

Gifted Adults and their conflicts in the workplace

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Case



Questions

- *1. Your first reaction on this discussion between employee and supervisor?
- *2. What do you recognize?

Program overview



- * Case and discussion
- * Conflicts in the workplace in NL
- * Gifted persons and their conflicts at work
- * Research
- * Discussion
- * Gifted children and conflicts?

Who are we?

- * Ido van der Waal, Altena bv
 - * Full time mediator in workplace conflicts since 1996
 - * Mediated hundreds of workplace conflicts
 - * Studying conflicts of gifted workers and children since 2011
 - * Coaching and mediation of gifted workers
- * Noks Nauta, IHBV
 - * MD and psychologist, PhD
 - * Studying gifted adults at work since 2000
 - * Publications, presentations, training
 - * Book: Gifted workers, hitting the target, Shaker media, 2013

Workplace conflicts in the Netherlands (17 million inhabitants)

- * Internet search: around 90,000 reported sick per year due to a workplace conflict
- * Costs: 58,500 to 65,000 U.S. dollar pro person (legal proceedings, pay-outs)

Definition of Workplace Conflict (NL)

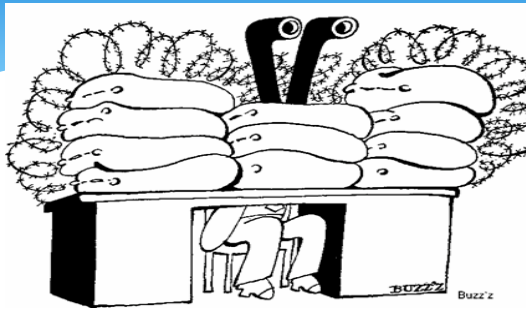
- Two individuals, one individual and a group, or two groups within the confines of a labour organisation
- At least one of the parties thinks that the other frustrates or annoys them
- This may relate to job content, working relations, working conditions or working terms

Van de Vliert (1989)



Hot conflict
(Friedrich Glasl)

8



Cold conflict

(Friedrich Glasl)



Sailing upstream does not feel well and is ineffective

Your own experiences?

Think about yourself (or someone in your immediate vicinity):

- Have you (or have they) ever been involved in a conflict in the workplace?
- What was this conflict about?



Cloke & Goldsmith on workplace conflicts

Many workplace disputes arise from

- simple miscommunications
- misunderstandings
- seemingly irrelevant differences
- poor choices of language
- ineffective management styles
- unclear roles and responsibilities
- false expectations
- poor leadership

Gifted people

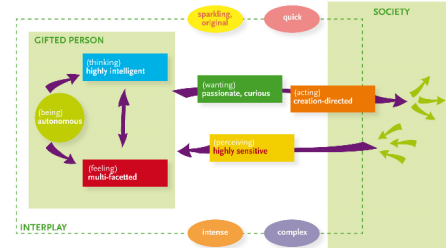


- * Quick and intelligent thinkers who can handle complex cases
- * Autonomous, curious and passionate by nature
- * Sensitive and emotional persons, intensely alive
- * Enjoy being creative

Delphi model (Kooijman-van Thiel 2008)



DELPHI-MODEL OF GIFTEDNESS®



From: M.B.G.M. Kooijman - van Thiel (ed.), *Highly Gifted: Obvious? On Identity and Image of Gifted Persons*, OYA Productions, 2008

Experiences of gifted workers

- * Problems connecting with others
- * Organizations are used to dealing with people of average intelligence
- * Gifted persons get bored and start acting up

Our reasons to do research:

- * Many stories, many frustrations
- * Why do gifted people develop this behavior?
- * Why conflicts in new jobs again and again?

Research

- * Online questionnaire (survey): general information on gifted people with workplace conflicts combined with sick leave
 - * 52 respondents
- * Face- to-face interviews with persons having had more than two conflicts
 - * 7 interviews

Interviewees

- * 2 men, 5 women
- * Ages 35 to 63
- * 2 managerial position
- * 6 had IQ test scores in top 2%



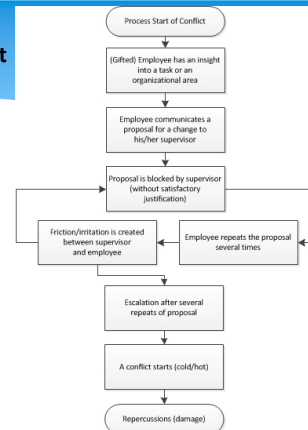
Results (interviews)

- * All had conflicts with the direct supervisor
- * Gifted employees speak passionately about an insight/ idea
- * "I cannot change my opinion (I base it on facts)"
- * "I am swimming upstream all the time"

Analysis: a pattern?

- * Conflicts always start with a clear observation and overview of work processes/ organization
- * Cold conflicts
- * Always about work processes within the organization
- * Never about relationships or communication

Phases in development of conflict



Your input

How to prevent/ solve these conflict?



What can gifted people do? (1)

- * Recognize the outlined patterns and pitfalls
- * Ask questions rather than present an analysis and solution all at once
- * Try to follow the train of thought of the other guy
- * Avoid playing the role of expert (making statements)
- * Allow for the extra time people need to follow your train of thought

What can gifted people do? (2)

- * Prevent loss of face or loss of reputation of supervisor
- * Choose an organization and a job that fits you
- * A supportive supervisor contributes to your well-being and your health
- * Ask for help if necessary
- * Coaching on the job and a lot of practice leads to more effective behaviour

Dale Dauten: The Gifted Boss



- * The great employees have at least one skill superior to the boss and/ or serve as a check on the boss's work...
- * Gifted bosses and great employees want the same thing: Freedom from management, mediocrity and morons; a change; a chance...

Gifted children

- * Conflicts with teachers?
- * Have we discovered a pattern?
- * Research?
- * Will learning of skills earlier in life prevent conflicts later in life?



Thank you

We wish all gifted people
inspiring and harmonious working!

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