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"[Conflict Resolution](#)" by Daniel Dana.

Review and Notes

When I got accepted to present the session [How to Work Personality Issues Without Sounding Like a Marriage Guidance Counsellor?](#) at the [Agile 2016 Conference](#) I decided that I needed to do more research into the issue of general conflict resolution. This book was recommended to me by [Bob Schatz](#) with the comment "Most of us are not trained in conflict resolution." He went on to say "In fact, most of what we learn about conflict resolution we learned by watching our mother and father deal with issues."

The reality is that when we are involved in conflicts in a later part of our live, we are more than just "involved". We are in fact part of the conflict, and so are not exactly unbiased participants in the exercise. Further, it is questionable as to what we learn from the event. Do we have a bias based on what we see the "result" was for example. If I won, was the approach I took good?

Of course, today I know that this perspective on a conflict is in fact part of the problem but it did take me a long time to realize this and to develop tools which I found were effective in dealing with difficult personalities.

So back to this book. Beginning with the definition that:

Workplace conflict is "A condition between or among workers whose jobs are interdependent, who feel angry, who perceive the other(s) as being at fault, and who act in ways that cause a business problem"

It takes you through the process of understanding how much unresolved conflicts can potentially cost you, and then takes you through approaches on how to deal with the conflict. The idea is to provide you with enough tools to help you either work the issue while the conflict is relatively "small". The thinking is that if it is a big issue, you might want to get someone who is a conflict resolution professional involved (expected to be in the small percentages of cases).

Costs of conflict in the workplace include:

- "Research studies show that up to 42% of employees' time is spent engaging in or attempting to resolve conflict."
- Conflict contaminates the decision-making process in even more serious ways than causing information to be incomplete or unreliable as decisions made jointly by two or more people who are embroiled in unresolved conflict will be imperfect at best—and seriously flawed at worst.
- "Raytheon Corporation determined that replacing an engineer costs the company 150% of the

departing employee's total annual compensation—the combination of salary and benefits.”

Approaches for dealing with conflicts include:

- Deal with it early as “Every tree was once a sapling, every adult was once a child, and every formal dispute was once an informal conflict.”

[Book, Learning, Improvement, ConflictResolution, Review](#)

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