

Kaitlyn Zintel

BIT 140-YO7

Professor Carnegie

December 1, 2025

Conflict Resolution

In the article “Resolving Conflict In The Workplace-And Why Common Sense Isn’t Enough” (*Forbes*), Rieva Lesonsky interviews Richard Birke. Lesonsky is the CEO of GrowBiz Media and SmallBusinessCurrents.com, and she has over three decades of experience with small businesses and entrepreneurship. Birke is VP and executive director of the JAMS Institute, which is an international alternative dispute resolution management company. In this essay, I will summarize the article.

Birke says in his interview, “Don’t assume that conflict resolution can be achieved with common sense alone.” (Lesonsky, 2023) Through answering a few relatively open-ended questions, he does three things: Birke tells us what the two most frequent causes of conflict are; he discusses conflict management strategies, and the benefits of using proper methods to do so. He says miscommunication and inequities real and perceived are largely the culprit behind conflict. He also reveals that one strategy is to investigate and resolve underlying systemic issues that may be creating a conflict-prone environment. He argues that there is no shame in hiring outside help, especially for a small business who may not be prepared for conflict.

To effectively and efficiently manage conflict, you should either equip your staff with conflict resolution skills or hire an outside company for the role of mediator. Either way, you need a designated person who is skilled in having hard conversations, understanding diverse personalities and navigating the specific workplace conventions. When done correctly, the

benefits of effective conflict resolution include employee engagement and satisfaction, according to Birke. This leads to better performance and employee retention. When people are happy, business runs smoothly.

In his interview with Lesonsky, Birke says “...hiring a pro to resolve a conflict is not an admission of weakness but rather an act of strength and courage.” (Lesonsky, 2023) This strategy is a good example of how to work smarter, not harder, when it comes to mitigating conflict for small businesses. There are many causes of conflict and several strategies to overcome it, but seeing what the pros have to say definitely helps to distill down all that information. Whether you are trained to resolve your businesses internal conflicts or you hire an outside mitigator, there are real benefits to those who manage conflict in their companies properly.

References

Lesonsky, R. (2023, December 21). *Resolving Conflict In The Workplace-And Why Common Sense Isn't Enough*. Forbes.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2023/12/21/resolving-conflict-in-the-workplace-and-why-common-sense-isnt-enough/>