

How to Handle Workplace Disagreements

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INTRO

Welcome to another episode of *The Workforce Link Podcast*, where we're offering forward thinking conversations for the workforce, linking employers and job seekers to a brighter tomorrow.

I'm your host, Sundi Jo Graham, with the Central Workforce Development Region, and I'm so glad you're turning in for another episode today!

If you've been enjoying this podcast, would you mind heading over and leaving us a review wherever it is you listen to podcasts? It helps us get the word out there, and that's our goal, to provide helpful career information for as many people as possible.

With that said, let's get down to business. Where there is a mixture of personalities, there will be some interesting opportunities that arise in the workforce that will either make us butt heads with our co-workers, or figure out how to appropriately resolve conflict and keep moving forward in the workplace.

In today's episode of *The Workforce Link*, we're going to learn how to handle workplace disagreements and overcome conflict together.

DISCUSSION

We're all going to disagree, right? But how we handle that disagreement is what matters. It only takes a short amount of time before everyone in the organization starts to feel the negative energy coming from co-workers who are in the midst of an ugly disagreement.

I don't know about you, but that's not a fun environment to be a part of. We can't avoid disagreement. As a matter of fact, we shouldn't. If we all agreed on everything, we would never grow - it would be counterproductive. But how we disagree is what is important.

What if you actually sit down together and figure out a way to encourage each others' different ideas without duking it out?

The last thing you want to do is walk away from the issue leaving it unresolved, because it will come back to haunt you later. Burying the problem only makes it fester longer, and no one wins!

Here are 4 ways that you can handle workplace disagreements to improve and strengthen your work relationships.

1) Self-Reflect

There's an old saying out there that says, "Remember, when you point a finger at someone, there are three more pointing back at you."

That's so true!

It's so important to look at yourself first before pointing out the flaws in others. Reflect on your attitude. Why are you upset? What did they say or do that caused you to be upset? Did you react negatively? If so, why?

In most disagreements, each side usually thinks they're right.

Make sure you check yourself before sitting down to talk with the other person. Take responsibility where it needs to be taken.

When you sit down with your co-worker and apologize for your own flaws before you even get into the conversation, that will deflate the situation many times, and honestly, surprise the other person who's probably just as ready to throw down over the issue.

Be humble. Look at yourself first.

2) Be Positive

If you're walking into a meeting and you know your co-worker will be there, don't go into the meeting with a negative attitude. Walk in with the mindset that you want to understand where the other person is coming from. Be willing to find a resolution beforehand.

Ask questions. Try to understand what the other person is saying instead of just trying to prove why you're right. Try to see your co-workers' perspective.

If you both make a commitment upfront that you want to be open-minded and willing to resolve the issue, whatever it may be, the tension will most likely decrease tremendously in the very beginning.

Before we continue, I wanna take a quick minute to share something with you.

PROMO - WORK-BASED LEARNING

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Learn more about our on-the-job training program, an excellent opportunity to get hands-on experience from an employer while earning a paycheck. It's a win-win for everyone. Employers get the workforce they need and you get the experience you need!

Or there's our Work Experience Program, available to job seekers August 14-24 who have little or no past work experience. This provides the opportunity to meet with prospective employees while also taking advantage of critical workplace training. Gaining work experience gives you the needed work background to secure future jobs.

And don't forget about our Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, which is an alternative "earn while you learn" combination of training and employment. Apprentice workers gradually earn more as they reach higher levels of productivity. In addition to rewarding performance, a Registered Apprenticeship combines employer-driven, job-related instruction with extensive on-the-job learning under the supervision of a trade professional. After completing a Registered Apprenticeship, the apprentice receives a nationally-recognized occupational credential that communicates the standards and high level of training that their employer provides.

To learn more about our work-based learning programs, visit cwdregion.com/learning today and find the Central Region Job Center near you! Again, that's cwdregion.com.

Now.. let's get back to the best ways to handle workplace disagreements.

DISCUSSION CONTINUED

3) Talk to Someone Else About Your Struggles

Talking to someone else about your struggles can be very beneficial. But.. before we go deeper into that, I'm not talking about complaining to your other co-workers about your issue. Gossip will destroy a workplace faster than you can imagine. Don't do it!

We touched on that topic a little bit in our episode, *Three Ways to Find Happiness in Your Job*. I'll share the links in the show notes.

Make sure it's someone who isn't involved in the situation. Someone who can be trusted and confidential. Ask them for their perspective, because it may be just what you need. Perhaps your emotions were too involved in the situation to see the reality and they can keep you from making, doing or saying something you may regret later.

Find someone who will listen well, ask you challenging questions, or even give you advice based on a similar situation they were in.

And notice I said talk to someone else, not a bunch of people. Your goal isn't to see how many opinions you can get. Your goal is to resolve. Talking too much to too many people can be damaging. This step is about assessing how you're seeing the situation, not getting everyone on your side.

4) Find a Mediator

This needs to be a last resort. If sitting down with your co-worker and resolving the issue with just you two hasn't worked, or the other person isn't open to resolving the issue, then it may be time to get someone else involved.

Maybe you need a facilitator to help work out the issue, or just help set up a more balanced environment. Having someone who is objective to the situation can be helpful to resolve the issue. Make sure whoever mediates is someone you both agree on.

Again, make this a last resort. Do what you can to resolve the issue amongst yourselves first.

RECAP

As I said at the beginning of this episode, disagreements happen. Depending on how they're handled, though, can make them very productive to grow one another and produce positive results for your work environment.

Disagreements are not the end of the world, but don't let them linger. Deal with them. They're not going away unless you do.

Let's do a quick recap of today's episode.

- 1) Self-Reflect
- 2) Be Positive
- 3) Talk To Someone
- 4) Find a Mediator (Only as a last resort)

When disagreements pop up, remember to stay professional, look within yourself, be humble, and try to find the best solution for everyone. You've got this!

REVIEW REMINDER & FACEBOOK INVITE

I hope today's episode was helpful for you, my friend.

If you enjoyed it, would you mind sharing with others and leaving us a review? Head on over to iTunes or wherever it is you listen to podcasts and give us a big 5 stars!

And if you haven't stopped by on Instagram to say hello yet, come on over and say hi. You can find us @centralwdb

CLOSING

Have a great week, my friend, and we'll meet again in the next episode. Until then.. Remember this... There's always a brighter tomorrow if you're willing to find it.

Links:

Work-Based Learning - <https://cwdregion.com/learning/>

3 Ways to Find Happiness in Your Job -

[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/centralwdb/) - <https://www.instagram.com/centralwdb/>