



LEARNING MATERIAL

FACILITATOR GUIDE

Conflict Management

SAQA ID	NQF Level / Credits
SP-210409	Level 5 · 8 Credits

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Prepared in accordance with Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO) quality assurance requirements

Table of Contents

Right-click the field below and select “Update Field” → “Update entire table” to populate.

1. Welcome to the Programme

Follow along in the guide as the training practitioner takes you through the material. Make notes and sketches that will help you to understand and remember what you have learnt.

Take notes and share information with your colleagues. Important and relevant information and skills are transferred by sharing!

2. Skills Programme Summary (QCTO)

Skills Programme Title	Conflict Management
Skills Programme ID Number	SP-210409
NQF Level	5
Credits	8
Quality Assuring Body (QAB)	Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)

3. Content Structure

3.1 Knowledge Component

Topic Number	Topic Title
Topic 1	Sources of conflict.
Topic 2	Types of conflicts
Topic 3	Strategies for conflict management.
Topic 4	Techniques in conflict management.
Topic 5	Conflict consequences analysis
Topic 6	Emotional intelligence in conflict resolution
Topic 7	Components of Conflict Resolution Report

3.2 Application (Practical) Component

Topic Number	Application Topic
Topic 1	Apply teamwork in conflict resolution process.
Topic 2	Profile a conflict at a workplace.
Topic 3	Analyse a conflict profile and determine the causes of conflict
Topic 4	Determine and implement appropriate conflict management strategies
Topic 5	Select and apply conflict resolution techniques
Topic 6	Analyse and profile conflict consequences
Topic 7	Apply emotional intelligence in conflict resolution engagement
Topic 8	Compile and implement conflict resolution follow up plan
Topic 9	Compile conflict resolution report

4. Types of Activities You Can Expect

To accommodate your learning preferences, a variety of different types of activities are included in the formative and summative assessments. They will assist you to achieve the outcomes (correct results) and should guide you through the learning process, making learning a positive and pleasant experience.

The table below provides you with more information about the types of activities.

Types of Activities	Description	Purpose
Knowledge Topics	You are required to complete these activities on your own.	These activities test your understanding and ability to apply the information.
Skills Application Activities	You need to complete these activities in the workplace.	These activities require you to apply the knowledge and skills gained in the workplace.
Applied Knowledge	You need to collect information and samples of documents from the workplace.	These activities ensure you get the opportunity to learn from experts in the industry. Collecting examples demonstrates how to implement knowledge and skills in a practical way.

5. How to Use This Guide

This learner guide provides:

- Knowledge required to understand the skills programme topics
- Practical scenarios to support application
- Activities to prepare you for workplace implementation

You will be required to apply this knowledge in assessments and workplace contexts.

Curriculum Structure at a Glance

Conflict Management — Facilitator Sessions

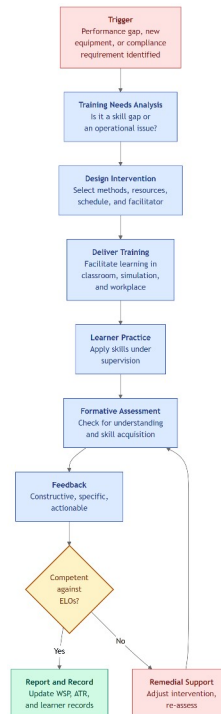
Session	Component	Code	Source Section	Title	Topics / Activities / Tasks
1	Knowledge Component	KM-01	Unit 1	Knowledge component	Sources of conflict.; Types of conflicts; Strategies for conflict management.; Techniques in conflict management.; Conflict consequences analysis; Emotional intelligence in conflict resolution; Components of Conflict Resolution Report
2	Application Component	PM-01	Practical Section 1	Application component	Apply teamwork in conflict resolution process.; Profile a conflict at a workplace.; Analyse a conflict profile and determine the causes of conflict; Determine and implement appropriate conflict management strategies; Select and apply conflict resolution techniques; Analyse and profile conflict consequences; Apply emotional intelligence in conflict resolution engagement; Compile and implement conflict resolution follow up plan; Compile conflict resolution report

This Facilitator Guide accompanies the Learner Guide. Each session below corresponds to one unit of the Learner Guide.

SESSION 1 · KM-01

Facilitator Session 1 (KM-01): Unit 1: Knowledge component

1.1 Session Plan



Time	Topic / Activity	Method	Trainer Role	Learner Role	Resources
30 min	1. Sources of Conflict	Lecture	The trainer will present the foundational socio-economic and structural drivers of workplace conflict, contextualising them within South Africa's historical labour landscape.	Learners will listen actively, take comprehensive notes, and relate the theoretical drivers to their own departmental experiences.	Whiteboard, projector, printed Learner Guide Unit 1.
45 min	2. Types of Conflicts	Group work	The trainer will divide the learners into syndicates to analyse different conflict typologies and assign each group a specific case study to classify.	Learners will collaborate in small groups to examine case scenarios, categorise conflict types, and present their findings to the plenary.	Flipchart paper, markers, conflict typology matrix handouts.
45 min	3. Strategies for Conflict Management	Case study	The trainer will introduce a complex organisational dispute and guide learners through evaluating competing, collaborating, and avoiding strategies.	Learners will review the case study independently, evaluate the strategic choices made by management, and debate alternative approaches.	Printed Apex Manufacturing case study, structured analytical worksheets.
45 min	4. Techniques in Conflict Management	Role-play	The trainer will demonstrate active listening and reframing techniques, then monitor and critique paired role-play exercises among learners.	Learners will pair up to enact simulated dispute scenarios, actively practicing caucusing, reframing, and reality-testing techniques.	Role-play prompt cards, observation checklist templates.
30 min	5. Conflict	Discussion	The trainer will facilitate a	Learners will contribute	Cost-of-conflict

Time	Topic / Activity	Method	Trainer Role	Learner Role	Resources
	Consequences Analysis		plenary discussion on the hidden financial and psychological costs of unmanaged conflict within South African enterprises.	real-world examples of organisational fallout, debating the direct versus indirect costs of disputes.	financial model slides, whiteboard.
30 min	6. Emotional Intelligence in Conflict Resolution	Reflection	The trainer will guide learners through a structured self-reflection exercise examining personal emotional triggers and the concept of the amygdala hijack.	Learners will complete personal reflection journals, identifying their own emotional responses and discussing strategies for self-regulation.	Personal reflection journals, emotional intelligence assessment tools.
30 min	7. Components of Conflict Resolution Report	Assessment briefing	The trainer will dissect the five core components of a defensible conflict resolution report, highlighting administrative justice and POPIA compliance.	Learners will review a sample incident report, critiquing its structure, identifying factual versus emotional statements, and noting compliance gaps.	Sample conflict resolution report templates, POPIA compliance checklist.

1.2 Facilitation Notes

Topic 1: Sources of Conflict

What to emphasise	Emphasize that workplace disputes in South Africa are rarely isolated interpersonal clashes; they are deeply influenced by systemic socio-economic inequalities, historical stratifications, and modern organizational pressures. Highlight the critical distinction between the immediate trigger of a conflict and its underlying root cause.
Common misunderstandings	Learners frequently assume that conflict is purely personal and can be resolved by telling employees to "get along" without examining underlying structural design flaws, resource scarcity, or ambiguous job roles.
Probing questions	What structural factors in your current department might be generating friction that managers mistakenly attribute to bad attitudes? How does the distinction between a conflict trigger and a root cause change your approach as an NQF Level 5 practitioner?

Topic 2: Types of Conflicts

What to emphasise	Emphasize the vital legal and operational differences between disputes of right (governed by statutory protections and existing contracts) and disputes of interest (matters of mutual interest such as wage negotiations). Stress that each conflict type requires a distinct resolution forum and pathway.
Common misunderstandings	Learners often confuse internal individual grievances with collective labour disputes, attempting to apply standard internal disciplinary policies to macro-level union negotiations.
Probing questions	Why would applying a standard disciplinary policy to a collective wage dispute violate South African labour law? How do vertical and horizontal conflicts differ in their underlying power dynamics and resolution requirements?

Topic 3: Strategies for Conflict Management

What to emphasise	Emphasize that conflict management strategy is a deliberate, high-level choice dictated by situational contingencies, relationship importance, and operational urgency. Highlight the superiority of interest-based negotiation over rigid positional bargaining in complex disputes.
Common misunderstandings	Learners often believe that "collaborating" is always the best conflict-handling mode,

	failing to recognise that emergencies or safety crises legally and operationally require a directive, competing strategy.
Probing questions	When is a competing conflict-handling mode legally and operationally justified in a workplace setting? What are the long-term dangers of relying solely on positional bargaining during high-stakes negotiations?

Topic 4: Techniques in Conflict Management

What to emphasise	Emphasize the tactical mechanics of reframing—specifically how practitioners must strip away personal insults and emotional hostility to re-state grievances in neutral, problem-focused terms. Stress the value of the caucus as a confidential tool for reality-testing.
Common misunderstandings	Learners frequently confuse active listening with passive agreement, believing that acknowledging a disputant's emotional state means validating their unreasonable demands or illegal actions.
Probing questions	How can you actively validate a disputant's emotional frustration without conceding the objective facts of the operational dispute? What is the tactical purpose of calling a separate caucus during a deadlocked mediation session?

Topic 5: Conflict Consequences Analysis

What to emphasise	Emphasize that the true cost of unmanaged conflict lies not in direct legal fees, but in hidden indirect costs such as presenteeism, staff turnover, management time, and cultural trust deficits. Highlight how this data is used to build a business case for proactive HR interventions.
Common misunderstandings	Learners often assume that conflict has zero financial impact unless it results in a formal CCMA arbitration award or a protected strike.
Probing questions	How would you calculate the hidden indirect costs of conflict when presenting a business case for dispute management training to an executive board? In what ways can a well-managed conflict yield constructive organisational outcomes?

Topic 6: Emotional Intelligence in Conflict Resolution

What to emphasise	Emphasize that emotional intelligence is a rigorous professional competency involving self-regulation, empathy, and relationship management, rather than simply being polite. Highlight the neurological impact of the amygdala hijack during disputes.
Common misunderstandings	Learners often believe that emotions should be completely suppressed during professional conflict resolution, viewing emotional expression as a sign of weakness rather than critical data.
Probing questions	How does an "amygdala hijack" impair a disputant's ability to engage in rational problem-solving? What specific self-regulation techniques can you use to maintain neutrality when a disputant attacks you personally?

Topic 7: Components of Conflict Resolution Report

What to emphasise	Emphasize that a conflict resolution report is a formal administrative and legal document that must stand up to rigorous scrutiny at the CCMA or Labour Court. Stress the absolute necessity of separating verified facts from unverified hearsay.
Common misunderstandings	Learners frequently include emotional opinions, subjective bias, and irrelevant personal details in investigative reports, fatally compromising the organisation's procedural fairness and exposing it to legal liability.
Probing questions	Why is separating verified factual findings from unverified allegations critical for legal defensibility during CCMA arbitration? How does the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) govern the drafting and storage of internal dispute reports?

1.3 Model Answers for Learner Activities

Topic 1 Workbook Activity: Conflict Source Audit

In conducting a conflict source audit within a typical departmental environment, three distinct areas of friction can be identified and categorised as follows:

- 1. Structural Conflict (Workflow Bottlenecks):** The friction between the customer service desk and the inventory warehouse stems from poor system integration and overlapping responsibilities. The root cause is that inventory software is outdated and fails to update in real-time, leaving customer agents promising stock that has already been allocated elsewhere. This structural misalignment leads to mutual recrimination and customer complaints.
- 2. Interest-Based Conflict (Resource Scarcity):** Disagreements between the marketing department and the operations team regarding promotional budgets and scheduling. The root cause is a zero-sum annual budgeting model where executive management allocates finite resources without transparent criteria, forcing departments into aggressive competition for operating capital and staff support.
- 3. Interpersonal Conflict (Cultural and Communication Clashes):** Friction between senior shift supervisors and junior technical staff arising from contrasting communication styles and perceived authoritarian leadership. The root cause is a complete absence of cross-cultural communication training and closed feedback loops, leading junior staff to interpret direct supervisory directives as personal disrespect and bullying.

Topic 2 Workbook Activity: Conflict Classification Matrix

A comprehensive conflict classification matrix for an organisation features the following categories:

- **Interpersonal Conflict:** Occurs between two individual accountants in the finance department over task delegation and credit-claiming. Characteristics include high emotional intensity, personal animosity, and subjective grievances. The appropriate resolution forum is confidential internal peer mediation facilitated by an HR practitioner.
- **Inter-Group Conflict:** Occurs between the sales division and the credit control department regarding client onboarding speed versus credit risk mitigation. Characteristics include departmental silo mentalities, competing KPIs, and finger-pointing. The appropriate resolution forum is a facilitated cross-functional problem-solving workshop to realign collaborative metrics.
- **Collective Labour Dispute:** Occurs between corporate management and the registered trade union representing operational workers over annual wage increases and medical aid contributions. Characteristics include formal bargaining structures, positional posturing, and potential industrial action. The appropriate resolution forum is compulsory conciliation under the auspices of the CCMA or a statutory bargaining council.

Topic 3 Workbook Activity: Conflict Management Strategy Analysis

Evaluating a past dispute regarding a major restructuring initiative reveals that management initially adopted a rigid **competing** strategy, issuing executive directives without consultation. This strategy failed because it ignored employee interests, triggered widespread anxiety regarding job security, and resulted in a retaliatory work slowdown. An alternative approach would have been to deploy a **collaborating** strategy combined with an interest-based negotiation framework. By establishing joint consultation committees, management could have addressed underlying fears regarding job losses through structured retraining programs and voluntary severance packages. This alternative strategy would have achieved the restructuring objectives while preserving trust and operational continuity.

Topic 4 Workbook Activity: Conflict Management Role-Play Practice

During simulated role-play exercises, practitioners successfully demonstrated active listening by maintaining neutral body language, nodding, and paraphrasing the angry disputant's core frustrations. When the disputant launched a personal attack ("Management are completely corrupt and don't care about us"), the practitioner applied **reframing** by stating: "If I understand correctly, you are seeking greater financial transparency and verifiable accountability regarding resource allocation." This technique successfully stripped away the toxic insult while preserving the legitimate operational concern, transitioning the dialogue into constructive problem-solving.

Topic 5 Workbook Activity: Conflict Consequence Audit

A high-level conflict consequence audit for a distribution enterprise revealed the following impacts:

- **Direct Costs:** R150,000 spent on external legal representation and CCMA conciliation fees following two unresolved unfair dismissal grievances.
- **Hidden Operational Impacts:** Over 200 management hours diverted from strategic business development to investigate petty grievances; a 15% drop in delivery turnaround times due to inter-departmental friction between dispatch and maintenance teams.
- **Psychological Toll:** A noticeable rise in presenteeism and a 30% spike in stress-related sick leave among warehouse staff, culminating in the voluntary resignation of three skilled technicians who cited a toxic work culture.