Conflict Management – the role of Hotel Managers

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Abstract

Conflict management in a hospitality operation is an issue which every General Manager, Department Head or Line Manager of a hotel has to contend with at one time or another; it is in essence unavoidable at times and is exacerbated by the stressful nature of hotel work. Managers in the traditional mould tend to view conflict as disruptive in nature. In truth, certain amounts of conflict are valuable for good work performance and lead to careful analyses of the goals of the business, and this is always a beneficial exercise. Conflict that is however at a high level for a relatively long period, is destructive and may result in chaos and a failure on the part of a department to meet business objectives in both the long and short-term.

The imperative is to manage conflict by improved communication skills and by developing an esprit d’corps amongst the employees across each of the departments in an operation. Conflict may be healthy to a degree. When conflict becomes problematic, a systematic approach to solving it is highly desirable. In this paper, types of conflict are identified and sources of conflict in hotels are analyzed. Various approaches and techniques to use in solving conflict in the workplace have been investigated and a technique to resolve conflict in hotels is suggested. Existing conflict management research is thus supported and extended.

Purpose: The study aimed to investigate conflict management in the hospitality industry in South Africa. It is also the purpose of this paper to identify questions requiring further research.

Methodology: A conceptual analysis and review of relevant literature was undertaken and analysis was based on a review of refereed articles, discussion papers and short papers in key academic hospitality and general management journals. Numerous hotel employees in Kwazulu Natal province were also spoken to on an informal basis on conflict management in their workplaces.

Findings: Conflict resolution is an unavoidable aspect of management in hotels. The fundamental nature of the hospitality industry in South Africa is undergoing extensive change. Hotels are responding by reviewing their internal structures and the conduct of management and other employees within the business and conflict resolution is apparently high on the agenda

Practical implications: The methods, techniques and systemic approaches discussed in this paper could be utilized by hotel managers to resolve serious problems between all employees in the workplace.

Originality/value: There are not many local sources offering guidance to South African hotel managers on conflict management in hotels. This paper seeks to assist service industry managers to make informed decisions on conflict resolution issues.

Keywords: conflict resolution, management, hospitality industry
Introduction

"Men are not disturbed by things, but the view they take of things." - Epictetus (55-135 A.D.)

Definition: Conflict is defined by Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman (1998) as “the process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or negatively affected by another party”.

Given that there are very high and unacceptable rates of employee turnover in the hospitality industry, it is imperative to minimize the role of conflict as a causal effect. Although conflict does and in some cases should occur, it should not lead to an hotel employee seeking to terminate his or her employment. Employee turnover in hotels is a major problem on a global scale (Lucas: 2004) and this is why conflict management is vital. In the United States, the Marriot Corporation reported in 2000 that a 1% increase in employee turnover would at a conservative estimate, cost the group between 5 and 15 million US dollars (Pizam & Thornburg: 2000). Conflict does tend to impact on performance but managers need to be careful not to allow deep conflict to de-motivate employees who are in event already stressed by the very nature and demands of the hospitality industry. Each case of conflict is unique and has its own situation, dimensions and behaviours. The hospitality management development process needs to be conceptualized as an ongoing and highly dynamic process which should be designed to maximize both the potential of employees and the business, in terms of competence and capability however conflict in the workplace is a major obstacle to this objective. Sadly, Conflict management in the workplace is an issue that every manager or employee has to deal with at some or other time.

In a hospitality enterprise, as indeed in most businesses, conflict is a result of natural competition between two or more individuals or between various departments. It may be used to prevent stagnation by focussing on problems which need to be resolved. Furthermore, conflict helps both individuals and groups to define and perpetuate their distinctiveness and promotes unity, cohesion and common purpose. It may be very healthy as it enables individuals and groups to establish norms to regulate and define the balance of power which prevails in an enterprise. In essence the roles individuals play in a business also impacts on conflict management. The basic means of conflict management in a hospitality enterprise could include improving communication, a greater emphasis on teamwork, and a systematic means of to resolving sticking points which are contributors to the problem.
What are the roles of a manager?

Hospitality managers generally fulfill a wide range of roles and take the lead in, as well as coordinate and control the activities in the day-to-day operation of their businesses. They may thus be involved, to a lesser or greater extent, in the many activities of numerous departments in a hotel such as the front office, food and beverage department, housekeeping department, purchasing, accounting and marketing to name but a few. They are usually also expected to set standards for personnel administration and performance, service quality provision to guests, the setting of room rates, advertising and sales, publicity and public relations, and the financial auditing aspects. They also serve as mentors and advisors and may handle a wide range of problems relating to conflict management, which is more prevalent in the average hospitality operation than one would expect. Managers must sensitize themselves to the consequences of conflict in the workplace. Consequences may generally range from negative outcomes (such as loss of highly-skilled employees such as Executive or Sous Chefs, Reservations Managers etc, sabotage of work, low quality of work, high stress levels and even violence in extreme cases). There may also be positive outcomes (such as creative and innovative alternatives to problem areas, an increase in motivation and commitment, higher quality work outputs, and increased personal satisfaction) (Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman: 1998)).

The size and type of hospitality operation will also to a very large extent determine the size and scope of the manager's duties. In many large operations, where their functions are primarily administrative (general manager), they will tend to coordinate the activities of the various department heads and usually delegate responsibilities to them. These department heads may include front-office managers, conferencing managers who organize and coordinate employees for meetings to be held in the hotel; food and beverage managers who coordinate menu-planning, purchase and prepare food; human resource managers in charge of recruitment and selection; front office managers who control room reservations; executive housekeepers who direct the cleaning staff; and sales managers who promote the maximum usage of all the facilities in the operation by the guests. Some large hotel groups may centralize activities such as purchasing and advertising, so that one may not need other managers for these departments. In this scenario, the manager in charge is faced with greater conflict producing situations where conflict resolution skills are imperative to success. The larger the hospitality operation the greater the scope for conflict that the manager must be able to proactively and reactively deal with.
In small or medium-sized hotels, managers are often owner-operators and have more of a direct supervisory responsibility over all the activities in the operation. These managers are more ‘hands-on’, as it were. Unlike managers in large hotels, they may play a more direct role in the recruitment and selection process. They may also perform relief work in various activities such as food and beverage preparation, room inspection, setting up the venue for a seminar, housekeeping and sales, marketing and community outreach initiatives. Generally they fill in wherever they may be required. As tensions tend to run high in your average hospitality business, due to the stressful nature of the work, one of the main areas of involvement for them is conflict management. What is understood by the term ‘conflict’ and how does it arise?

**Conceptualizing Conflict**

There are numerous causes of workplace conflict. Some of the most common may include:

- Poor communication processes
- Lack of knowledge of vision and mission of the business
- Unrealistic work expectations from line-managers and supervisors
- Overwork time not paid for
- The stressful nature of the industry
- Personality clashes between employees
- Poor leadership and management skills

Hellriegel *et al* (1998), define conflict as a process in which one party perceives that its interests are being opposed or adversely affected by another party. According to Spreitzer (1995), employees feel empowered psychologically when they feel able to shape their work role and context. A hotel Food and Beverage manager therefore, who informs kitchen employees that they must do something totally different to what they were told to do a short while earlier, feel that they are losing power and may believe that they are being exploited and manipulated to serve the manager’s interest. Conflict thus results about who is correct and what strategy should have been pursued. The work relationship is thus tainted and in the hospitality business this is a huge problem as what is called for is close and harmonious cooperation.

Individual differences among employees and incompatible goals are other sources of conflict in a hospitality operation. One employee may not understand another’s attitude and opinion due to cultural diversity, the level of educational difference or language problems, or perhaps
sex and age. One party sets its objective to neutralize or gain an advantage over another party. Communication or the lack thereof, is usually at the root of all conflict. Employees thus need to communicate on an ongoing basis about business goals, organizational problems and scarce resources, work relationships – including power and prestige, and the differences between individuals. Such efforts will go a long way in the pro-active avoidance of conflict scenarios. Effective interpersonal communication is vital as it allows the manager to develop a relationship with the employees in his/her particular department. Positive interaction with employees is constructive and creates a favourable work environment in which appropriate behaviours and attitudes are fostered.

**How can a Line, or other Manager, optimize communication with employees?**

Line managers have to constantly be ready to handle a wide range of conflicts in the workplace and must do so without alienating the employees concerned. In a kitchen environment, too many cooks may indeed spoil the proverbial broth. It is not uncommon for pent up employee frustrations to spill over into verbal abuse slinging matches and even fist fights. This type of activity can certainly tarnish a guest’s perceptions of a hotel. Although much time and effort may have gone into “creating” the right customer, he will certainly not be retained. What can a line manager proactively do to minimize the possibility of conflict erupting?

Suggestions:

- Ongoing interaction with all employees in a climate of mutual respect.
- Matching leadership style with the group of employees.
- Putting employees in charge as well as in control – giving them latitude to make decisions independently.
- Constantly striving to motivate employees.
- Striking a balance between concern for individuals and groups and the accomplishment of tasks.
- Giving employees realistic workloads.
- Including the employees in the implementation of current plans as well as in future plans.
- Involving employees in the communication process.
- Including conflict management in the employee relations planning and identifying instances of conflict and developing procedures to resolve them.
- Valuing employees and giving praise where praise is due.
- Regular consultation and communication.
- Providing unambiguous situations and guiding and mentoring employees.
At times, conflict is a positive force in a business, while at other times it is totally destructive and has a negative impact. After discussions with over ten line-managers from various hotel departments including Food and Beverage, Housekeeping and the Front Office departments (of five different hotels in KwaZulu Natal Province), it became apparent that the behaviour exhibited by employees differs considerably from situation to situation. Some employees attempt to ignore the conflict and deny that there is in fact a problem looming. Others tend to co-operate with their line-managers to resolve issues which are disrupting their performance in the workplace. Yet others compete through participation in various other structures and in so doing undermine their line-manager. In each of the hotel Food and Beverage departments investigated, a major conflict area was the tension which lies between the value placed on certain food items on menus and the established norms and standards, set by industry, which are in place to achieve them.

Groups are generally regarded as highly effective in influencing and socializing individuals. In each of the hotels, not much effort went into the development of effective working groups. Research has demonstrated that groups do in fact greatly limit variance in the behaviour of their members through the development and maintenance of explicit and implicit norms (Feldman: 1984). In the average kitchen, this could be a challenge as chefs are generally very innovative and creative individuals and like things to be done their way and they will thus tend to express views which are contrary to those expressed by their immediate supervisor (Nemeth: 1986). An essential skill for line-managers and supervisors in a kitchen, for example, is thus to understand and practice good interpersonal communication. This is after all the foundation for all actions in the workplace. It is also the ideal opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with each kitchen employee without alienating anyone. Especially in a country such as South Africa, where there is great cultural diversity, huge amounts of time should be spent on positive interaction with employees. It is this interaction which invariably creates a good workplace climate and nurtures respect and understanding and tolerance, and this in turn leads to favourable behaviour on the part of employees, to the benefit of the enterprise. Managers therefore need to focus on their employees and also on processes (Mullins: 2005).

Conflict Behaviour of Line Managers

How does the average line-manager actually react when faced with conflict? I investigated this by asking a random sample of twenty hotel employees to evaluate the behaviour of their
line-managers which included both male and female managers. I conducted interviews with relevant employees ranging from 15 minutes to 25 minutes in length. In each case the identity of the interviewee was protected. All interviews were conducted in private at the workplace of the employees and were audio-recorded. These formed the basis of my findings. The employees were asked to comment and express their personal opinion about conflict in the workplace and its resolution or lack thereof.

I found that men were more likely than women to report that their male line-managers avoided issues which were leading to conflict. This avoidance led to an escalation and expansion of conflict. Some line-managers were seen to compromise too easily in dealing with conflict situations while a few were obliging. Generally, there were gender differences found in how male and female line-managers tried to resolve conflict. The male line-managers were however regarded as more effective leaders. This perception of leadership cogency was correlated with dominating masculine behaviour. Female leaders were generally seen as either too obliging towards, or too intolerant, of especially innovative employees and tended to rely on threats rather than on any genuine attempt to enhance mutual benefit and respect. This is probably because women managers are a highly selected group who do not generally conform to the average typical feminine stereotype (Korabik: 1990). Some female managers employed tactics including persuasion and rewards to achieve their objectives. If these failed, they then tended to coerce and threaten employees and escalated the conflict considerably. The employees almost unanimously expressed the belief that their line-managers held incorrect assumptions of them which formed the basis of their expectation of what they were considered likely to do in a given situation. All employees reported feeling physically exhausted every day and felt that the pressure at work was gradually mounting, thereby exacerbating an already difficult situation. Some employees said the felt “burnt out” and would probably leave the hospitality industry once other suitable employment was found by them.

Each employee also believed that their line-manager, especially the female line-manager, was usually highly stressed and was thus not in a suitable psychological state to be able to communicate effectively and this would invariably lead to conflict. The consensus was that the average line-manager, both male and female, was not sensitive enough to the negative consequences of conflict that was unresolved. There were cases of sabotage of guests food and generally very low productivity resulting directly from unresolved conflict with other employees, including the line-manager. Most employees felt that their line-managers avoided conflict as much as possible as intervention from senior management would be likely, and this
would then make them appear to be less effective in the eyes of senior management and adversely affect their careers. The successful line manager as a conflict resolver, will try to strike a balance between concern for the groups or individuals involved in a conflict and the achievement of a given task (Pugh and Hickson: 1997) - this was sadly not the case in the five hotels investigated. The employees echoed this sentiment and expressed the opinion that effective conflict resolution is crucial in reinforcing acceptable behaviours and values. They believed that charismatic line managers were the most suitable conflict resolvers but stated that there were really not enough of these to go around in the industry, except in the upper management echelons. Each also believed that if the members of a group could not agree on certain task issues, it was likely that they would begin to dislike each other and come into conflict with each other. They would then attribute this to personality clashes whereas in fact, it is task-related conflict. As most blame for conflict is personal rather than situational (Ginzel: 1994), task conflict is very often misconstrued as a personal assault on a group or individual. Line managers also reported high stress levels and attributed their low levels of involvement with other employees on this fact. They felt that they were slowly being alienated from their work. Emotions tended to run very high in the kitchens of hotels which are very pressurized environments and these uncontrolled emotions were considered to be a major contributor to conflict. Stress is perceived as an imbalance between the demands facing the individual employee and his/her perceived ability to cope with a difficult situation. The situation very much depends on the extent to which employees have support and on their individual natures (Cox et al: 2000). In some cases, conflict that was not resolved led to violence and fist fights and verbal abuse between two chefs and between a chef and a restaurant maitre’d (the latter in front of guests in a hotel restaurant). In the United States, restaurants were considered the fifth most dangerous place to be employed at, based on the number of employees killed at work (Toscano & Weber: 1995).

Many stressed employees explained that they were negative and de-motivated due to changing timetables and what they considered to be unfair shift-work. These negative feelings, such as anger and frustration, tend to adversely affect performance as emotions easily take over where rationality leaves off (Thomas: 1992). A large number of employees stated that they worked many hours overtime, some more than 60 hours per week, and this was not satisfactory. Some of the dishwashers interviewed in one hotel said that they were very poorly paid and were obliged to hold other external jobs in addition to their hotel work, and thus faced much higher pressure which made them more volatile in a workplace where they felt exploited. The industry also creates an environment which is supportive of sexual
feelings and this may result in employees, especially females, being exposed to threatening guest behaviour.

Many hotel employees working in bars where alcohol is consumed, are also exposed to abusive guests and this makes them vulnerable to intimidation and even violence (Hobbs et al: 2002). Bartenders in American hotels are especially exposed to the risk of becoming victims of a homicide than the national average (Jenkins: 1996). Amazingly, 85% of hotel employees interviewed, from all departments, experienced abusive language from guests. 16% of Front-Office employees had the experience of being pushed by irate guests. 95% of employees interviewed experienced abusive language and were shouted at least once a week. In kitchens, 88% of employees interviewed, psychological abuse was experienced daily. This latter finding is echoed in the United Kingdom, by Johns and Menzel (1999), confirming the global nature of conflict in a hotel operation. Where conflict arises in such situations, it generally tends to deplete time and money and moves an enterprise away from its desired goals (Hellriegel et al: 1998) except of course, where it is a useful mechanism to promote the development of a business.

It is especially women employees who are the most vulnerable to conflict situations in hotels as they dominate the industry and are the main workforce in housekeeping and front-office departments in a typical hotel. Immigrant workers from countries such as Zimbabwe are common in the industry and it is this group of employees who are particularly susceptible to discrimination in the workplace. They are however, less often involved in conflict due to their inability to articulate their feelings adequately and their fear of losing their jobs.

**Sexual Harassment and Victimization as Sources of Conflict in Hotels**

Although none of the employees interviewed by me had experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, current literature suggests that it is a pervasive and widespread problem in the hotel industry, which causes grave conflict. “Flirting” is encouraged as part of the job in all service industries (Hart: 1995) -after all, hotel employees are expected to be caring, pleasant and accommodating towards guests all the time, exceeding their expectations as much as possible.

Sexual harassment is a particularly great problem in the restaurant sector in the United Kingdom where about 25% of female employees report having experienced unwanted sexual attention at work (Hoel: 2002). It is not only women who are subjected to sexual harassment – a fair amount of men are also victims. Waiters are especially prone to obscene language and
sexually suggestive comments (European Commission: 1998). Just over 17% of employees interviewed by me reported that they were intimidated at work and bullied at least once a week, while 40% said they had witnessed colleagues being bullied and intimidated by both fellow employees and guests.

Figure 1. Types and number of Conflicts handled by Food and Beverage Managers in a sample of five hotels in Kwazulu Natal in 2005 (January to July)

1. Operational conflicts 43
2. Disciplinary issues 15
3. Interpersonal conflicts including guest conflict 13
4. Service Quality delivery related 10
5. Sexual harassment related including guest behaviour 7
6. Remuneration and conditions of employment related 3
7. Racism related 2

A Technique to Manage Conflict
What can line-managers do to manage conflict? To investigate how line-managers could handle conflicts in the workplace, I researched a wide range of sources and drew on many ideas and developed the technique for conflict management which follows later (figure 2).

Firstly, all managers should realize that conflicts can work to their advantage if they are resolved in a favourable manner which can improve the future strategy of a hotel operation. A concerted effort should be made to reduce bickering and complaining as this can become a sort of disease, which will gradually eat at the business like an ulcer in the stomach. A strong effort must be made to enhance service quality excellence where the welfare of the hotel guests is the paramount consideration.

If a conflict is about to erupt between employees, there should be a mechanism in place such as a hand gesture which indicates that the conflicting parties should immediately go to a back-of-house venue to iron out their differences in the presence of the line manager. Conflict in front of guests is unacceptable and should not be tolerated under any circumstances. The line manager should identify who the complainers are and keep them busy as this will minimize the likelihood of them becoming involved in conflict. It is imperative that close contact be maintained with all departments so as to foresee potential problem areas.
Pro-activity is better than reactivity. It is easier to work off a common base as this creates an up-front win-win scenario, so I suggest that the line manager should try to isolate the common ground and take the conflict resolution further from that point onwards. If employees are encouraged to cooperate with one another as part of a team, are trained appropriately and are treated fairly, there is far less likelihood of conflict arising. In an industry where stress and violence at work are more prevalent due to the interaction between employees themselves and between them and guests, and where tricky situations lead to inappropriate reactions, line managers need to be particularly well trained. Only management which is inclusive and in which all employees participate, will ultimately thrive.

Line managers must strive to collaborate in managing conflict in the workplace (Hellriegel et al: 1998) as this approach tends to bear the greatest fruit in terms of positive employee feelings which impact on their performance in the workplace (Ibid). A step-by-step process to managing conflict in the workplace is highly desirable as this allows a manager to follow a systematic approach to conflict resolution (Yandrick: 2003). I suggest the approach in Figure 2.

Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman, propose a few conflict management styles, including: the “forcing style”, the “accommodating style”, the “compromising style”, and the “collaborating style”. Each of these is briefly described below:

The forcing style refers to “assertive and uncooperative behaviors and reflects a win-lose approach to interpersonal conflict” (Hellriegel et al: 1998). This approach requires coercive power as a means to resolve conflicts in the workplace. The ‘win-lose’ emphasis is less than desirable and is not conducive to harmony in the workplace.

The accommodating style relates to cooperative and unassertive behaviors in the workplace and generally appears as a long-term strategy to promote teamwork or as a submission to the wishes of others. In this style there is evidence of genuine concern about the emotional aspects of conflict in the workplace. Its shortfall is that it seemingly does not concern itself with substantive issues and is thus to a large extent ineffectual. (http://www.articlesbase.com/conflict-management-in-the-work-place-639812.html)

The compromising style alludes to “behaviors at an intermediate level of cooperation and assertiveness” (Hellriegel, et al: 1998). It is based on a concessionary approach of ‘win
some- lose some’. This technique is the most commonly used in hospitality enterprises and is generally accepted as a means of resolving conflict in the workplace.

The collaborative style is expressed in “strong cooperative and assertive behaviors. It is a ‘win-win’ approach to interpersonal conflict resolution. Management plays a meaningful role in examining and assessing the reasons for conflict and makes suggestions that may hopefully lead to alternatives that are acceptable to conflicting parties. This method usually effectively resolves conflict. This is the best approach to managing workplace conflict and it tends to be characteristic of (1) Individuals that are more successful and high-performing, as opposed to medium- and low-performing (Hellriegel et al: 1998).

A systemic approach to workplace issues by management is a necessity in today's hotel workplace environment. Step-by-step process can utilized to resolve any workplace conflict. This allows the manager to follow a systematic approach to resolving a conflict in which probing questions as to the origin of the problem may be asked with answers provided pointing the way to a solution.

**Conclusion**
Conflict is to an extent, a part of individual relationships and organizational development, and no organization can hope to mature productively and be successful without the ability to resolve conflicts in the workplace when they arise (Cotringer: 1997). In this paper I set out to highlight key conflict in the workplace factors that can adversely impact on a hotel.
Interviews have been conducted with a number of employees from a sample of hotels in the Kwazulu Natal province. Based on these interviews The researcher has identified the key elements of conflict and has referred to relevant international literature which shows distinct agreement in reasons for conflict and who is at greatest risk in the workplace. He has also proposed a technique for line managers to use in the resolution of conflict between employees in a hotel and also between employees and guests. Based on a literature review, it appears that the best style to resolve conflict is the collaborative style as proposed by Hellriegel et al (1998). As conflicts are part and parcel of individual relationships and affect organizational development, no enterprise can be fully productive without being able to resolve workplace conflicts effectively (Cottringer: 1997).

There is clearly a need to broaden the training that all managers and especially line managers receive, in the area of conflict management. It is proposed that more intense studies are required to further explore the dynamics of South African hotel employees’ interactions with their managers. This is especially necessary given the diverse nature of the workforce and the fact that hotels are increasingly changing places of work. Perhaps a major task for further investigation, is to ascertain appropriate models for the recruitment and selection of employees in hotels as well as a deeper analysis of the organizational structure and job design in hotels, and how this may impact on conflict and its management.

Conflict resolution is an unavoidable aspect of management in any workplace. The methods, techniques and systemic approaches discussed in this paper could be utilized by hotel managers to resolve serious problems between all employees in the workplace.

The fundamental nature of the hospitality industry in South Africa is undergoing extensive change. Hotels are responding by reviewing their internal structures and the conduct of management and other employees within the business and conflict resolution is apparently high on the agenda.

**Figure 2. Conflict Management Technique for Hotel Line Managers**

**Low intensity conflict between employees/ employees and guests**
- Ascertain facts but remain objective
- Meet with conflicting parties and keep focused
• Be assertive and flexible and listen carefully while keeping eye contact
• Analyze circumstances of conflict situation and ask simple questions
• Criticize guilty party privately
• Demand immediate apology from guilty party
• Request understanding from victim
• Strive for win-win situation if possible
• Obtain a commitment for harmony

Medium intensity conflict between employees/employees and guests
• Meet with conflicting parties and keep focused
• Be assertive and flexible and listen carefully while keeping eye contact
• Have neutral third party present if available
• Analyze circumstances of conflict situation and ask simple questions
• Try to depersonalize the conflict
• Ask for neutral eyewitness account if available
• Advise conflicting parties as to how they should react
• Objectively warn about the effect of failure to resolve troublesome issues
• Strive for win-win situation if possible
• Obtain a commitment for harmony

High intensity conflict between employees/employees and guests
• Immediately calm conflicting parties
• Meet with each separately
• Be assertive and flexible and listen carefully
• Take notes and ask simple questions
• Try to depersonalize the conflict and expand awareness of feelings of parties
• Analyze conflict situation based on statements made by both parties
• Ask for neutral eyewitness account if available
• Suggest immediate concessions from both parties if applicable
• Make provision for follow-up meeting and further concessions if necessary
• Strive for win-win situation if possible
• Obtain a commitment for harmony

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