

---

---

**The Mathis Group's**

---

---

# Messenger

---

Vol. 4 No. 11

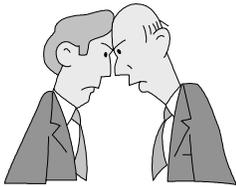
November, 2006

---

## What Makes Your Organization Tick? Part III

The last two months we have looked at how organizational behavior influences every aspect of every organization. We discussed the three main approaches of studying an organization and how vital a role communication plays. We also explored the impact motivation, goals, and power have in organizational behavior. This month we will examine how conflict can be positive in an organization, and how varying learning styles affect the organization dynamic.

Conflict is the refusal to see, listen, or be open concerning the beliefs or opinions of another. It is normally signified by arguments, gossip, slander, and taking sides. Most people do not like conflict and view it as always being negative. There are three main ways that people handle conflict: Running away from it and the individual involved, confront it, or do nothing or act in a non-assertive way.



If handled correctly, conflict can be beneficial. Listed below are some positive examples of when conflict is beneficial.

1. If it clears the air without harming people.
2. If it reduces bad feelings and taking sides.
3. If it creates a better way of doing things.

*One person with passion is better than  
forty who are merely interested.*  
Thomas K. Connellan  
Business speaker and writer

4. If it opens up communication for future discussions.

In order for conflict to refrain from becoming negative, you need to have a plan of action before you approach the person.

### ***Focus on repairing the relationship.***

Your goal when approaching someone is not to start a fight. In many cases, conflict is caused because of miscommunication. Hearing things through the “grapevine” is a major contributor of this. Talking things out with the others involved is necessary to clear the air. Make sure you are willing to listen to the other person.

### ***Describe your concerns.***

List in detail all the concerns that you have. Getting everything out on the table will ensure that there is no hidden resentment left at the end of the discussion.

### ***Give information and details.***

Give specific details on the area that needs change and how to go about it. Do not be ambiguous. People need to know what is wrong before they can fix it.

### ***Be specific concerning your needs, performance, or wanted behavior.***

Tell people what you need from them. Others cannot read your mind. If a change needs to be made, specify what needs to be done.

**(continued on page 2 What Makes Your  
Organization Tick?)**

# The Mathis Group's Messenger

(continued from page 1 *What Makes Your Organization Tick?*)

• Congratulations to Dr. Keith Mathis on receiving his PMP (Project Management Professional) certificate. The Mathis Group will soon be offering PMP Prep classes. Be watching for further information.

### *Seek to help - not hurt.*

Do not be condescending when you are giving input to others. Stay positive. Tell of areas where he or she is doing a great job. Your goal is not to make the other person feel inferior, but to build up and make him or her better.

### *Be assertive - not aggressive.*

It is possible to be forceful and get your point across without being overbearing. People usually respond better in a nonthreatening situation. Also, empowering others to develop the solution or change will increase their willingness and desire to change.

When making changes in an organization, there are four styles of organizational learners in which everyone falls.

1. Resistant learners--They refuse to participate, discuss, or even act as if they are involved. They are not interested in learning any additional information or new skills. They feel that it is a waste of their time and, therefore, want no part of it.

2. Passive learners--The trainer bears all the responsibility for educating them. They expect you to break it apart with little or no effort from them. They are open to learning, but do not want to exert themselves.

3. Cooperative learners--They are open to learning if you can get them thirsty for it. They will meet you 50%

of the way. Once you have their attention and they have a desire to learn, they will put forth the effort.

4. Assertive learners--They are driven and hungry for additional learning. Most will read, study, and research on their own. These are the ideal learners. They want to increase their knowledge so they will work hard to do so.



Each learning style is seen in every organization. Knowing the signs of which learner you have will make it easier to teach new information.

Understanding how your organization ticks allows you to utilize all of your resources to the fullest potential. Grasping how everything from communication to conflict influences employees will help you to create an effective workforce that works well together.



Check out our exciting  
courses at  
[www.themathisgroup.com](http://www.themathisgroup.com)!!

- Tough Minded Leadership*
- How To Handle Difficult People*

Contact The Mathis Group today to receive their catalog of complete course listings or to discuss your customized onsite seminar.

The Mathis Group, Inc.  
Dr. Keith Mathis  
106 Lakeview Woods  
Eureka, MO 63025  
1-800-224-3731  
636/938-5292 voice/fax  
keith@themathisgroup.com  
[www.themathisgroup.com](http://www.themathisgroup.com)  
GSA Contractor- GS10F0383M  
Project Management Institute R.E.P.