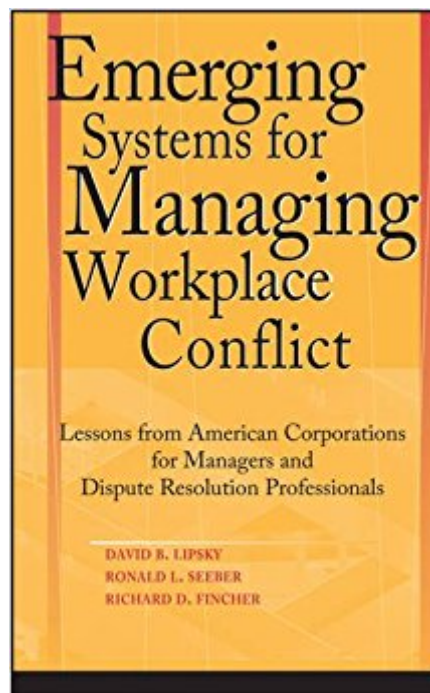




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Emerging Systems For Managing Workplace Conflict: Lessons From American Corporations For Managers And Dispute Resolution Professionals



Synopsis

Emerging Systems of Managing Workplace Conflict presents illustrative real-life examples as well as cutting-edge methods and tools for integrating systems of dispute resolution into standard corporate procedures. This vital resource investigates the systems organizations have developed to manage common and costly workplace conflicts involving supervisor-employee relationships; race, age, and gender discrimination complaints; sexual harassment; occupational safety and health; reasonable accommodation of the disabled; and wrongful termination as well as other problems stemming from governmental regulations and court actions. Drawing on the authors' vast research and frontline experience with a wide variety of corporations and organizations, this important book examines successful responses to universal workplace problems and conflicts. In addition, the book is filled with illuminating case examples and stories from organizations, such as Brown and Root, Kaufman and Broad, Warner Brothers, Universal-Studios, Kaiser Permanente, the United States Postal Service, Johnson & Johnson, Shell, Prudential, and others, that have instituted systems of dispute resolution in response to ongoing destructive conflict, expensive litigation, and crippling settlements. This book offers an enormously useful approach for the application of the most up-to-date systems of organizational conflict resolution and shows how this approach can work in specific situations to save time and money.

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Customer Reviews

"This is the most important book yet published to address the evolution of private justice systems for

managing workplace disputes" (Industrial and Labor Relations Review, Vol. 57, No. 4; 7/1/2004)

"The book is well researched and looks at conflict management historically, currently and prospectively." (The Texas Mediator, Fall 03)

"Lucidly written and thoughtfully researched, *Emerging Systems of Managing Workplace Conflict* is a perfect resource manual for CEOs and managers interested in learning about alternative dispute resolution in the workplace." â" David A. Hart, CEO, Association for Conflict Resolution "This book makes a major contribution to the expanding body of empirical information about how alternative dispute resolution techniques are being used in American corporations. It is practical and specific and should be read by everyone with an interest in reducing the cost of conflict in the workplace." â" Robert C. Barrett, director, California Dispute Resolution Institute, University of San Francisco "Managing conflicts is so much a part of corporate and institutional lifeâ" and is so often handled without creativity. The authors offer a comprehensive picture of conflict managementâ" its history, current practice, and future prospects. As you move through their work you are struck by the need to shape a culture that supports win/win outcomes and uses processes, like ADR, only after the individual stakeholders have thought fully executed the spirit of conflict resolution through their daily behavior." â" Harold W. Burlingame, senior executive advisor, AT&T; Wireless and former executive vice president, Human Resources, AT&T; "This is a unique work that provides a complete framework for effectively managing workplace conflict. The authors have achieved a creative blend of research, strategic thinking, and practical application. This should be mandatory reading if you are responsible for innovation or accountable for results dealing with inevitable conflicts that arise out of highly complex and increasingly interdependent organizational relationships." â" Dennis Donovan, executive vice president for human resources, The Home Depot "No one else in the field of dispute resolution has been able to integrate practice, theory and empirical research in one book as Dave Lipsky, Ron Seeber and Dick Fincher have done in this book. If you practice in the field of dispute resolution, ever want to hire a mediator or an arbitrator, or teach in the field, this book is an indispensable guide for you." â" John Bickerman, secretary, American Bar Association Dispute Resolution Section, and founder, Bickerman Dispute Resolution, PLLC "This is the book all who work on conflict resolution systems have been waiting for. In one place we have a superb treatment of the history, current state of practice, and a vision for the future of this emerging field of study and practice. This will be the standard reference for those designing, studying, and managing these systems for years to come." â" Thomas A. Kochan, George M. Bunker Professor of Management, Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and codirector, MIT Institute

For many years, scholars and academics have focused on the importance of conflict resolution in the workplace. This tradition goes back to studies that were done in the 1940s-50s. In more recent years, conflict in the workplace has become a major issue. No longer are workplaces those socially integrative, sometimes paternalistic, havens for lifetime security. They are now arenas for multiple conflicts. The issue therefore becomes how to deal with these conflicts in a non-ad hoc manner--how to put in place systems for managing conflict. American corporations have much to teach the world in this regard. The problem is that before this book, no one has systemized these lessons. Before this book, there was no central location where the tools, the methodologies, and the processes necessary for putting quality conflict resolution was readily available. Lipsky, Seeber, and Fincher have provided a critical service in having completed this volume. They have written the definitive reference volume on the specific issue of alternative dispute resolution techniques in American business. In this context, they have served the practitioner community well. Yet not only is this a well-written book for the practitioner, it is an informative book for the academic. The combined research record of these authors is impressive and it serves them well in putting this material together. Anyone interested in alternative dispute resolution in the workplace must have this well-written volume as a reference.

I purchased this version of the book because of the read-aloud options enabled for Kindle. While it is, in fact, enabled, it appears that the file is a mediocre OCR version of the book. There are (small) spaces in many words, which leads to the following situation: Word in Text: mediation Spacing Error (though less visibly identifiable within the text): medi ation Read As: "mediation-ation" This is frustrating, given the cost of the book. It is a text for my graduate program, so the purchase was necessitated. Knowing what I know now, I would hesitate to buy the book again.

The research is extensive and well done, the content is extensive and seemingly complete, however the reading is dry. If you use this like a text book or reference book it provides good foundational information and considerations for conflict management at the organizational level. It does not get into interpersonal conflict issues.

good book for managing design systems

Really good resource for understanding organizations from different frames, i.e., political, HR, symbolic and structural. Easy to understand and apply.

Good book

Emerging Systems for Managing Workplace Conflict is a rich compendium of research, insightful analysis and practical advice that will be invaluable for any individual interested in the field of workplace conflict management. Written by three authors who each bring an average of between 25 and 35 years of background experience in labor relations and human resources management, supplemented by extensive work as mediators, arbitrators and consultants to public and private sector organizations, it is a "must read" in its field. The work is based on more than six years of research into conflict management systems in the United States. The authors draw upon surveys of general counsel of Fortune 1000 corporations, onsite interviews with over 700 executives, managers and attorneys in sixty firms and extensive interviews with individuals operating as neutral parties in the settlement of conflicts and disputes. Based upon their research, the authors conclude that "... there is a sea change in U.S. organizations that reflects an emergence of systems of conflict management and a new paradigm for organizations" (p.5). Their finding, they note, is independently confirmed in research conducted in 1999 by Bingham and Chachere who found that "about half of [U.S.] 'large' private employers ha[d] established some sort of formal dispute resolution procedure for their nonunion employees" (p. 81). With this major movement established, the authors proceed to explain the reasons for the shift to conflict management systems, the processes that have emerged to service that demand, how those systems were created and implemented and the challenges that lie ahead in the field. Importantly, the authors immediately focus on the corporate interests that drive the development and implementation of alternative systems for conflict management.

Overwhelmingly, the primary driver in developing alternative systems to replace litigation procedures is the belief that dispute resolution can be accomplished at less cost in dollars and time." (p.6). "In our survey of the Fortune 1000," the authors write, "about 80 percent of the respondents told us that saving time or saving money was the primary reason the corporation had used ADR" (p.313). The implications of this finding are clear and reflected, as the authors point out, in the fact that "... the vast majority of corporations favor dispute management over conflict management" (p.313). Having presented us with the primary drivers as well as several other contributing factors, the authors move into a discussion of alternative management systems and their components. Readers will learn the pros and cons of the main features of these systems. It is

truly a handbook of elements for both the decision-maker and the designer. The book explores who is eligible in most systems, the essential elements for judging the fairness of a system, the issues of who pays the costs, training requirements, the use of outside "neutral" parties and a host of other common design features in considerable detail. You will find the most common element, the Open Door, explored with its drawbacks and its contributions. Additionally, you will find a careful discussion of other features such as "hotlines," ombudspersons, resolution facilitators, internal peer mediation and external "neutral" ad hoc personnel. Always, the authors present the pros and cons of each of the possible components. Professors Lipsky, Seeber and Fincher then lead the reader through the process of system design and implementation, citing key steps along the way. Always, their work is based on findings from major U.S. organizations that have engaged in the process. As they examine the process, the authors provide the reader with another very valuable part of their work by confronting the issues inherent in evaluating the systems. Their findings will be either a comfort or a source of devastation for the planner. The authors put the matter succinctly and critically. The frame for evaluation is necessarily couched in the key question: "As compared to what?" (p.269). Indeed, the answer is far from easy. Rather, it may be astonishingly elusive. The challenge of evaluation is one the authors explore in detail, showing various evaluation schemes in practice in American corporations today. Results, alas, yield data far from business case standards. "Leaders of organizations, even if they believe in conflict management," they conclude, "are often faced with going forward in the absence of any hard evidence about the benefits of the system" (p.308). "There is in fact very little hard evidence that corporations actually do save time and money by using ADR ...," they conclude (p. 313). "Furthermore," they assert, "it is not clear to us that many corporations are even gathering the information necessary to make a cost benefit analysis" (p.313). As befits a work of this breadth and depth, the authors do not disappoint us as they turn their attention at the close of their work to the future of conflict management systems. Their work is insightful and thorough. "Contrary to much of the popular literature and perceptions regarding ADR and somewhat surprising to us," the authors conclude "we do not believe that the ADR movement has achieved the critical mass necessary to institutionalize it within most large businesses and organizations" (p.315). And yet, the authors are confident that the future trend is toward the expansion of alternative dispute resolution procedures, but far less certain about the broad expansion of conflict management systems. It is an area with unresolved issues and significant promises. Readers will find thought provoking and useful discussion of these issues as the conclusion to the work. There is far more in this book than this review touches upon. Additionally, readers will find an extensive bibliography, current research statistics, informative footnotes and an

eminently useable glossary.Highly recommended.John Baker, Ph.D.Editor, The Negotiator Magazine

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