

4 Managing conflict

- ▶ qualities of a good manager
- ▶ conflictual relationships
- ▶ resolving conflicts

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concern
to go over
somebody's head

4.6 Case study Olvea Brasil

Discussion


1 Work with a partner. Imagine your ideal team leader. What would they do in the following situations?

you need help you make a big mistake you do something really well
you do your job with no problems you have personal problems

Reading

2 Read the background to the case and answer the questions.

- 1 What are Eliana's concerns?
- 2 What kind of management style does the company encourage?
- 3 Why does Eliana like to hear both sides of the story?



ELIANA SCHAEFFER, Director of Human Resources at Olvea Brasil, stood at her window and stared out pensively at the mountains rising above the city. On her table were four employee files; each had been put in the 'concerns' category at last Friday's six-monthly staff review. Eliana knew very well that although a 'concern' tag was supposed to be an early warning, all too often it meant that a crisis was just waiting to happen.

Olvea Brasil is the Brazilian subsidiary of an international group which supplied components for the automobile industry. Aware that they relied heavily on the skills and creativity of their engineers for survival, Olvea's management encouraged a culture that was officially firmly people-orientated. At the same time, Eliana understood that in a field where competition was fierce, and customers more and more demanding, productivity was crucial; results often took precedence over people's feelings.

It was going to be a tough morning; Eliana had made appointments with each of the four 'concerns' in turn. After reading their manager's comments in their files, she liked to hear the employee's side of the story before reaching any conclusions. 'More often than not it's the manager who's the real concern!' she thought as she sat down at the table to review the four files.

Internet research

Search for the keywords *how to manage your boss*. Take a class vote to find your top tips.

2 Work in small groups. Read the employee files opposite and answer the questions below. What do they suggest about the relationship between each employee and their manager?

Which members of staff:

- 1 have changed their attitude?
- 2 do not communicate well?
- 3 are disappointing or disappointed?
- 4 are being unreasonable?
- 5 have a limited future with the company?