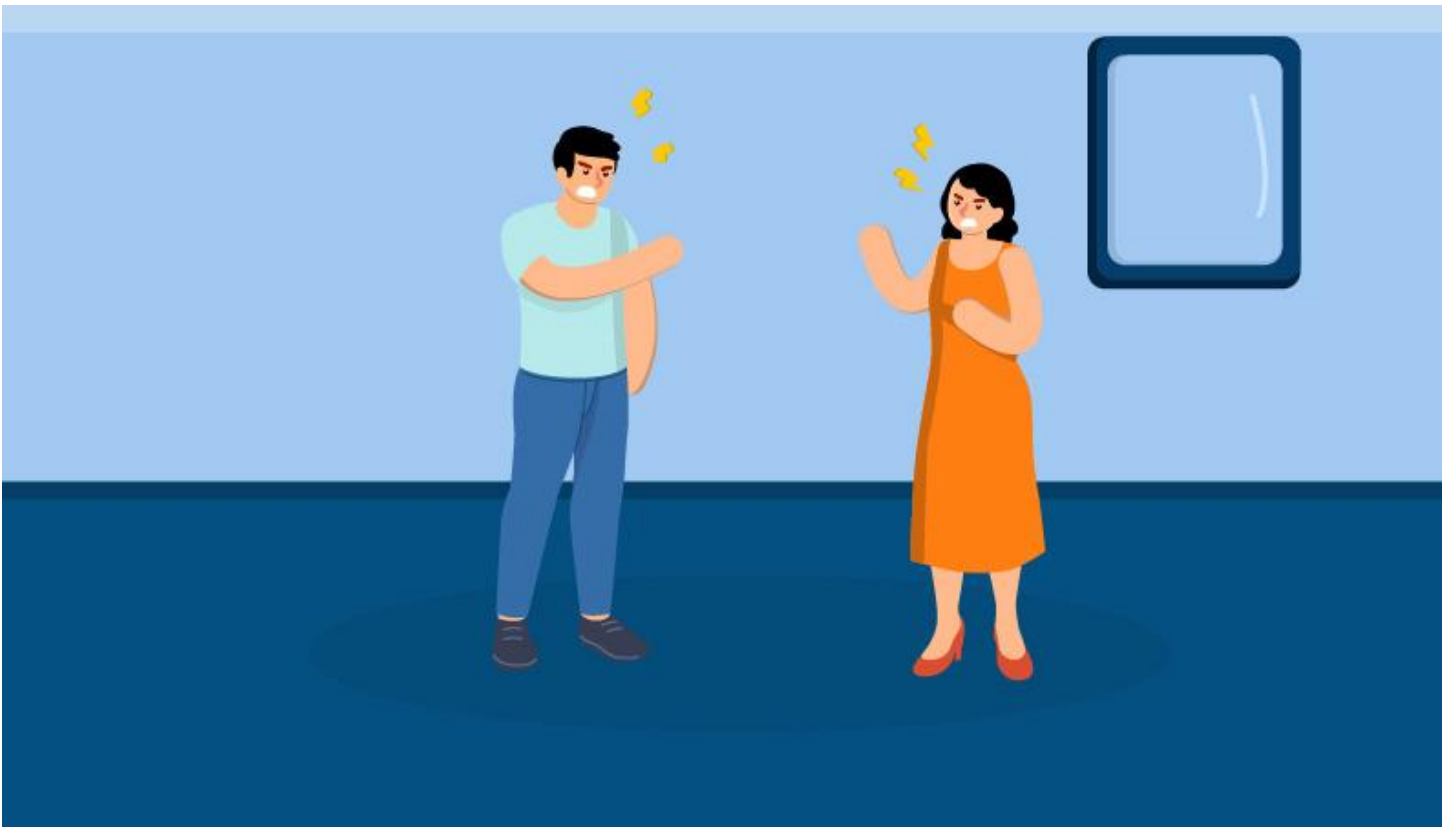
**THE ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP
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OVERVIEW

Conflicts are very important as they provide the opportunity of narrowing the gap between aspirations and reality. In this book, we take a look at orchestrating conflicts.

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In this session, we take a look at orchestrating conflicts. Solving adaptive challenges requires people to learn, unlearn and relearn different things. Adaptive challenges are not easy. They require involvement of people who are directly or indirectly affected by the problem. This means the authority figure has the role of asking the right question aimed at pushing those involved with the issue to resolve their differences and find a working solution for their problems rather than imposing a solution to them. Involving people in society provides another set of challenges as conflicts will arise. The conflict may arise due to differences in ideologies, economic status, age and interests.

Conflicts are very important as they provide the opportunity of narrowing the gap between aspirations and reality and solving conflicts help in providing a conducive environment for people to work together and make commitment towards the cause. In society, people have different ways and extents of tolerating conflicts whenever they arise. Some people will:

- 1) **Do nothing:** *Doing nothing is the easiest response towards a conflict. People take this option to maintain the equilibrium in the organization. They aim not to make things messy. Systems within organizations have rewarded people who take this response and as such organizations remain unchanged.*
- 2) **React by flight or fight:** *Taking initiative to bring conflict into the open and engaging different groups of people by asking correct questions and providing a conducive environment for people to engage and find out common ground. If things get tough, one gets on the defensive side to cleanse themselves from the mess.*
- 3) **Look to authority:** *Relying upon people in authority to resolve conflict. People in authority are expected to preserve calm in the organization.*

When conflict arises, there is no need to resolve it as an authority figure. Solving it may easily expose you ending up being regarded as a barrier. Providing a conducive environment for different factions to air their views and get to the conclusion of the kind of steps or remedies is key to the success of your work. Many ideas, answers and commitments can be obtained from conflicts. Just like in preparing stew, in exercising leadership you need to know the amount of heat to put and at what stage you may need to adjust it.

STEPS OF ORCHESTRATING CONFLICT



Healthy conflict is an ingredient for a high-performance team. It plays a significant role in narrowing the gap between aspirations and reality and also in decision making. Orchestrating conflict ensures a healthy level of conflict is maintained and the involved parties are in position to air their views.

Orchestrating conflict sounds attractive. However, it assumes that people who are involved can build strong relationships with people in the groups whom they need to have healthy conflicts with. This is not usually the case as people have different cultural and economic backgrounds and the ever-increasing virtual world provides a superficial environment where people and groups don't know each other well. In order to orchestrate healthy conflict, here are 7 steps you can use:

- 1) **Prepare:** *Involves understanding the environment you are operating in. Mapping stakeholders and factions, their standpoint on key elements, what they care about and losses they fear by taking part in adaptive work. Understanding this and talking to them in advance makes them trust you and gain the formal authority to deal with stress and retain their trust.*
- 2) **Establish ground rules:** *Frame the issues with overall mission and adaptive challenge. The goal is to keep the issues at the center of the work.*
- 3) **Get each view on the table:** *This involves including each faction to articulate values, loyalties and competencies that inform their perspectives on the adaptive challenge. Commitments they have to others not in the room and the perspective those have on the challenge. What they see as their potential and non-negotiation losses*
- 4) **Orchestrate Conflict:** *This step entails articulating competing claims and position. This is through reminding people of the purpose. Knowing the right temperature in the room and understanding how to regulate the heat will result in greater outcomes.*
- 5) **Encouraging, accepting and managing losses:** *Giving each person or faction time to reflect fully the losses they will be asking the constituents to accept. This influences commitment. Ask them how they are going to refashion their constituent's expectations and loyalties*
- 6) **Generate and commit to the experiments:** *This step helps in finding general consensus using several experiments for tackling the adaptive challenges which will give different stakeholders perspectives of what might be expected in a given scenario.*
- 7) **Institute peer leadership:** *This step helps in maximizing chances of successful move of the group through peer consulting where stakeholders consult one another on leadership challenges to obtain different views.*

SCENARIO

Adolescent pregnancy has affected the lives of young girls in developed and developing nations. It is estimated that 21 million girls aged between 15 to 19 years become pregnant in developing countries and about 12 million of them give birth to the young ones. Early and accidental pregnancies among young girls are linked to several adverse social, economic, educational and health outcomes.

Society has continued to bury heads in the sand believing teenagers are not having sex with sex education remaining a contentious topic on whether it should be introduced in the curriculum. Parents widely believe that teenagers should not have sex and girls they should not get pregnant. Society forgets that puberty is a stormy period for both genders and teenagers need an understanding and guidance for them to go through this period rather than the usual statements.

Adolescent pregnancy challenges cannot be fixed by one person neither does it have a known solution. It is an adaptive challenge and as such different groups will have different perceptions of the problem and the path to follow to have positive results. Conflict will arise and as a person leading an adaptive change you should provide a conducive environment so that ideas and different views and perspectives can be provided. This is useful to get others on board. The seven steps should be put into practice as follows:

Prepare by doing your preliminary work. Understand different groups, engage with them prior to the meeting to preempt some items and get their views on tough topics. Different groups may include: parents, youths, church leaders, teacher's union among other stakeholders. Ground rules for the discussion should be clear and be influenced by teenage pregnancies as the problem. The set environment should be in a way that stakeholders are free to share their views without infringement. In orchestrating conflict, you need to know

when to regulate the temperature of the discussion. This will ensure no concept or idea slides out of the table. Identify losses and fears and how they can be managed. What will the church as an institution fear, what are the losses for the youths? Use different models that may influence consensus and commitments from different members and give room for consulting.