

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teamwork is increasingly becoming the norm in organisations and is largely relied upon to attain organisational goals (De Dreu & Van Vianen, 2001; Tannenbaum, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 1996). In spite of this, challenges of working effectively are significant for teams and consequently most teams do not operate at their optimal effectiveness (De Dreu & Van Vianen 2001). Team performance and effectiveness is not only dependent on available resources and the competencies of team members, but also relies on team processes; that is, how team members interact, cognitively, verbally and behaviourally to accomplish work goals and objectives (Marks, Mathieu, & Zaccaro, 2001). Insight into the importance of processes in team performance has led to a wealth of research into this element of teamwork. Much of this research has adopted an input-process-output framework, which examines team processes as mediating mechanisms of the relationship between, member, team and organisational antecedents with performance criteria (Guzzo, 1996; McGrath, 1984).

Marks et al., (2001) developed a Taxonomy of Team Processes that highlights the multidimensional nature of team processes and introduces the concept that different processes can occur simultaneously. Their framework defines processes in three categories; transition processes, such as, goal specification, action processes, such as systems monitoring, and interpersonal processes, such as conflict management. Marks et al., (2001) contend that interpersonal processes occur throughout both action and transition phases and thus may play a fundamental role in the effectiveness of the other processes and accordingly overall team performance. Thus, understanding how to manage these interpersonal processes is crucial to enhancing team effectiveness.