Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPGOV411A Deal with conflict

Revision Number: 2

INDUSTRY SKILLS COUNCILS
Creating Australia's Future

PSPGOV411A Deal with conflict

Modification History

PSPGOV411A Release 2:   Layout adjusted. No changes to content.
PSPGOV411A Release 1:   Primary release.

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the requirements for handling difficult interpersonal situations and addressing the conflicts that may arise in day-to-day work activities. It includes identifying the cause of conflict, establishing and implementing strategies for dealing with conflict and evaluating the response and outcomes. It does not include formal negotiation, counselling or mediation.

In practice, dealing with conflict may overlap with other generalist or specialist public sector work activities such as acting ethically, complying with legislation, applying government processes, gathering and analysing information, using advanced communication strategies, etc.

This is one of 4 units of competency in the *Working in Government* and *Human Resource Management* Competency Fields that deal with conflict. Related units are:

- PSPGOV314A Contribute to conflict management
- PSPGOV508A Manage conflict
- PSPHR603B Provide advisory and mediation services

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency.	Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in ***bold italics*** is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. **Identify the cause of conflict**	1.1 The ***conflict situation***, including the ***cause***, is analysed and the position of each party established.
	1.2 Steps are taken to prevent the escalation of the conflict, in accordance with organisational procedures.
	1.3 All points of view are encouraged, accepted and treated with respect.
	1.4 Factors and issues relevant to the situation are identified, clarified and confirmed using appropriate ***communication techniques***.
	1.5 Proceedings to settle the dispute/conflict in accordance with ***legislation, organisational policy and procedures*** are initiated with minimal delay.
2. **Establish and implement strategies for dealing with conflict**	2.1 All parties involved in the conflict are encouraged to take shared responsibility for finding a solution to the situation.
	2.2 The strategy is selected for resolution, taking account of ***social and cultural differences*** and consistency with organisational policies and procedures.
	2.3 Assertive feedback is provided to the parties and constructive feedback is accepted from the parties non-defensively.
	2.4 Outcomes are agreed that meet individual, organisational and legislative requirements.
	2.5 ***Assistance*** is obtained where necessary in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.
3. **Evaluate response and outcome**	3.1 Records and reports are maintained in accordance with legislation, policy and procedures.
	3.2 Accurate and constructive observations of incidents are provided in reviewing and debriefing the situation.
	3.3 Effectiveness of response is evaluated and reviewed in accordance with organisational policy and procedures.

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- using a range of communication strategies/skills with a diverse workforce and client base including assertiveness, listening, non-verbal communication, language style, problem solving
- using problem solving to deal with unexpected issues or attitudes
- dealing with difficult situations and people
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying procedures relating to occupational health and safety and environment in the context of conflict resolution

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- legislation, regulations, organisational policies, procedures and guidelines relating to conflict in the public sector workplace
- types of conflict in the workplace and typical causes
- conflict theory including signs, stages, levels, factors involved, results
- group processes and roles people play
- organisational structures and workplace culture
- different social and cultural practices
- conflict resolution skills and strategies
- personal power and positional power
- grievance procedures in the public sector
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- public sector legislation such as occupational health and safety and environment in the context of conflict resolution

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together	• *Pre-requisite* units that <u>must</u> be achieved <u>prior</u> to this unit:*Nil* • *Co-requisite* units that <u>must</u> be assessed <u>with</u> this unit:*Nil* • *Co-assessed units* that <u>may</u> be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to: PSPETHC401A Uphold and support the values and principles of public service PSPGOV405B Provide input to change processes PSPGOV406B Gather and analyse information PSPGOV408A Value diversity PSPGOV412A Use advanced workplace communication strategies PSPGOV417A Identify and treat risks PSPLEGN401A Encourage compliance with legislation in the public sector PSPOHS401B Implement workplace safety procedures and programs
Overview of evidence requirements	In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms: • the knowledge requirements of this unit • the skill requirements of this unit • application of Employability Skills as they relate to this unit • conflict dealt with in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)
Resources required to carry out assessment	These resources include: • legislation, policy, procedures and protocols relating to conflict management in the public sector • grievance procedures in the public sector • strategies and guidelines for dealing with workplace conflict • case studies and workplace scenarios to capture the range of situations likely to be encountered when dealing with conflict
Where and how to assess evidence	Valid assessment of this unit requires: • a workplace environment or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when dealing with conflict in the workplace,

including coping with difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine

- conflict dealt with in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time).

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations.

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- portfolios
- questioning
- scenarios
- simulation or role plays
- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of assessment

Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in **bold italics** in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

Conflict situations may relate to:	• conflicts among work colleagues and/or work teams • work areas • employees and supervisors • customer complaints
Causes of conflict may include:	• differences of opinion • different ways of working • poor communication • competing needs • cross-cultural issues • racial or religious issues • abuse of power • workplace bullying • customer dissatisfaction • gender issues • inter-generational issues
Communication techniques may include:	• verbal and non-verbal language • questioning and listening • cooperative language • appropriate use of emotions, voice and body language • constructive feedback • reflection • summarising • re-phrasing • paraphrasing • presenting options • using language and concepts suited to the occasion and the other party • showing a willingness to compromise
Legislation, ***policy and procedures*** may include:	• State/Territory or Commonwealth legislation, regulations, organisational policies, procedures and guidelines relating to the management of conflict in the public sector, including equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity, occupational health and safety, privacy, confidentiality, anti-discrimination, harassment • public sector standards

Social and cultural differences may include:	• codes of practice
	• codes of ethics
	• security standards
	• beliefs and values
	• social conventions
	• family relationships
	• codes of conduct
	• cultural observances
	• cross-cultural issues
	• verbal and non-verbal language
Assistance may include:	• mediators
	• employee assistance providers
	• advocates
	• supervisors/senior staff
	• colleagues

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Working in Government.