

COMMUNICATION AS A TOOL IN LEADERSHIP

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Whenever we hear the words “conflict” and “crisis,” they often carry negative connotations. Our immediate reaction is to ask, “What happened?” “Who is involved?” or “Will this affect me?” As social beings, we are conditioned from childhood to navigate relationships and avoid conflicts. Our families teach us how to interact with others, often encouraging us to conform in order to maintain harmony. As we grow older and become part of various groups and organizations, we continue to apply these learned behaviors to sustain our roles and relationships. However, despite our best efforts to think and act rationally, conflicts and crises are inevitable, testing our emotional and mental resilience.

The reality is that no single approach can satisfy everyone. Organizations are composed of individuals with diverse backgrounds, personalities, and perspectives, making conflict a natural part of group dynamics. Disagreements and misunderstandings are inevitable, but they also provide opportunities for growth, discussion, and progress.

As future leaders, we must recognize the critical role of communication in managing conflict and crisis within an organization. To effectively address and resolve issues, we must first understand how to utilize communication as a tool for clarity and collaboration. Identifying, analyzing, and developing solutions to conflicts are essential steps in crisis management, but these efforts will only be effective if they are grounded in clear and open communication. Senapathy (2023) highlights that organizations thrive when members are well-informed, actively involved, and aligned with shared goals. Communication plays a vital role in conflict resolution, risk identification, and trust-building. A well-structured crisis management strategy should include effective crisis

communication, focusing on message delivery, timing, and appropriate dissemination methods.

Moreover, to meet the needs of modern education, school administrators in the twenty-first century must also be skilled at integrating technology and making sure that both they and their employees are digitally literate (Hauseman et al., 2020). This includes social media management, in which leaders use social media to communicate quickly while skillfully controlling the dangers of misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations. Leaders should encourage students and employees to develop critical thinking, communication, information literacy, media literacy, and technological literacy as essential 21st-century abilities. In order to foster a pleasant school climate, promote academic excellence, and guarantee student success in a world that is changing quickly, school administrators must acquire and master these abilities.

Conflict and crises are unavoidable in any organization, but their impact—positive or negative—depends on how they are managed. As leaders, we must develop the knowledge and skills to handle these challenges effectively and proactively. Understanding the perspectives of those we lead, fostering open dialogue, and implementing well-rounded solutions will contribute to a more resilient and adaptable organization. Ultimately, how we approach conflict, and crisis can determine whether they strengthen or weaken our leadership and the organizations we serve.

References:

Senapathy, Y.(2023). Communications Management: Definition, Importance, Purpose, Benefits, and Process. Project Management Training Institute.

Hauseman et al. (2020). Crisis Communication by School Leaders during the COVID-19 Pandemic.