

Conflict Management at the Workplace

In the working world, disputes between people not only lead to enormous efficiency losses but also to high costs for companies and authorities. *Conflict Management Plus Ltd*, based in Royston, England, workplace mediation to find lasting solutions to conflicts occurring in free enterprise, authorities as well as the private sphere. The company has made a name for itself as the British market leader in this field.

When John Crawley founded Conflict Management Plus Ltd in 1989, he could look back upon many years of experience in solving disputes through mediation. For example, he had dealt with teenagers at schools as well as community volunteers in order to work towards a solution for interpersonal problems. This experience was incorporated into conflict resolution programs that have in the meantime benefited clients in the public as well as the private sectors.

Conflict Management Plus Ltd employs a total of about 40 staff and generates a one million GBP turnover. Headed by the directors John Crawley and Katherine Graham, 25 highly qualified mediators offer a wide range of programs that help to deal with difficult situations in the working world. The British experts' portfolio includes conflict management and mediation for managers, the careful handling of difficult people and situations as well as the art of successful negotiation and of managing complaints in a way that does not harm the company and oneself. Comprehensive training of skills in convincing other people, revealing instances of mobbing and successfully overcoming its underlying structures also form part of the services offered. Moreover, clients can also acquire diplomas and certificates in the art of mediation. Most courses take place in the clients' immediate working environment in order to take into consideration the individual situations at the places of work. Certificate in Mediation Skills courses are held at certain locations in Great Britain six times each year. The fact that the participants come from a variety of industries guarantees that the working climate within the courses is inspiring and conducive to a wide range of experiences. The specialists also offer conflict management courses at universities and colleges. In this way, prospective managers are prepared to deal with potential interpersonal problems in their future workplace during their professional education.

“Our job is to enable people to find their own solutions to interpersonal problems at the workplace,” affirms John Crawley. *“With the skills learned from us, our clients are in a much better position to play the role of mediators between conflicting parties and thereby contribute to a de-escalation of tension in their professional environment. Thus we help*

English text for Konfliktmanagement am Arbeitsplatz (Conflict Management in the Workplace) article
companies and organizations improve their working climate and prevent unnecessary costs that inevitably occur in conflict-laden situations. It is not rare for such conflicts to end up in court and they cannot be concealed from customers either. Therefore, when clients use our services, they often compare us to rainmakers in the desert.”

Demand for the services offered by Conflict Management Plus Ltd is permanently increasing. During the past five years in particular, the company's business has experienced strong growth. Spurred by the great success in Great Britain, the English mediating experts now want to expand their offerings more and more to other European countries. *“In cooperation with our clients, we are currently looking for contacts on the continent in order to open offices there,”* points out John Crawley. *“In this regard, we are also quite open to cooperating with established consulting and training companies.”*

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Photo 1

The managers of a successful company that helps to solve conflicts in the workplace:
John Crawley and Katherine Graham

Photo 2

Bridging the gap between conflicting parties: Katherine Graham in a mediation session