

How do you feel about the situation? – Dealing with conflicts in the workplace

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Konflikte sind Teil des menschlichen Lebens und lassen sich auch am Arbeitsplatz nicht immer vermeiden. Hier führen verschiedene Wertvorstellungen sowie unterschiedliche Arbeits- und Kommunikationsstile häufig zu Konflikten.

In dieser Unterrichtsreihe befassen sich Ihre Schüler mit verschiedenen Arten von Konflikten sowie deren Ursachen. Die Lernenden erarbeiten anhand von realitätsnahen Dialogen Strategien, um Konflikte konstruktiv zu lösen. Zudem lernen sie höfliche Redemittel kennen, die sie abschließend in einem Rollenspiel anwenden.



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Der richtige Umgang mit Konflikten will gelernt sein – vor allem am Arbeitsplatz.

VORANSICHT

Das Wichtigste auf einen Blick

<p>Kompetenzen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – die Ursachen von Konflikten am Arbeitsplatz beschreiben – Strategien zur Vermeidung bzw. Bewältigung von Konflikten am Arbeitsplatz kennen – passende Redemittel zur Konfliktbewältigung kennen und anwenden – Dialogen und Sachtexten zum Thema Informationen entnehmen – das eigene Konfliktverhalten reflektieren 	<p>Dauer</p> <p>6 Schulstunden (+ Test)</p> <p>Niveau</p> <p>B1</p> <p>Ihr Plus</p> <p>eine Farbfolie und ein Rollenspiel zum Thema</p>
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Materialübersicht

1. Stunde **Conflictual situations in the workplace and its reasons**

- M 1 (Tr) Conflicts at work – people and situations
 M 2 (Ws) A conflict situation at work – a dialogue (group A)
 M 3 (Ws) A conflict situation at work – a dialogue (group B)
 M 4 (Ws) What are the reasons for conflicts at work? – Creating a mind map

2./3. Stunde **Strategies to deal with conflicts**

- M 5 (Tr) A tug of war? – Strategies for resolving a conflict
 M 6 (Ws) Dealing with conflicts – some tips
 M 7 (Tx) Different types of conflicts – an info box
 M 8 (Ws) There must be a misunderstanding! – Avoiding conflicts

4. Stunde **Strategies to deal with difficult colleagues**

- M 9 (Tx/Ws) Whatever you want! – Dealing with difficult colleagues

5. Stunde **Bullying at the workplace**

- M 10 (Ws) You aren't any good! – About bullying in the workplace

6. Stunde **A role play**

- M 11 (Rp) Let's find a solution! – A role play

Vocabulary Dealing with conflicts at work (M 12)

Test Dealing with conflicts – show what you have learned (M 13)

Bedeutung der Abkürzungen

Rp: Role play; Tr: Transparency; Tx: Text; Ws: Worksheet

Minimalplan

Sie haben nur zwei Stunden zur Verfügung? So können Sie die wichtigsten Inhalte erarbeiten:

1. Stunde: Strategies and phrases to deal with conflicts at work **M 1 und M 6**
 2. Stunde: How to avoid conflicts – reading a dialogue **M 8**

Zusatzmaterialien auf CD

M8_Zusatz_organisational conflict (zusätzlicher Dialog, in dem ein Missverständnis auf Organisationsebene aufgeklärt wird)



Auf der **CD RAAbits Englisch Berufliche Schulen (CD 18)** befinden sich alle Materialien im **veränderbaren Word-Format** sowie Zusatzmaterialien.

M1 Conflicts at work – people and situations



VORANSICHT

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Tasks

1. Describe the photos and speculate what the people are saying or thinking.
2. Tell the others about similar situations you have had or seen at work.

M 5

A tug of war? – Strategies for resolving a conflict**Task**

1. Describe the photo. (tug of war = das Tauziehen)
2. What does it have to do with a workplace conflict?

Dealing with conflicts – some tips



M 6

Here are some tips on how to resolve¹ a conflict.



Top tips for dealing successfully with a conflict at work

1. Stay respectful and polite² even if the other person is behaving in an unacceptable way.
2. Talk about the problem when both parties have calmed down³.
3. Try to show empathy⁴ for the others feelings.
4. Don't blame⁵ the other person for what has happened.
5. Ask for the other's opinion and listen to the other person without interrupting⁶ him or her.
6. Use statements starting with "I" to show how you think and feel about the conflict situation.
7. Be constructive and try to find a compromise.
8. Apologize⁷ if you get the impression that you've done something wrong.

Tasks

1. Which phrase goes with which piece of advice⁸ from above? Write the correct number on the line.

- | | no. |
|---|-------|
| a) The situation is really not easy but I would like to state my point of view as well. | 4 |
| b) I understand what you mean. I would probably feel the same in your situation. | _____ |
| c) I'm terribly sorry for what I said yesterday. | _____ |
| d) Would it be OK with you to talk about the situation tomorrow afternoon? | _____ |
| e) I'm afraid you're getting personal right now. | _____ |
| f) I had the impression that you've been trying to avoid me during the last weeks. | _____ |
| g) It would be good to know how you feel about the situation. | _____ |
| h) I'm sure we'll find an agreement. What do you think of the following compromise? | _____ |

2. Work with a partner. Take notes on why the young people's behaviour in a conflict situation is problematic. What could they do instead?



"Don't interrupt me!
I haven't finished."

"I've already talked
to our boss. I know that
it's your fault."



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Vocabulary

1 **to resolve a conflict**: einen Konflikt lösen – 2 **polite**: höflich – 3 **to calm down**: sich beruhigen – 4 **empathy**: das Mitgefühl –
5 **to blame so.:** jmdn. beschuldigen – 6 **to interrupt so.:** jmdn. unterbrechen – 7 **to apologize**: sich entschuldigen –
8 **piece of advice**: der Ratschlag

Whatever you want! – Dealing with difficult colleagues

M 9

Find out about strategies on how to deal with difficult colleagues at work.

The situation: Marion Heller works in the purchasing department¹ of *Roth & Co.*, a big German building company. Dorina Varga from Hungary and Juan Navarro-Lopez from Spain started working in the international sales department of the company not long ago.

Marion: You come rushing² in as if the devil were behind you. What can I do for you?

Dorina: I'm sorry, but I did knock before entering.

Marion: I didn't hear anything. So what's the matter?

Dorina: I would like to ask you if you could lend me a package of coloured printing paper. We're short³ of paper.

Marion: I don't lend⁴ anything to anybody. That's one of my principles. People never bring anything back.

Dorina: I promise I'll return it as soon as possible.

Marion: No way!

Dorina: But it's very important, I have to print out my presentation.

Marion: Everyone who comes along has something very important to do.

Dorina: Thank you very much anyway.



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A difficult colleague?

Later the same day

Marion: Ja, bitte?

Juan: Guten Morgen!. Good morning, Mrs Heller. Busy as usual. How are you doing?

Marion: Good morning. As you see, I have a lot of work to do. But that's fine since it leaves me no time to think about my divorce.

Juan: I admire⁵ how you get all these things done. I don't always meet the deadline⁶.

Marion: And you, Juan, what about your project?

Juan: I've almost finished. Only a few corrections and I can print it out.

Marion: You'll print it out on coloured paper, won't you? It looks better.

Juan: You're right. I didn't think about that. But we don't have any coloured printing paper in our department.

Marion: I can lend you a package. You can return it whenever you want.

Juan: Thank you so much, Mrs Heller. That's very helpful. If you have time, I can give you a copy of my project so you can read it.

Marion: Oh yes, thank you. I always try to keep in touch with the latest developments in the company.

Vocabulary

1 **purchasing department:** der Einkauf (Abteilung einer Firma) – 2 **to rush in:** hereinplatzen – 3 **to be short of sth.:** aufgebraucht sein – 4 **to lend sth. to so.:** jmdm. etw. leihen – 5 **to admire sth.:** etw. bewundern – 6 **to meet a deadline:** eine Frist einhalten

M 11 Let's find a solution! – A role play

Conflicts are part of everyday working life. Act out a conflict situation with a partner and use the strategies and phrases you have learned.



Role Card 1: Susan Elliot

You are Susan Elliot. Robert Eber is a colleague of about the same age as you who is working in another department of your company. You have known each other for many years. You aren't very close friends but you get together at least twice a week to have dinner or coffee in the staff restaurant. In general, you talk to each other in a very confidential¹ way, not only about company issues but also about your private lives.

Yesterday you got an email from Robert. He has heard from colleagues in his department that you said that he wasn't sufficiently qualified for his job. Today he would like to come to your office to talk about the issue.



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1 **confidential**: vertraulich – 2 **sufficient**: ausreichend



Role Card 2: Robert Eber



Your name is Robert Eber. Susan Elliot is an English-speaking colleague of about the same age as you who is working in another department of your company. You have known each other for many years. You aren't very close friends but you get together at least twice a week to have dinner or coffee in the staff restaurant. In general, you talk to each other in a very confidential¹ way, not only about company issues but also about your private lives.

Two of your colleagues told you confidentially that Susan is talking about you behind your back. You heard that she said that you weren't sufficiently² qualified for your job. At the beginning, you didn't believe the rumour³. But now you have serious doubts⁴ about Susan's loyalty. You want to talk to her immediately.

1 **confidential**: vertraulich – 2 **sufficient**: ausreichend – 3 **rumour**: das Gerücht – 4 **doubt**: der Zweifel

Tasks

1. Get together with a partner. One of you is Susan and one is Robert.
2. Make notes to prepare your roles in the conversation. Make sure you use the strategies and phrases you have learned about on how to resolve the conflict.
3. Practise the role play. Be prepared to act it out in class.