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MANAGEMENT OF CONFLICT WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM GROUP
TEAMS IN FRENCH ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract

Conflict exists from as many years as humans. We deal with it in our public and in our private life. However, we try to adapt the intensity of our emotions to every situation. Conflict occurs between humans, that's why finding a solution that satisfies both parts appears as difficult or even impossible sometimes. The situation becomes even more difficult at workplace as it could have an impact on the efficiency and quality of the employees' work. This way being able to resolve conflict is an essential skill for managers. Through this dissertation, we establish the main concepts of conflict management, define the main approaches and processes but also the tools and techniques used by managers to solve these problems within small and medium group teams in French organizations. Our study is based on a practical case study, eight interviews of French managers from different industries and companies as well as on an online questionnaire completed by sixty-four French managers. The main results from this research are that most of the conflicts in these companies are based on personal differences, that compromise and confrontation are the two most used techniques to resolve it and that more of forty percent of them never use third-party intervention. Some limits have this way been observed. Indeed we recommend managers to organize team-building activities to improve relationships between employees, to learn more about conflict management and third-party intervention techniques and finally to come to a clear agreement and analysis of the causes of conflict to prevent it.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

"Peace is not the absence of conflict but the presence of creative alternatives for responding to conflict -- alternatives to passive or aggressive responses, alternatives to violence."
Dorothy Thompson

The notion of conflict has a large broad of meanings and connotations, making it difficult to understand and to deal with it. These situations of conflict are usual and unavoidable in our everyday lifes, either in personal and professional spheres. Mashanne and Glinow in 2008 declare that "people see only the observable aspect of conflict - angry words, actions of opposition, etc. But this is only a small part of the conflict process." Indeed, many different views of conflict exist. Some people perceive it as negative and want to avoid it, whereas others believe that it is a good way to learn, grow and innovate. In order to answer to this problematic, conflict has been studied in many fields such as sociology, psychology or management. Focusing on this last field, conflict might be present in almost every decision taken by a manager. This way, learning to deal with conflict appears as a major aspect when being a manager and passes through recognizing its signs and characterictics and implementing techniques to take advantage of conflict instead of loosing opportunities (Oladosu et al., 2014).

1.2 Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to establish the main concepts of conflict management within small and medium group teams in French organizations. Different resolution skills and techniques will be analyzed in different contexts and industries in order to identify what is currently done by managers and how it could be improved to take advantage of these situations that are part of organizations' lives. This analysis will be supported by the interviews of managers which companies are located in the area of Bordeaux, in France, as well as by online questionnaires completed by more than sixty managers in the same region.

The aim of this project is also to identify tools that could help managers to identify their conflicts, their sources and to implement solutions that will benefit their entities thanks to

preventing conflict and transforming it in an increase in productivity or performance and a better situation for their employees.

This dissertation takes finally part on the learning process of the author, as it gives her tools to discover and improve her skills in management and more specially in conflict management in order to be able to deal with it in her professional life.

Research questions:

- How can we characterize conflict within small and medium group teams in French organizations ?
- What are the different conflict management approaches and processes in these companies ?
- What are the different tools and techniques used to resolve conflicts within these small and medium groups of people ?

1.3 Structure

The dissertation project will be organised in seven major points, starting with a brief introduction that will present the first approach of the work as well as the purpose of it. It will be followed by the literature review, divided in four steps. We will first establish a general approach, with definitions, the different views of conflict and its nature. Then we will have an insight on its processes and approaches as well as its resolutions techniques and the situations that must be avoided. Finally, we will study the different management techniques, from third party intervention techniques to negotiation and mediation. The third step will be the conceptual framework, presenting a five step conflict resolution model. The fourth point will be dedicated to the research methodology. Then, the analysis of the results, identifying the main important points of the interviews and questionnaires, will be detailed and would lead to the discussion and recommendations. Finally, the main conclusions of the research will end this project.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conflict, a general approach

a) Definitions

From the Cambridge dictionary, conflict is defined as «an active disagreement between people with opposing opinions or principles (Cambridge University Press, 2017)» or a «fighting between two or more groups of people or countries (Cambridge University Press, 2017)».

However, an exact definition of conflict does not exist in the literature. We usually define this notion in terms of two different approaches. The first one will be based on competition while the second one is about the situation, the conflict itself before deciding how to handle it. Three conditions are included in this concept: «interdependence between the parties, perception of incompatibility among the parties concerned and some form of interaction (Kenneth, 1992)». They can also be described as «one or more of a number of people depending on the other(s) for their effectiveness or satisfaction; the interdependence exists within a continuing relationship; and there is some barrier to free communication (Dick, 1987)». These different barriers might be for instance physical, temporal, structural or due to differences in value or status.

Different authors have described conflict through different definitions. For instance, one of the first authors to define it was Lewis Coser in 1967 speaking of «a clash of values and interests, the tension between that is and what some groups feel ought to be (Oladosu et al., 2014)». Then Bercovitch, in 1984, talked about a «situation which generates incompatible goals or values among different parties (Oladosu et al., 2014)». Folger also approximates its definition to the incompatibility between goals but also people: «the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving those goals (Oladosu et al., 2014)». Tillet added a new vision in 1991: «Conflict does not only come about when values or needs are actually, objectively incompatible, or when conflict is manifested in action; it exists when one of the parties perceives it to exist (Oladosu et al., 2014)». Georg Simmel, in 1903, presented this notion as «designed to resolve divergent dualisms; it is a way of achieving some kind of unity, even if it will be through the annihilation of one of the conflicting parties (Roberts, 2013)». He also defined three different ways of finalizing a conflict, with a win of one of the parties, thanks to a compromise or

through conciliation. In 2005, Dr. Thomas J. Hoban gave a different insight in the vision arguing that conflict is based on a «disagreement in opinions between people or groups, due to differences in attitudes, beliefs, values or needs. In the business world, differences in such characteristics as work experience, personality, peer group, environment and situation, all lead to differences in personal attitudes, beliefs, values or needs (Oladosu et al., 2014)».

These definitions have created different views of conflict that we will present as well as the different types of conflict.

b) Views of conflict

We can categorize the notion of conflict in three different views. The first one is the traditional view, appeared between the 1900 and 1940, that characterizes conflict as a negative force that will have a bad influence on conflict. That's why it states that conflict should be completely avoided as it has a connotation of violence and destruction. It has been followed by the behavioral or contemporary view, also called the human relation view, between 1940 and 1970. This approach sees conflict as instinctive, natural and unavoidable and the result can be either positive or negative. The main advice in this case will be to deal with the conflict directly instead of delegating it. Finally, the last view is the interactionist one that states that conflict is crucial and indispensable as it helps the project to have an innovative and creative vision, to be sustainable and viable and therefore to avoid mistakes by being self-critical (Vijay, 1998).

As we just presented, the view of conflict will influence the way conflict is perceived, either positively or negatively. For instance, Hocker and Wilmot, in 1985, made a list of negative aspects about it affirming that conflict and disagreements are synonymous but most of all not normal as they are pathological, that they should be avoided in any case and are often linked with personality and emotions (Oladosu et al., 2014). Other authors as Deetz and Stevenson in 1986 perceived conflict as something that could bring some positivity as they considered it as «natural, good, necessary and based on real differences (Oladosu et al., 2014)». Finally, Corwin and Edelfelt apprehended conflict as completely positive as they acknowledged that «it is inherent in the fact that authority is problematic, promoted by inconsistent goals, success criteria and heterogeneity of the clientele and it can improve organizations by forcing change and compromise, as it challenges assumptions and creates discomfort with existing practices (Bankovskaya, 2012)».

Communication appears this way to be determinant to avoid or prevent conflicts and communication skills are then essential between managers and team members. We can still defined three different categories of conflicts. Conflicts can be goal-oriented, administrative or interpersonal. Goal-oriented conflicts are really often linked with performance and outcome where administrative conflict comes from issues in management structure, definition of roles, responsibilities and functions. Finally, interpersonal conflicts deal with problems in ethics but also with the personality of the members of the team (Vijay, 1998).

Conflicts can also be divided in three theories, «functional, situational and interactive (Bako et al., 2015)». Functional conflicts are defined as the ones that «support the goals of the group and improve its performance» whereas dysfunctional ones are «conflicts that hinder group performance (Oladosu et al., 2014)». However, other authors realize a different categorization of conflict, in four different types: interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and interorganizational. Interpersonal conflicts are based on personal differences and dislikes. Intragroup conflicts are more interns to a group of people as for example a department or a team whereas intergroup conflicts are differences between groups. Finally, interorganizational conflicts occur between different organizations and can be divided in three different levels: substantive conflicts, mainly at a «fundamental level» between two organizations, emotional conflicts as for example jealousy or envy and cultural conflicts that arise in many cases due to stereotypes (Bankovskaya, 2012).

After defining the notion and some of the views of it, we are going to present the nature of conflict and the different factors that have an influence on it.

c) Nature of conflict

Three different factors can have an impact and change the nature of conflict: structural factors, personal factors and communication. Starting with structural factors, there are eight major characteristics that can cause conflict. The first one will be specialization, indeed if employees are specialized in their job, they will not be aware of the responsibilities, capabilities and issues of the others which can then lead to conflicts. Common resources have also a role in conflict, as if they are scarce, it will create without doubt a conflict. Then the probability of occurrence of a conflict can also rise if departments, groups or teams have different goals, creating misunderstanding between them. After, interdependence can also be a cause as if one employee depends on another and they do not achieve a good result together, they can blame each other. Furthermore, authority is also important as most of the

time, some tension can arise between managers and employees if they do not agree or do not appreciate to be directed. The same occur when responsibilities and authority are not well defined within the organization, which is called jurisdictional ambiguities and when roles and expectations are not well understood as well (Oladosu et al., 2014).

Personal factors have been defined in 2012 by Whetten and Cameron as «skills and abilities, personality conflicts, perceptions, diversity and personal problems (Bankovskaya, 2012)». Indeed, conflicts can also be due to differences in experience, if for example a worker with a lot of experience has to work with a new employee, problems of communication or knowledge could appear. To analyze in details this type of conflict and the influence of personality on job performance, five personality dimensions have been defined by this same author: «conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, openness to experience, extroversion and diversity (Bankovskaya, 2012)». Conscientiousness can be approached as the level of organizational citizenship of the employee, meaning that if the level is high, he will be an excellent communicator and really good with customers. Agreeableness is about the courtesy and the empathy of the employee whereas neuroticism is the level of anxiety and self-consciousness. Another aspect is the level of openness to experience, as if they are highly opened, they will be supposed to be more flexible, curious and creative. People that are extroverted will be more sociable and less anxious. Finally, diversity will be the last aspect of personality. It can be defined as «a variety of individual differences and similarities which exist among people (Bankovskaya, 2012)». These differences can be based on four levels: personality, internal dimensions, external influences and organizational dimensions. Diversity can become a real problem sometimes, due to stereotypes and prejudices, creating situations of discrimination. Discrimination can this way be direct, if for example a company refuses to employ a person based on her origins or indirect, if some working conditions are less favorable for certain employees than others. In some cases, it can also be traduced into harassment or victimization (Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission).

Finally, the last factor is communication, which is said to be essential when dealing with an interpersonal conflict. Conflict and communication are closely linked in three different ways. The first one is that conflict is often created due to a lack of communication. Then conflict is reflected in communication and finally, it has a major impact on the management of conflict. However, communication can face some barriers such as cultural differences or gender differences but also «filtering, selective perception, information overloaded, emotions, language and communication apprehension (Robbins, 1996)». Filtering is related to the manipulation of information in order to benefit from it and selective perception is linked to

the willingness of the receptor to listen and hear depending on its needs and motivations. Information overloaded means that the employee receives too much information preventing him to analyze well the situation. The same occurs when the emotion is too strong or due to language barriers. Finally communication apprehension can appear when a person is afraid to communicate, it can be orally, written or in both. All these barriers need to be overcome in order to create a good atmosphere and resolve conflicts within the organization.

As a conclusion, we can say that the nature of conflict depends on three major characteristics, structural factors, personal factors and communication. We should then analyze the different conflict processes and approaches in order to understand better the notion of conflict and learn to deal with it.

2.2 The conflict process and approach

a) Conflict approaches

Many authors through the years have presented different approaches of conflict. For instance, in 2004, Desivilya reminded the five main conflict management patterns established by Blake and Mouton in 1964, Pruitt and Rubin in 1986 and Rahim in 1983: «dominating, obliging, avoiding, integrating and compromising (Desivilya, 2004)».

In 2009, Hughes, Ginnet and Curphy added a new vision, separating the conflict resolution into «two independent dimensions: cooperativeness/uncooperativeness and assertiveness/unassertiveness (Kinnader, 2011)». They also presented five approaches that will enable managers to deal with conflict: «competition (assertive and uncooperative), accommodation (unassertive and cooperative), sharing (midrange on both assertiveness and cooperativeness), collaboration (assertive and cooperative) and avoidance (unassertive and uncooperative) (Desivilya, 2004)». We will explain with more details these approaches when presenting the main conflict management styles.

However, other approaches based on team configurations, task interdependence, self-efficacy or conflict cultures have also been established. Starting with team configurations, Aritzeta in 2005 defined it as the «importance of team roles and importance of mixing them in a project team». Somech, in 2009, made an important differentiation stating that: «Team's cooperative conflict management style will be positively associated with team performance» and «Team's competitive conflict management style will be negatively associated with team performance». Then, task interdependence is closely linked with the notions of collaboration

and interactions, making the possibility of occurrence of a conflict more important. Task interdependence supposes that a person need information, support and materials from the rest of the group, creating inevitably situations of conflict. However, Somech added that task interdependence and important interactions within a group would create a more collaborative group thanks to communication (Somech, 2009). Team identity is closely linked to team interdependence. Indeed team identity states how willing a team member will be to follow the rules and norms of a group instead of its individual ones. This way, a high team identity, in case of a high interdependence, will help the group to be cooperative and to adopt a positive attitude in order to achieve their common goals and avoid or prevent conflicts. The main hypotheses about team identity are that:

- «At low levels of team identity, task interdependence will be negatively related to a team's cooperative conflict-management style, and positively related to its competitive conflict-management style.

- At high levels of team identity, task interdependence will be positively related to a team's cooperative conflict-management style and negatively related to its competitive conflict-management style (Somech, 2009)».

About self-efficacy, it has been defined as «individual's belief in being able to perform a certain task as global self-efficacy where he or she is confident to success and therefore will must certainly go ahead and perform the task» by Eizen in 2005. Furthermore, Bandura, in 1997, argued that self-efficacy has a clear impact on motivation, commitment, effort and persistence as well as success (Somech, 2009). Indeed employees with high levels of self-efficacy are considered to be more able to resolve conflict quicker and in an easier way (Kinnader, 2011). This way, self-efficacy in conflict management is linked with decision-making and performance (Desivilya, 2004). This approach has also been linked with the five main conflict management patterns in two different hypotheses:

- «Global self-efficacy will be positively related to engaging patterns of conflict management, such as dominating, integrating and compromising, and negatively associated with passive patterns, such as obliging and avoiding.

- Social self-efficacy will be positively related to conflict management patterns that entail both engaging as well as constructive elements (integrating and compromising), negatively related to the avoidance pattern and unrelated to the destructive-engaging (dominating) and constructive-avoiding conflict management modes (obliging). The

current study also addresses the role of team related variable group identification in dealing with internal conflicts (Kinnader, 2001)».

About ethical climate, it is perceived as the positive, correct and ethical behavior that should be handled within an organization in order to avoid certain issues as it has been defined by Victor and Cullen in 1987. It will help to determine what aspects are considered crucial for the company and which ones not. These aspects will then be accepted, shared and internalized by the members of the organization, becoming most of the time personal values. Donaldson and Davis (1991) believed that: «a strong ethical climate improves trust among employees (Desivilya, 2004)».

Finally, conflict culture is the last aspect of these approaches. Indeed De Dreu, in 2004, argued that some teams develop an own culture of conflict as well as a conflict management style closely linked with their team and individual (Kinnader, 2011).

After analyzing the main approaches of conflict, we will now present and study the main conflict processes, giving an insight on the main model developed, the dynamic conflict model and then the main consequences of conflicts in organizations.

b) Process of conflict

We can define four different stages of conflict: «the latent stage, the cognition and personalization stage, the conflict manifestation and finally the conflict outcome (Zeljko et al.)». The latent stage represents the first step in which conflicts can occur due to certain characteristics as for example communication, structural or personal variables (Bankovskaya, 2012). The second stage, cognition and personalization, will be the result of the first one, divided in two sub stages: « perception of the participants in conflict and articulation of feeling and expression of awareness of conflict (Zeljko et al.)». This stage will be followed by the conflict manifestation, the moment where the disagreement will be clearly exposed and opened. Finally, during the step of conflict outcome, the impact and consequences of conflict will be presented as well as the relationships between the participants. Bankovskaya, in 2012, presented a slightly different conflict process with five different steps, really similar to the ones presented before except that she changed the third one and added a fourth one in between. Indeed the third one is called intentions and is based on the approaches that we presented in the part before, presenting "two main dimensions cooperativeness and assertiveness and five conflict handling intentions, competing, collaborating, avoiding, accommodating and compromising (called sharing in some models)(Desivilya, 2004)". The

fourth step is about behavior and presents different types of it affecting conflict ordered in a scale, starting from functional conflict to affective or emotional conflict. We will present it in more details in the next paragraph. It finalizes as for the precedent one with the outcome that might be functional or dysfunctional (Bankovskaya, 2012). Functional conflicts can be defined as the ones that «support the goals of the organization and improves its performance» whereas dysfunctional conflicts are «believed to be destructive, and decrease productivity and performance (Oladosu et al., 2014)». If the conflict is functional, one of solution could be the stimulation of conflict, whereas if it is dysfunctional, an immediate resolution is highly reommended.

Based on this process of conflict, different models have been proposed and developed as for example the dynamic conflict model. This model tries to show what triggers conflict and how the different responses have an influence on the global conflict process and its resolution, either positively or negatively. In 2007, Runde and Flanagan have organized this model in two categories, cognitive conflict and affective conflict (Runde et al., 2007). Cognitive conflicts usually concern a group that use to share, debate and negotiate ideas whereas affective conflicts are more focused on the negative aspects of conflict and team members use to blame each other instead of trying to solve the real cause of the problem (Runde et al., 2007).

This way, the retaliatory cycle summarizes the main parts of this model. It starts with what it is called the conflict triggers, that can be caused by «a precipitating event or hot buttons (Runde et al., 2007)». A precipitating event occurs when a person detects something in someone else or in a situation that she disagrees with or that could have an impact on her own person. A hot button can be defined as: «situations or behaviors in others that tend to frustrate or irritate us enough to cause us to overreact in ways we might not if we had cooler heads (Runde et al., 2007)». These hot button scales can have different characteristics. Indeed, they can be unreliable, in this case they will concern employees that the organization cannot rely on because they miss deadlines or are not serious enough. They can be overly analytical, when analysis is brought too far or employees focus too much into details. We can also qualify them of unappreciative or aloof, in this case, it will concern people that do not like to be in-group and prefer to be alone. They can also be micro managing, monitoring and controlling everything, self-centered, abrasive, too arrogant for example, untrustworthy or finally hostile, becoming angry (Capobianco et al.).

At this moment, the responses will be divided into two parts: the constructive ones and the destructive ones. Behaviors that will be defined as constructives can be for example

«perspective taking, creating solutions, expressing emotions, reaching out, reflective thinking, delay responding and adapting» whereas destructive ones will be «winning at all costs, displaying anger, demeaning others, retaliating, avoiding, yielding, hiding emotions or self-criticizing (Capobianco et al.)». If the response is constructive, it is said to be a task-focused conflict based on cognitive aspects. In this case, team members will be « focused on problem solving, it will have a positive affect, tension will decrease and group functioning improves (Kinnader, 2011)». It implies to be able to manage emotions in order to prevent destructive conflicts. As a direct consequence, conflict will deescalate. At the opposite, if the response is destructive, we will have to face a person-focused conflict, based on emotional aspects. People will «focus on personalities, negative emotions and so tension will increase and group functioning will decrease (Kinnader, 2011)». These conflicts tend to last in time and increase tensions. In both cases, constructive or destructive conflicts, the response can be active or passive. An active response will be characterized by a direct action whereas a passive response will «withhold a particular action (Runde et al., 2007)». People will learn to face conflict adapting and improving their behavior as conflicts change over time. Nevertheless, in many cases, the first attitudes and behaviors will have an important influence on the outcome of the influence, making therefore the use of constructive responses necessary since the beginning of it.

Conflict can be approached as competition. Nevertheless competition is associated with destructive behaviors. However researchers brought a new vision from Harvard, called interest-based negotiation. This way, the first step will be to understand the interest of each part instead of trying to defend its own one. The researchers defend the idea that: «we have to change the perspective from a zero-sum game to a win-win or both-gain scenario (Runde et al., 2007)». Obviously, the role of power in conflict is determinant. Indeed, people will tend to use their power to obtain the outcome that they want. However, this use of power can lead to bigger issues such as alienation for example. A better use of power can be done through collaboration. It will allow the team to reach a win-win option and so a better situation (Runde et al., 2007).

Obviously, different intensity levels of conflict exist starting with differences and finishing with polarization. Differences can be defined as people having different opinions and perspectives but being aware of the other ones, having rarely a negative or further impact. The second level is misunderstanding that correspond to different interpretations of a situation or behavior. The shorter it will be, the less risky it will be for the organization, as it will prevent it to evolve in a worse way. Then, people can face disagreements, the situation is

similar to misunderstandings but adding that people do not accept or do not feel confortable with this situation. The next step is called discord, a stronger step of disagreement as people «start to criticize, avoid and block each other (Kinnader, 2011)». From this step, negative impacts begin to be seen. Finally, polarization occurs when people look for others to join their cause and support them. This is the most critical step, as it will durably damage relationships within the organization.

Conflicts can have either positive or negative consequences. Indeed, in some cases, conflict can lead to benefits such as for example creativity. It improves problem solving and social relationships reinforcing teamwork as listening skills are better developed. It increases reflective thinking and open communication, and information about people and situations are more easily shared. It allows knowing what is going wrong within the organization, either between people or due to a specific situation. Finally, through conflict, people express emotions, which will with time reduce tensions. However it can also have potential costs. Conflicts can lead to bad decisions, with poor quality and poor results. It can create misunderstandings and destroy relationships. It causes negative emotions as for example anger, fear or hurt and can prevent open communication between team members. Finally, it can have an impact on reputations and careers (Runde et al., 2007).

As a conclusion, different approaches of conflict exist as well as processes. When dealing with conflict, the person should take this into account when choosing its way of resolving it. We will now present the different resolution options.

2.3 Conflict resolution

a) The fundamental ideas of conflict resolution

When managed positively, conflict can appear as a good opportunity for the company to grow durably. This way, it is important to recognize the needs of each part when conflict arises. Furthermore, certain abilities are useful to deal with this situation. Indeed, you need to be able to manage stress but also control your emotions and the way you express them. However, respect remains fundamental in this process (Segal et al., 2009).

We can define two different ways to resolve conflict, healthy or unhealthy. Unhealthy responses can be defined as inappropriate responses, angry emotions, feelings of rejection or isolation, expectation of negative results and finally the fear of conflict. At the opposite,

healthy responses can be characterized as appropriate responses, « the ability to forgive and forget », compromise and finally an interest to resolve both parts needs (Segal et al., 2009).

The key conflict resolution skills in order to manage conflict efficiently are the following: manage stress and your emotions, work on non verbal communication skills but also use humor and challenges to create a good atmosphere within the organization. This way, to prevent conflict or to resolve it, relationships should become the manager's priority but he should also focus on the present. We cannot fight against all the conflicts or we should at least order our priorities and the situations that really need our intervention. It is also important to be able to forgive and let things go. Segal and Smith defined in their article the most important rules in order to resolve conflict, as for example: «Remain calm, express feelings in words, not actions, be specific about what is bothering you, deal with only one issue at a time, no « hitting below the belt », avoid accusations, do not generalize, avoid « make believe », do not stockpile and avoid clamming up (Segal et al., 2009)».

Listening has been mainly defined as crucial when managing conflicts. That's why managers should create a good atmosphere in order to encourage people to speak and share, but also help them to express themselves, restating what they say, being clear and validating their worries. Moreover, these skills take indirectly part in «the five key skills of emotional intelligence». As indicated, it is composed of five skills: «quick stress relief, emotional awareness, nonverbal communication, playful communication and conflict resolution (Segal et al., 2009)». In the situation of quick stress relief, there will be three different stages of adaptation called alarm reaction, resistance and exhaustion. Alarm reaction is a «psychological stress response», resistance is linked with «biochemical, psychological and behavioral mechanisms» and finally exhaustion will be divided again in three characteristics: foot on the gas, angry responses, foot on the brake, depressed reactions and foot on both gas and brake, a clear situation of tension. Then, emotional awareness will help to have an influence on the employees, understanding what they need and communicating clearly. Finally, about nonverbal communication, the most important information can be exchanged through «pitch, speed, tone and volume of voice, gestures and facial expressions, body posture, stance, and proximity to the listener, eye movements and contact, and dress and appearance (Business Dictionary)». Researchers use to define that five percent of the message will be contained in the words, forty-five percent is in the voice and fifty in the body language, being this part the most important when transmitting a message (Business Dictionary). In conclusion, Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer (2000) approaches the definition of emotional intelligence as «the ability to perceive and express emotion,

assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (Mayer and Salovey, 2011)». Emotional intelligence can also be characterized thanks to four points, starting with self-awareness, that can be defined as «the ability to know yourself and understand your feelings, your strengths and weaknesses and develop self confidence (Mayer and Salovey, 2011)». Then self-management concerns the capacity to manage oneself, either resources or actions. Social awareness is the third step and represents the ability to understand others, especially their feelings. Finally, it finishes with relationship management, the management of people's emotions and feelings (Mayer and Salovey, 2011). Managing this complete process will help to create good and strong relationships between employees, to prevent bigger conflicts, to face challenges in the better way and finally to succeed, both individually and collectively (Segal et al., 2009).

After presenting the main ideas, we will now present the different techniques used to resolve conflict and how they are implemented.

b) Different techniques to resolve conflicts

Different techniques can be used to solve conflicts such as organizational justice, conflict dynamics profile, perspective taking, logical argument mapping, Vaaland's improvement model, active conflict management or negotiation. We will go into details through all these instruments to understand how we can use them and in which situations.

Starting with organizational justice, Rahim defined it in 2000 as «employee's perceptions of organizational justice will be positively associated with their use of the more cooperative (integrating, obliging and compromising) styles of managing conflict with their supervisors (Kinnader, 2011)». Organizational justice can be divided in three different categories: «distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice (Rahim & all, 2001)». Distributive justice concerns the attitudes and opinions of the staff towards the outcomes received. Procedural justice tries to determine the fairness of the procedure but also of the outcome. Finally, interactional justice deals with the quality and fairness of information employees receive as well as the way they are treated by managers (Rahim & all, 2001).

Emotions will also play a role in conflict and are characterized by three main components: attitudes, behaviors and contradictions. Attitudes are linked with «cognitive ideas and emotions, whereas behaviors are evident behaviors and potential aggressive actions and finally contradiction, values and interests (Kinnader, 2011)». Conflicts can be managed in three steps. The first one will be the phase of identification of all the elements, attitudes,

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behaviors and contradictions. It will be followed by the transformation step where the manager needs to make all the parts aware of the situation and work on the orientation of the conflict. Finally, the last step is called solution: after transforming the conflict, the solution will be clearer.

Then, about conflict dynamics profile, it can be defined as « an assessment instrument measuring conflict behaviors, in order to increase self-awareness and improve conflict management skills (Capobianco et al.)». Runde and Flanagan added in 2007 that «behavior is measured through questionnaires that focus on frequency of a certain behavior and involvement in certain situations (Runde and Flanagan, 2007)». Certain abilities are necessary for the manager, in order to be able to deal with these situations, such as being calm, being understanding, being critical of ideas, being fair but also a good listener. This way, this technique helps to improve self-awareness as well as conflict management skills. Employees and groups will understand their responses to conflict, the elements that can increase it and how it should be managed. The conflict dynamics profile instrument will be declined in two different ways: «CDP – Individual and CDP – 360 (Capobianco et al.)». Starting with CDP – Individual, it will have an influence on self-awareness. This means that individuals will understand better themselves, knowing how they react when they are facing a conflict. CDP – 360 focus more on the group itself, comparing how individuals behave and the different reactions of the team. It will allow creating a complete profile thanks to feedbacks and reports from different sources such as managers, bosses or colleagues. It will be particularly interesting for managers and leaders as they are confronted directly to conflict in their work. These two versions will have different benefits. CDP – Individual benefits will be the followings: «quick and easy administration, inexpensive pricing, behavioral feedback which is easy to understand, information on emotional aspects of conflict, abbreviated development guide and group reports for intact teams (Capobianco et al.)» whereas CDP – 360 provides «in-depth view of conflict behaviors, detailed analysis of the 15 scales, perceptions of colleagues, comprehensive development guide, concrete suggestions for improving behavior patterns and group reports for intact teams (Capobianco et al.)». This technique will be used to create orientation programs. These programs will identify the best approach to deal with conflict and will help this way new employees to adapt their behavior to the organization's culture. It will also have an impact on team conflicts thanks to the generation of a report. This report will concentrate the main behaviors and responses that the company wants to foster. Employees will then know what causes conflict and how they have to behave to avoid or prevent it. Finally, this instrument will be used as coaching, individual

behaviors could be then compared to the group. Indeed, it can help for the diagnosis of certain profiles and the future development of employees (Capobianco et al.).

Perspective taking is another technique used to «redirect the conflict against innovativeness and productivity and accepted outcomes for all involved parties (Kinnader, 2011)». It supposes that the manager has the ability to put himself in the position of his employees to understand them and to see conflict from a different point of view.

After, about Logical Argument Mapping (LAM), Hoffmann said that it can be used as «a tool to facilitate the reflection on those conditions of understanding that hinder communication and mutual understanding (Hoffmann, 2005)». LAM can be implemented in two different ways, creating an argumentation or thanks to collaboration. Its main objectives are to reconsider the problem itself, to «motivate self-reflexivity», to develop a new structure in order to solve conflict and to foster creativity within the team (Hoffmann, 2005). However, this model has also some limits. As it is mainly based on mutual understanding, it could then not be applied to conflicts based on divergent interests or needs for example. Nevertheless, it will help to find hidden issues and test the abilities and argumentation of the managers (Hoffmann, 2005).

Another technique is called Vaaland's improvement model, based on workshops that will help to identify issues and analyze them. The model is composed of four major steps. It will start with the identification of the conflict, its cause and what participants think about it. Different criteria will then be applied to «link the conflict to destructive effects on the relationships within the team (Kinnader, 2011)». Then, employees will be informed in order to have an insight on the actual situation and on what have been improved or not. The last step will help to find a compromise between the different parts.

DeChurch and Marks added two dimensions in 2001 to the other models «activeness and agreeableness. High activeness is characterized by openly discussing differences of opinions while fully going after their own interest. High agreeableness is characterized by attempting to satisfy all parties involved. (Joseph, 2016)». However, no special link was observed between active conflict management and team effectiveness.

Finally, negotiation is also important as it is based on communication and needs to be relevant. Fulmer (2004) has studied the link between cognitive ability, emotional intelligence and negotiation and states four main propositions:

1. «Higher cognitive ability is associated with more rapid learning about the underlying interests of one's negotiation partner.

2. Higher cognitive ability is associated with more rational decision-making performance and less judgment error in negotiation settings.

3. Emotionally intelligent negotiators will more accurately evaluate risk, leading to better decision-making performance within a negotiation context.

4. Emotionally intelligent negotiators are more likely to perceive the opportunity to use and to actually choose negotiation strategies/tactics that involve manipulation of their own emotions or of the emotions of negotiation opponents (Fulmer, 2004)».

However, Murtoaro in 2007 presented a different vision about negotiation. Indeed he argued that to achieve an agreement, employees had to be motivated about it and presented four characteristics needed: two or more parts, creativity and cooperation, an honest and free exchange of information between the two parts and finally an outcome that depends on the consequences of the common decision (Kinnader, 2011).

These different techniques will help managers to resolve conflicts. However, some conflict resolutions need to be avoided because instead of resolving it, they will increase its consequences and issues.

c) Conflict resolutions to avoid

Some conflict resolutions need to be avoided, as they will increase conflict instead of resolving it. This way, Scott in 2016 defines nine major attitudes to avoid when dealing with conflict. First of all, managers should avoid «conflict altogether», this means that conflict should arise as soon as both parts feel tension or resentment. Actually, many times, employees wait a long time before saying how they feel, creating situations of more tension and bigger conflicts at the end. People should instead create situations of assertive communication, where people can express themselves and be heard without tensions. Then, they should not « be defensive ». In this case, people feel that they are not doing something wrong and do not accept this situation, which creates complicated situations. «Overgeneralizing» can also occur, meaning that people will extrapolates a problem and feel that everything is going wrong with the person or the situation. They can also feel that they are «right», when actually there is no good or bad answer to a problem. Compromise is in this case difficult to achieve. It is also crucial to avoid «psychoanalyzing or mind reading», we should instead really listen to the person and her feelings. That's why the next major error will be to «forget to listen». After, no need of «playing the blame game». Indeed, conflict should be seen objectively, responding to the need of both parts and finding a good solution

for both. As a consequence, we should avoid «trying to win the argument». Nobody should win as a compromise will be beneficial for both parts and will consolidate relationships. Finally, conflict is not personal and there is no point in «making character attacks». Respect is fundamental in every situation (Scott, 2016).

After defining the main techniques of conflict resolution and the solutions to avoid, we will now analyze the different conflict management styles and the third-party intervention techniques, necessary to deal positively and adequately with conflict.

2.4 Conflict management techniques

a) The different conflict management styles

The different conflict management styles will be organized around two dimensions: "assertiveness and cooperativeness" (Desivilya, 2004). The first management style could simply be to avoid it or withdraw it; assertiveness and cooperativeness in this case will be low. This style will be appropriate in different situations as for example when the problem is not enough important to lose time and money, when a conflict is long-lasting, when it is not the right moment, when a lot of information is needed to deal with it and when the manager is not able to do it because of his emotions. This situation will have pros and cons. First of all, we could avoid situations of aggression and wait for a better moment to argue, it will also shorten the conflict and give some time to prepare before acting. However, the manager could loose his authority. The other part can also feel this absence of conflict or response as an agreement, or it could affect the relationship if they are expecting some responses or solutions (Victor, 2012).

Then, the manager can choose a competing conflict resolution style or forcing style, also called win-lose approach (Victor, 2012). In this case, the assertiveness will be high and the cooperativeness low. It could be used when other methods, less forceful, are not appropriate or when important rights are engaged in the conflict, which means that they have to push their concerns despite the ones of the other part (Conflict Management Techniques). It is also necessary when the conflict needs to be resolved quickly or if it is really long lasting one. The main advantages will be that it will resolve the conflict quickly and will improve self-esteem. However, it will have a negative impact on relationships, the other part can have the same reaction and as it takes a lot of time and energy, it could result as exhausting (Victor, 2012).

The next style will be the accommodating one, also called obliging or smoothing style, composed of high levels of cooperativeness. This means that they will look for the concerns of others before their owns. It will be necessary when some time is needed to prepare the approach to the conflict or when the issue is really important for one of the parts. It could also be used if the person recognizes its errors or when there is no other choice. This style will help to focus on the more important problems and avoid the others, but also to have another point of view on it. Whereas the disadvantages will be that one of the parts could take advantage of it constantly, the win-win approach will be difficult to reach after this and not all the participants will appreciate this style (Victor, 2012).

A compromising conflict resolution style can also be used. It could be called a «give-and-take advantage, with medium levels of both assertiveness and cooperativeness (Victor, 2012)». It will be useful when there is no need of forcing, or when the problems are really complex and need temporary approaches. It will also be appropriate when the persons did not know each other, as it will help to improve their relationships. The resolution of the conflict will be faster, a temporary approach can be approached when waiting for a win-win situation and it will help to reduce the situation of tension but the result may not be convenient for both parts. Managers will need to monitor and control every step to meet the agreement and maintaining trust will be complicated in the long term (Victor, 2012).

Finally, the last management style will be a collaborating conflict resolution style, also called «win-win» situation, combining «high levels of both assertiveness and cooperativeness (Victor, 2012)». A win-win situation will bring mutual benefits to both parts. It is mostly applied when commitments, collaboration, trust levels are really important, or when long-term relationships are needed. It is also important when emotions and responsibilities are engaged in the conflict as well as when the different interests of the stakeholders need to be achieved (Conflict Management Techniques). The pros of this conflict management style are that it will imply collaboration, trust and respect but also share the risks and responsibilities among the parts. However, it will be complicated to find a common decision, and it will spend a lot of time, money and efforts. Furthermore, this solution may not be appropriate when a quick response is needed. Finally, trust can have an impact on relationships, this way; a problem of trust will lead to the use of a new management style (Victor, 2012).

After presenting these different management styles, we will analyze the third-party intervention techniques that can also be used to resolve conflicts.

b) The third-party intervention techniques

The third party interventions techniques combine different techniques, with different budgets and levels of difficulty. The first one is called facilitation and consists in the intervention of a neutral person, internal or external of the organization. It will help to bring a new vision to the conflict as well as positivism and a better communication. The work of a facilitator will be done with small groups, through collaboration. Then managers can also use conciliation. This process is done by a neutral person also that will communicate with both parts, helping to reach an agreement. Peer review is another technique used to resolve daily problems or disagreements and increase trust and understanding. About Ombudsman, an intern person, recognized for its skills, will intervene when conflict occurs in order to resolve it, listening to people but not judging them. Mediation is a well-known technique based on the intervention of a neutral part, internal or external. He will bring new ideas and alternative solutions in order to create the perfect situation for both parties and the organization. Finally, the last technique is called arbitration, a confidential and legal way of resolving conflict. This technique is the most powerful but also most expensive one. However, it is mainly useful when there is a need of a solution without any specification. This means that both parts do not care about the result itself but want a solution (Fisher, 2001).

However, some issues about these third-party intervention techniques exist and need to be taken in consideration. Indeed culture is one of them as it can affect behaviors and is, most of the time, misunderstood. Indeed Mark Ross, in 1993, said that «the way in which conflict is defined, perceived, responded to and managed is culturally embedded; that is, there is a « culture of conflict » in each society (Fisher, 2001)». Moreover, power asymmetries are also crucial in this process, as it will affect both processes and outcomes. This way power balance is necessary to be efficient and to foster interaction and fairness. The third-party should also be impartial, to avoid any kind of third-party bias. It is a fundamental prerequisite to create a good atmosphere and a relationship of trust. If not, their role will be completely different. Furthermore, there is also a problem of time also called «ripeness» in mediation. Indeed most of the time, when the mediator intervenes, conflict has already escalated, creating a situation of frustration and even violence sometimes. This way, it is really complicated to define the right time. Coordination also appears to be complicated when different parties intervene. Indeed Susan Allen Nan defines it as «the variety of ways conflict resolvers consciously attempt to make their own individual efforts more effective together as interconnected pieces of a larger peace process (Fisher, 2001)». This way, third-party intervention is not always successful due to these issues.

These techniques in addition to the different management styles will help to prevent and resolve conflict, even if they have to face some issues as presented before. We are now going to present two other techniques also used when conflict appears: negotiation and mediation.

c) The technique of negotiation and mediation

On the one hand, negotiation can be defined as «a process where parties with conflicting interests determine how they are going to distribute resources or work together in the future. Possible reasons for negotiations on the workplace can be wages, working hours and conditions (Bankovskaya, 2012)». It exists two different kinds of negotiation: distributive negotiation and integrative negotiation. Distributive negotiation concerns a unique issue; this means that only one person will achieve its goal or outcome. In this case, we can call this strategy a «win-lose strategy». Whereas integrative negotiation tries to consider and satisfy every part, following a «win-win strategy». Finally, an application of the integrative approach is called added-value negotiation (AVN). The technique follows five steps. The first one will be to define and identify the interests and then the different options. After this, the manager will «design alternative deal packages, select it and finally perfect it (Bankovskaya, 2012)».

On the other hand, mediation can be defined as «the intervention of a skilled and impartial intermediary working to facilitate a mutually acceptable negotiated settlement on the issues that are the substance of the dispute between the parties (Fisher, 2001)». It is considered as a task-oriented method that aims to reduce the problems between both parts. However, the nature of the relationship is not taken into account. As Christopher Moore said in 2003 this technique has been used for different purposes, in almost all countries and in almost all periods. Four different stories of mediation exist and explain its processes and results. Firstly, the «satisfaction story» presents mediation as a method of collaboration and integration. Then, the «social justice story» argues that mediation will bring a better organization of people, build strong communities and they will be less vulnerable to external situations. At the opposite, the «oppression story» has a completely different vision as it presents mediation as an instrument of power used against weak people. Finally, the «transformation story proposes that the power of mediation is to be found in its ability to transform the quality of the conflict interaction (Fisher, 2001)». It will help people to build their own character and ability to face conflicts. Bush and Folger defined the satisfaction story as the most appropriate. Mediation is often associated with empowerment and recognition (Fisher, 2001).

Christopher Moore, in 2003, defined three kinds of mediators, social network mediators, the authorities mediator and independent mediators. Social network mediators are called like this because they constitute a web of connections between the parties. This means that they will have to preserve their relationships between them. Whereas the authoritative mediator maintains formal relationships with the disputants with a certain form of authority, even if he does not use it to resolve the conflict. Finally, independent mediators will have a role of objectivity during the conflict. However, in any case, mediators need to have certain qualities and skills as for example impartiality, credibility, knowledge and skills. Indeed, William Zartman in 1985 proposes three different categories to qualify their behavior: communication, formulation and manipulation. Furthermore, six different methods of pacific interventions have also been defined. Starting with conciliation, informal communication will be used to identify the issues and foster interaction through negotiation. About consultation, the mediator will use communication to create innovative problem-solving methods. Mediators could also use a method of pure mediation based on «reasoning, persuasion, effective control of information and the suggestion of alternatives (Fisher, 2001)». Power mediation is really close to pure mediation but includes punishments and rewards. Then, through arbitration, the mediator will impose an outcome, a solution that is supposed to be fair and just. Finally, peacekeeping is the last solution proposed «in which the third party provides military personnel in order to monitor a ceasefire or an agreement between antagonists (Fisher, 2001)».

Both techniques, negotiation and mediation, could then be used to solve conflicts within an organization as well as the third-party intervention techniques presented before. After analyzing these different techniques and establishing a complete literature review about conflict management, we will now propose a conceptual framework in order to analyze the different results and establish a conflict resolution model.

3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework will be developed in this chapter and it will be based on the theoretical framework. Its main aim is to analyze the results of the research developing a framework for it. Different conflict resolution models have been developed as we have seen in the literature review. These different models can be summarized in five major steps, which will be described in the next figure. This conflict resolution model can then be used to respond to a conflict situation.
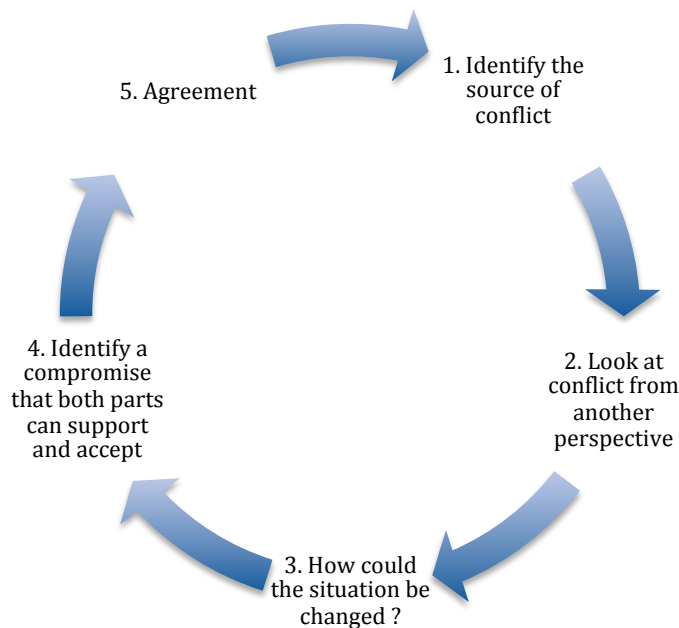
Figure 1: Conflict Resolution Model

3.1 Identify the source of conflict.

In this first step, it is necessary to have sufficient and appropriate information because it will simplify the resolution of conflict. You can get this information through talking with each disputant involved in the conflict and using different questions to determine the origin of this problem. A manager really needs to find out what is the cause of the conflict and how he can handle it. Involving both parts in this stage is really important because it will help to better understand the situation and to remain impartial, which is crucial in this kind of conflict (American Management Association).

Managers also need to define the relation of conflict with the level of performance. Job performance can be defined as: «the work related activities expected of an employee and how

well those activities were executed. Many business personnel directors assess the job performance of employees on an annual or quarterly basis in order to help them identify suggested areas for improvement (BD Dictionary, 2017)».

3.2 Look at conflict from another perspective.

Sometimes, the conflict is not the situation but the perspective of the situation. In this case, it is really important to define the real cause of the problem. Again, talking to each part involved is really useful and you can for example ask questions like «How did the conflict begin?» or «When did it arise?» (American Management Association).

3.3 How could the situation be changed?

After listening to both parties, the next step is to understand how the situation can be changed and improved. In this stage, you also have to decide if the conflict should be stimulated or resolved. It will mostly depend on the type of conflict. As we have defined in the literature review, the conflict can be functional or dysfunctional. On one hand, functional conflicts «support the goals of the organization and improve its performance» whereas dysfunctional conflicts are «believed to be destructive, and decrease productivity and performance (Oladosu et al., 2014)». If the conflict is functional, the stimulation of the conflict can be recommended whereas if the conflict is dysfunctional, the priority is its immediate resolution.

It is also crucial to take into account the feelings involved in the conflicts. Strong feelings are involved in conflicts and sometimes it leads to problems of communication with others. Emotional awareness appears here as very useful because it allows people to deal better with conflict thanks to the control of their emotions. Emotional awareness and emotional intelligence appear to be closely linked and so conflict management will have to deal with it to choose the best solution in order to resolve the conflict (Bankovskaya, 2012).

3.4 Identify a compromise that both parts can support and accept.

In this step, you have to choose the best action to take. You have to look to the best action that not only satisfies each part of the conflict but also benefits the organization. As we have defined it in the stage before, the conflict can be stimulated or resolved. In the case of stimulation, you will need to «lead up-front initiative» in order to reduce any negative effect

of conflict on performance. At the opposite, in the case of a dysfunctional conflict, you need to resolve it as soon as possible. You can use one of the five management styles defined before: «avoiding conflict resolution style, competing conflict resolution style or forcing style, accommodating conflict resolution style or obliging, compromising conflict resolution style and collaborating conflict resolution style (Kinnader, 2001)». Each of these styles might be useful and appropriate in a particular situation and it will specially depend on the parties involved in the conflict (Bankovskaya, 2012).

3.5 Agreement.

In this step, both parties will try to agree on a solution. The behavior of both disputants will be evaluated with the aim to select the best action for everyone. After resolving the conflict, the situation need to be analyzed to understand why the situation has occurred and how we can prevent it to happen again but in most cases, this stage is forgotten.

4. Methodology:

In this chapter, we will present and justify the research methodology.

4.1 Research purpose

The main purpose of this research project is to describe and analyze conflict management practices in French small and medium groups of people in companies located in Bordeaux. It will help us to identify the sources of conflict but also the conflict resolution techniques that might be used by managers in real companies and organizations. Finally it will also allow us to compare different conflict management techniques/styles but also to describe some skills that managers might need to deal with conflict in their everyday work. We could then, after this analysis, make some recommendations to improve the situation of conflict by stimulating or resolving it. By reducing the potential negative effect of conflict, managers will probably increase the performance of their employees and companies.

4.2 Interviews

In order to collect data, we have made some interviews to managers from organizations located in Bordeaux, France and we have send and share questionnaires online to reach the highest number of French managers and obtain as much content as needed for our research. Our strategy has been defined thanks to the study of Yin. Indeed, in 2003, Yin defined different conditions that would help the researcher to select the best strategy. Regarding these conditions, different considerations were analyzed such as «the form of the research question, if it requires control of behavioral events or not and if it focuses on contemporary events or not (Yin, 2003)». The following table was proposed:

Strategy	Form of research question	Requires control of behavioral events?	Focuses on contemporary events?
Experiment	How, why.	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much, how often.	No	Yes
Archival Analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much.	No	Yes/No
History	How, why.	No	No
Case Study	What, how, why.	No	Yes

Table 1: Conditions for different research strategies

Source: Yin. 2003. **Case Study Research: Design and Methods.** Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

We have chosen to conduct case studies and to collect data through semi-structured interviews and online questionnaires. The main characteristics of semi-structured interviews are that there are formal and that a list of topics needs to be covered following a defined order but the interviewer can go further on some questions or «stray from the guide» if he/she thinks that it is necessary and appropriate. These interviews will allow us to get «reliable, comparable and qualitative» data but also some flexibility (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008). Furthermore, qualitative research will enable us to have an insight in different companies, different industries and so on different conflict management techniques and perspectives. In addition, we also conducted online questionnaires, as interviews were not sufficient in terms of data to get reliable results and make some conclusions. The main advantages of online questionnaires are that they are cheap and fast to realise so you can obtain more responses than with direct interviews for example. Furthermore, responses are usually more reliable as participants do not have to face the interviewer, confidentiality is guaranteed and they can answer these questions at anytime, wherever they want. That's why participants are usually more willing to participate to this kind of interviews.

We conducted eight direct interviews. Our willingness was to have enough detailed data to establish some observations but also to strengthen our results and enable us to make some conclusions of our study. We made one test pilot before the first meeting with a friend in

order to check the validity, understanding and organization of our interview. The questionnaire is composed of eleven « open » questions, starting with two questions about the manager himself and his experience. The three following questions allowed us to determine the atmosphere of the workplace and the relationship between the manager and the employees. Then, questions six, seven and eight helped to analyze the type and cause of conflict within the organization as well as to give a first insight of the manager's view of it. Finally, the last three questions dealt with the conflict resolution skills and management style. The questionnaire was developed based on the literature review realized previously. We made eight interviews in the region of Bordeaux. We contacted them both by email and phone. During the phone conversations, we explained the purpose of this study as well as the length of the interview and privacy conditions. We then planned a meeting for the interview. All of them took place in the office of the interviewee, except one that was by phone. The length was from forty-five minutes to two hours. However, audio or video recordings were refused by all the participants to preserve their confidentiality and privacy. They also argued that being recorded could suppose a bias to the interview, as they will not have the same freedom of expression.

We also obtained sixty-four completed online questionnaires. Three friends answered to three questionnaires to make sure that each question was easy to understand, well formulated and make sense. The questionnaire was really similar to the interviews, except that for almost every question we proposed different choices based on the results of our previous interviews. Indeed we started with five personal questions to establish a brief profile of the participant but then the questions used were the same as presented before. The questionnaire was published in the researcher's social networks and then shared by some managers on their own pages.

We will now propose a presentation of participants in order to understand better their intervention and be able to analyze it.

4.3 Participants

As we have presented before, we have conducted eight interviews in the period of February 2017 to March 2018, in the region of Bordeaux, France, and sixty-four questionnaires available online in the period of Abril 2018 to May 2018, to different managers from different backgrounds and working in different types of organizations. Our questionnaire was anonymous, so we do not have any information regarding their function or

the name of the company they are working for. However, we have this information for our interviewees and so we will present the different persons and organizations below.

M. Lozano Hita is the chancellor at the Spanish consulate in Bordeaux. This organization represents the country in France with all the authorities and administrations. The organization is composed of thirteen persons, including the chancellor and the consul. We could consider this interview as part of the one test-pilot that we mentioned before as it was our first real interview after our friends' one but as we get « good » and « sufficient » information, we will also use it for our analysis.

M. Rousseau is the Deputy General Manager at ENEDIS in Bordeaux. The company leads the Electricity Market in France and manages «95% of the electricity distribution network in continental France (Enedis)». The company is part of a large public group and has two main public service duties: the continuity and the quality of the service. Their main activities are focused on the operation, maintenance and development of the networks. The main key figures of the company are the followings: «35 million customers, 39.033 employees, €13 billion in revenue in 2013, 11 million operations per year and 1,3 million km of electrical network managed (Enedis)».

M. Mourlan directs the Mourlan Company, a familiar company implanted in the south of Gironde since 1969. The company has developed a strong expertise in the wood industry, controlling all the stages of the process: from silviculture to pallet production. Its main asset is the know-how of its employees and quality represents its main objective, being certified by the standard ISO 9001. Some of the figures of the company are the followings: «46 employees, 110.000 tones of sawn timber and 900.000 pallets produced per year, 5.000 m2 covered area and 5 drying cells (Mourlan, 2016)».

M. Groelier is the chairman of the Board of Directors of the company CANAELEC, located in Bordeaux, Périgueux and Angoulème. The enterprise is a French SCOP, a cooperative and participatory association, specialized in the construction of electrical and telecommunications networks. Its turnover in 2014 reached 13.823.900,00€ (SCOP CANA ELEC SA).

M. Marco is the director of technical services at the football club «Girondins de Bordeaux», located in Bordeaux le Haillan. It has been created in 1919 and have won 6 times the «Championnat de France», 4 times the «Coupe de France» and 3 times the «Coupe de la Ligue». The new president of the company is Stéphane Martin, since March 9th 2017 and the

actual coach of the football team is Jocelyn Gourvennec since May 27th 2016 (Girondins de Bordeaux).

Ms. Lafarge is the reception and ticketing manager at «Congrés et Expositions de Bordeaux», located in Bordeaux. The company was created in 1916 with the name «Comité de la Foire Internationale de Bordeaux». CEB (congrés et expositions de Bordeaux) is in charge of business tourism and events in the Aquitaine-Limousin-Poitou-Charente region. Its activities are divided into two major areas of expertise. The first one is exhibition and production center for events for the public as for example Bordeaux International Fair, Jumping Expo, for professionals, Exp'Hôtel or Vinitech-Sifel for instance and for sportsmen with the Jumping International de Bordeaux. The second one is brand bordeaux events, hosting of public and professional events as for instance competitions, congresses, corporate events or shows. The company hosts more than 400 events each year (Congrès et Expositions de Bordeaux).

M. Chiron is the Head Manager of Alliance Inox Industrie, located in Bordeaux. The company is one of the leaders in the iron/stainless steel vessels and reactors industry. They serve clients from different sectors such as « food processing, pharmaceutical, cosmetic, healthcare, chemical, water-treatment and wine industries (Alliance Inox Industrie).» They are specialized in boiler work, adapting their tanks to their customers' needs, serrurie which consists in complete structures made of steel and in heat exchangers. Their main concerns are quality, expertise and savoir-faire (Alliance Inox Industrie).

Ms. Tremoulinas is manager at the Charles Perrens Hospital, in Bordeaux. It is a public health institution divided in different sections and one of them is a specific university center for child and adolescent psychiatry called Pupea that aims to help and resolve the needs of children and adolescents in mental health. Ms. Tremoulinas works in this specific center. Her patients are aged from 0 to 18 years and they offer a wide range of services adapted to every particular case, depending for example on the age of the patient or on the treatment that he needs going from daily visits to long term hospitalizations. (Charles Perrens pedopsychiatrie)

From these presentations we can appreciate the diversity of our interviewees. Indeed, we decided to focus on five different factors to choose our interviewees. Firstly, we wanted to have both genders, male and female, in order to establish if gender can have an influence or not on conflict management. However, as we can see our interviewees are mostly men as they are still predominant in these managerial positions in France. We also wanted to have two different generations, one under forty and one above forty. This decision was made on the basis that conflict management has been approached differently for these generations,

with a stronger focus and exposition on this aspect for people under forty. This way we wanted to compare their responses on these aspects. The trade sector was the third factor taken into consideration. As we can see we wanted to have people from the three main sectors: agriculture, industry and services. However, we did not find any interviewee from the agriculture sector that agreed to participate on our project. The fourth factor was the size of the group managed. Indeed our work is focused on small and medium French group teams. That's why we have managers of really small groups and others of medium groups. Finally, we also wanted to have an insight on different types of organizations in order to see if it plays a role in conflict management. This way, we interviewed people from public and private organizations but also from different structures as familiar companies or multinational ones. This way we have a large range of managers, which will enable us to have a broad view on conflict management of managers in France and particularly in Bordeaux.

4.4 Interview analysis

As we mentioned before, we interviewed more than sixty persons from different backgrounds and different companies. We will try now to conduct a brief analysis of the participants in order to establish their main characteristics. This way, we will take into account their gender, their age and their education, their sector and specific industry and finally the type of organization. Concerning gender, less than 27% of them were women. The managers' age ranges from twenty-two to sixty-five years old, with a mean of 41.88 years old. Twenty-three of them are under forty; with a mean around 29,43 years old and the rest are above forty, around 52.92 years. About their education, they have different levels of education and different studies. Twenty percent of them have just completed high school studies, 12% have a BTS or a similar certificate, that could correspond to an advance technician certificate, 23% have a bachelor, 30% a master degree, 7% a PhD and 8% have completed professional studies. If we linked together age and education, people under forty appear to be more qualified in average, however, more people above forty have reached a PhD level. All of them have French nationality, except one that is Spanish but has been living in France for five years and manages French people. Regarding their sector, they come from the industry sector and the services sector and are then redivised in different industries. For example, 20% of them belong to the distribution and trade sector, 17% of them to the electricity, electronic and energy sector, 8% to consultancy services, 7% to the banking and insurance sector, 7% to the health industry, 5% to the wood industry or 5% to public services.

Finally, concerning the type of organization, 25% of the companies are public and 75% are private.

These different graphs will help us to visualize and summarize this information.
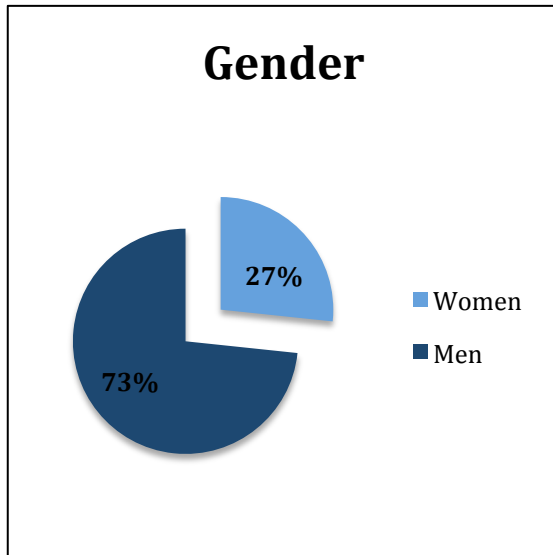
Figure 2: Participants' Gender
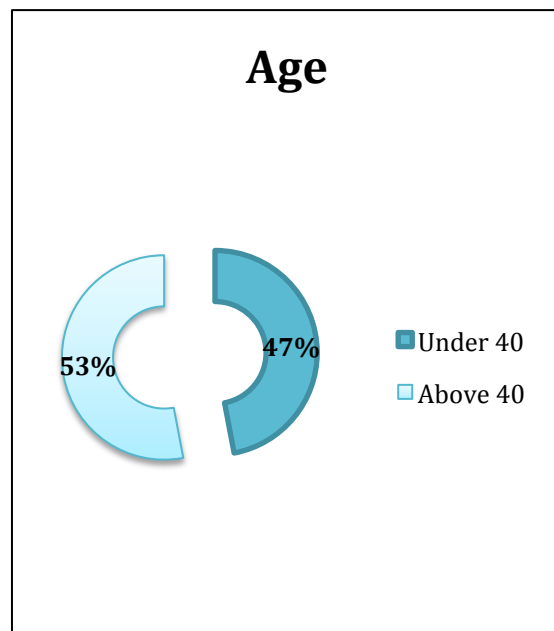
Figure 3: Interviewees' Age
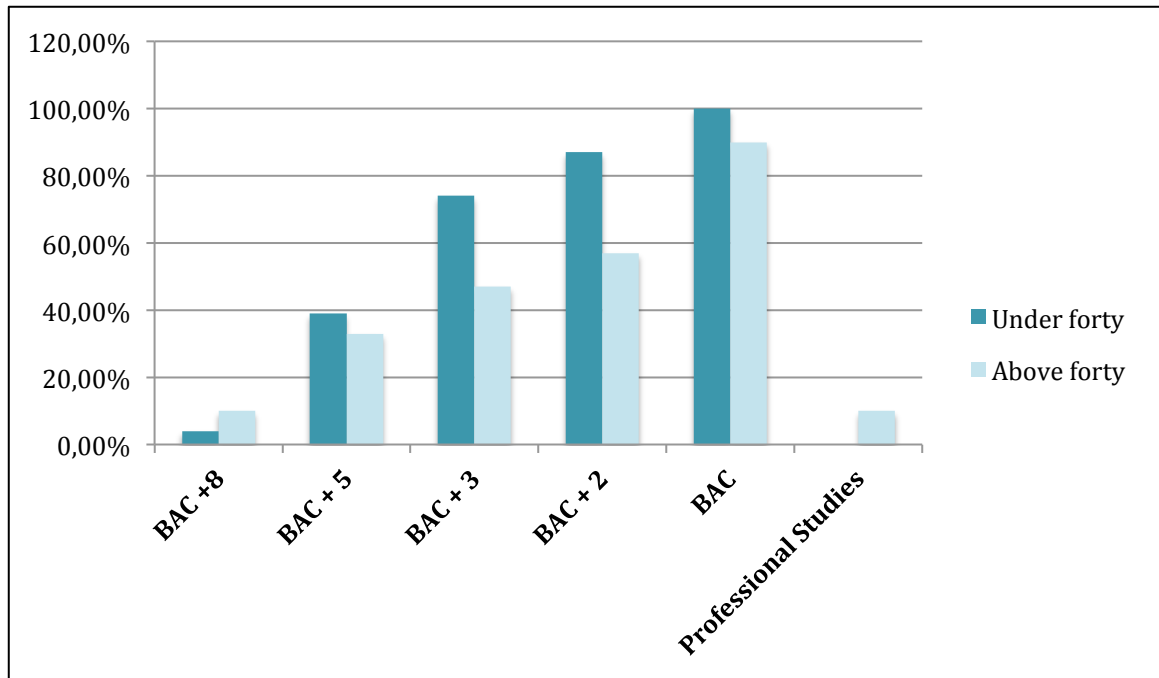
BAC is the equivalent of the High School Diploma in France. We often find the above organization to define the level of study, BAC+3 being the equivalent of a Bachelor degree and BAC+5 of a Master degree.

Figure 4: Respondents' level of education
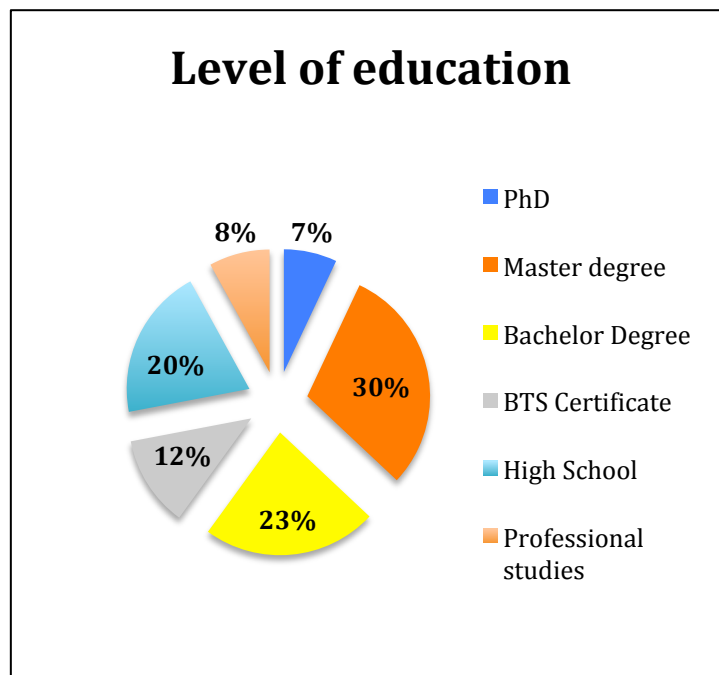
Figure 5: Link between age and level of education
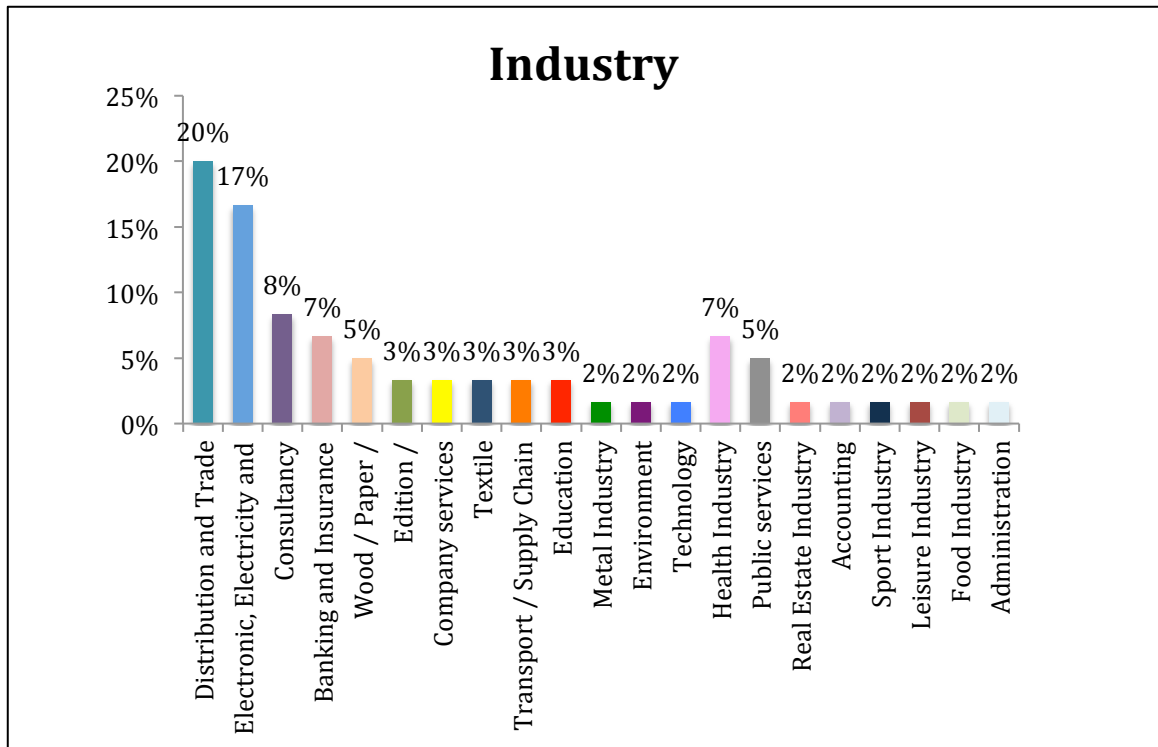
Industry

Figure 6: Industry of the participants

Type of organization
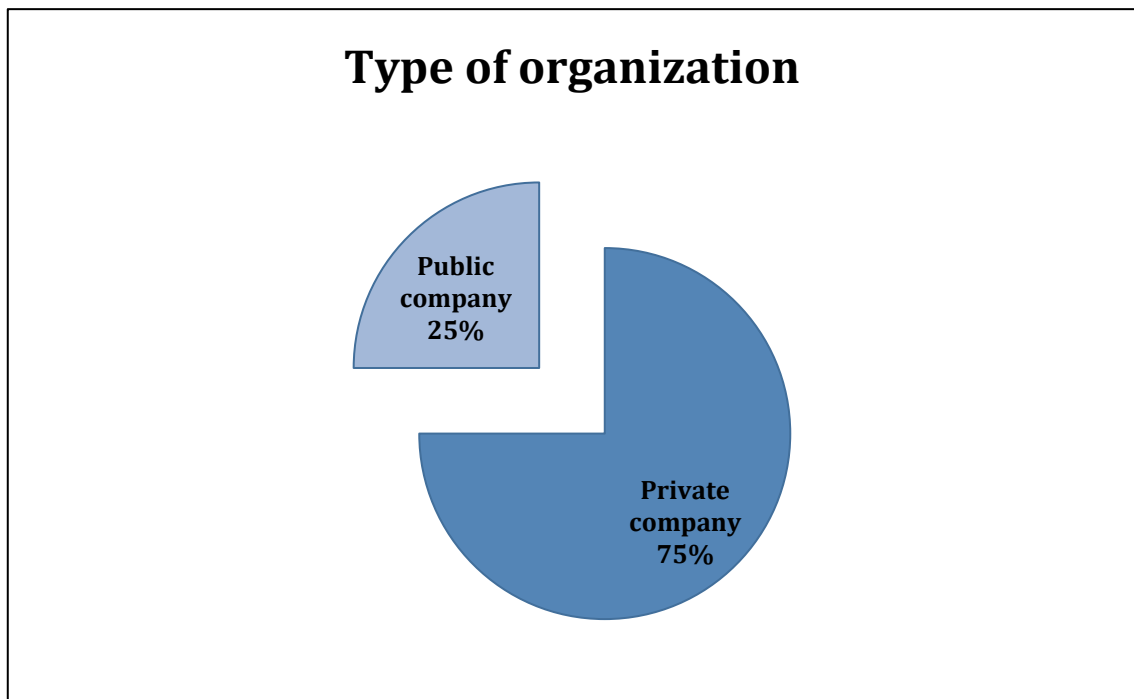
Figure 7: Type of organization

5. Analysis of the results

5.1 Interviews results

We will now proceed to the analysis of the interviews and the results of the questionnaires, question by question in order to summarize the main findings but also discuss them.

a) Managers' experience

The information about the managers' experience and the size of the team that he manages is important to define his background as well as the conditions of work within the organization.

- **42,20% of them have between one and five years of experience managing people.**
- **10,90% of them have between six and ten years of experience.**
- **15,60% of them have between eleven and fifteen years of experience.**
- **10,90% of them have between fifteen and twenty years of experience.**
- **20,30% of them have more than twenty years of experience.**

Through our interviews, we will determine if experience could have an impact on the style of management as well as on the techniques used to resolve it. From the literature review, we can advance that experience can be seen as a benefit when dealing with conflicts but also as a burden as sometimes bringing a fresh and new vision can help to solve a conflict. This way, experience should be analyzed carefully and linked with other conditions before taking any conclusion.

In terms of size of the teams, all the managers deal with small and medium groups, fewer than 250 people. If we go into more details, we can present the following results:

- **35,90% work with groups of one to five persons in their day-to-day.**
- **15,60% with groups of six to ten persons.**
- **25,00% with groups of eleven to twenty persons.**
- **15,60% with groups of twenty-one to fifty persons.**
- **3,10% with groups of fifty-one to hundred persons.**
- **And 4,70% with groups up to two hundred and fifty persons.**
- **None of them direct a group of more than two hundred and fifty persons.**

These results are summarized in the following graphs.

Managers' experience
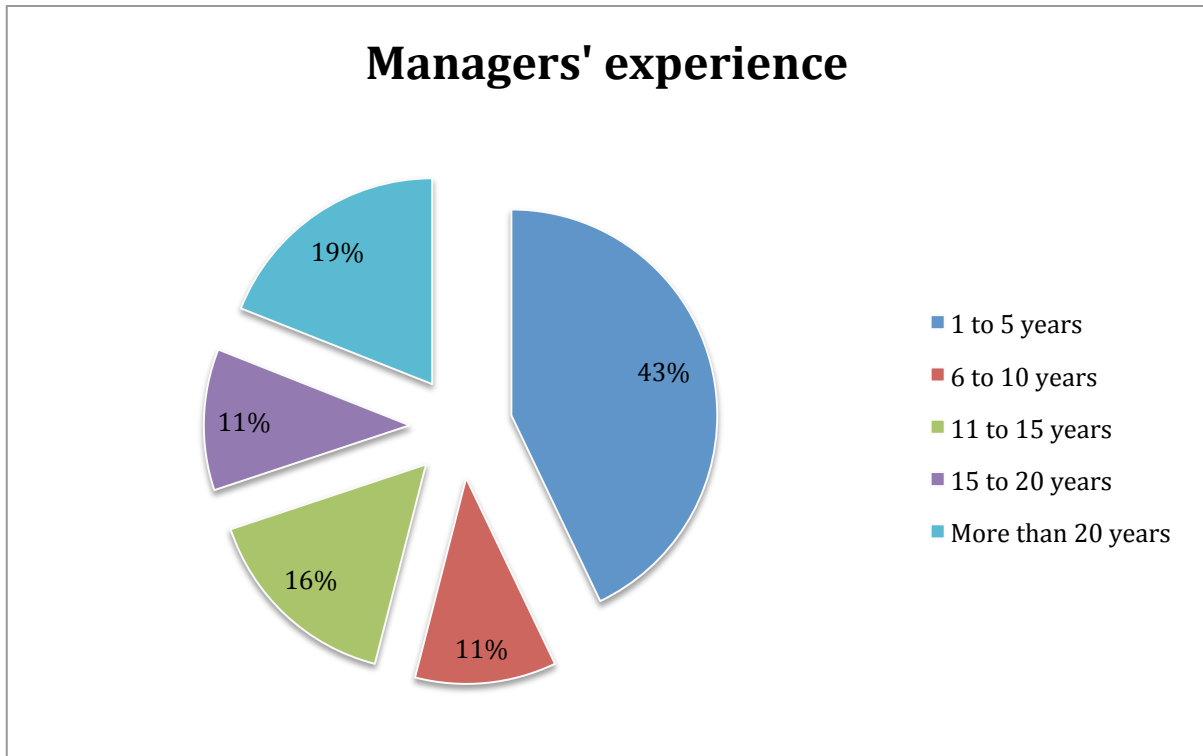
Figure 8: Managers' experience

Size of their team
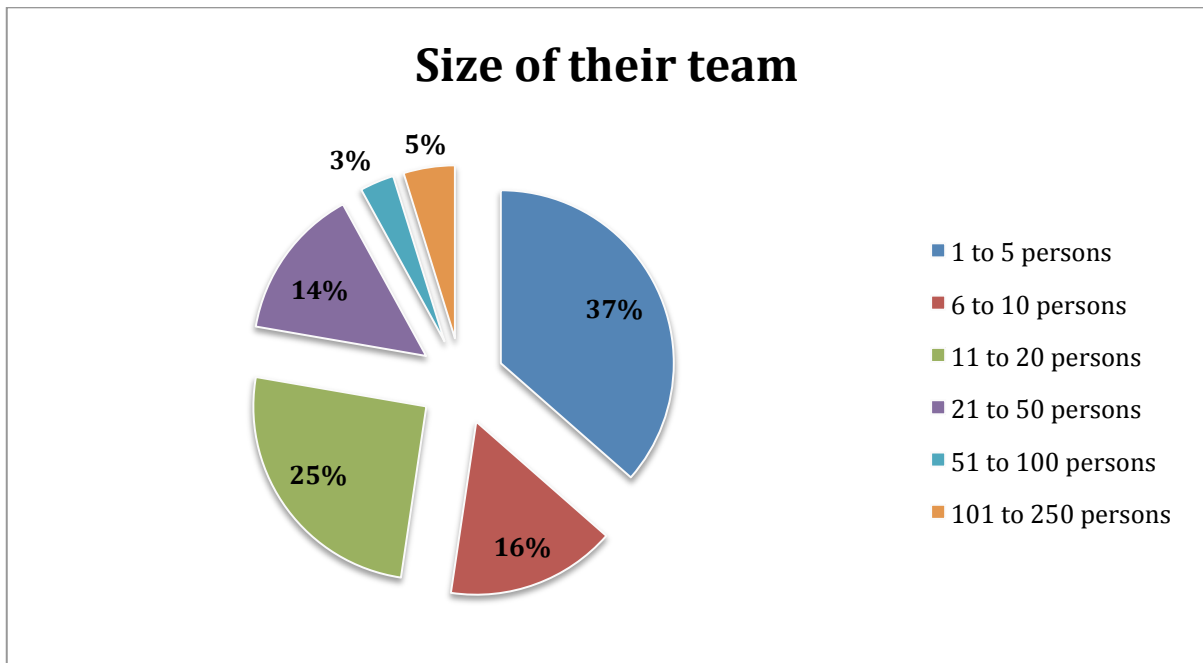
Figure 9: Size of Managers' teams

b) Managers' satisfaction and level of stress

When talking about the managers' satisfaction, **the overall mean is 3.64 out of 5**, meaning that globally they are satisfied about their employee productivity. If we go into more details, we can see that:

- **4,70% of managers are not really satisfied of the productivity of their employees.**
- **31,30% are satisfied.**
- **59,40% are really satisfied.**
- **And 4,70% of them are extremely satisfied.**

However our direct interviews show some differences in the perception of this criterion:

- Indeed some managers consider that this productivity should be improved or could be improved through a better selection of employees for example.
- The rest of them are satisfied with this level and want to preserve it.

About the level of stress, we can conclude that:

- **25,00% of them consider that their employees do not suffer of stress at all.**
- **28,10% believe that they are not really stressed.**
- **25,00% consider that their employees are stressed.**
- **20,30% are really stressed.**
- **And 1,60% of them are extremely stressed.**

From our interviews, these differences appear to be due mainly to the kind of activity or the type of company itself.

- For example, M.Groelier commented that as his company is a SCOP, the employees are associated and the CEO elected. This way, they do not feel stressed by the authority or the objectives, as they want to reach them for themselves and not for satisfying their manager.
- Another example could be the activity of M.Mourlan' or M. Chiron's companies. As their work is purely manual, they consider that there is no stress for the employee or at least no pression.
- The same occurs for Ms.Lafarge, as the work of her employees is mainly operational.

From our questionnaires, we also obtained certain responses that linked the level of stress to different subjects such as:

- The productivity levels that they have to reach.
- The daily relationships with the clients.
- The lack of human ressources or the short deadlines.

When pursuing our analysis and based on our literature review, we should link these two variables: satisfaction and level of stress. On one hand, some authors argue that productivity and stress are inversely correlated: if the level of stress is high, we could expect the productivity to be lower. On the other hand, productivity and stress can also be directly correlated if the stress is said to « be positive ». If the level of « positive stress » is important, productivity can this way increase.

From these answers, we could conclude that globally the level of satisfaction is high or satisfying and the level of stress relatively low. However, as we have just seen, other factors have an impact on these variables such as the kind of activity, the number of employees, the deadlines or the market position of the company.

c) Occurrence of conflict and managers' concerns

About occurrence of any kind of conflict, we defined five different levels of responses: never, rarely, sometimes, frequently and very frequently.

- **17,20% never face conflict.**
- **53,10% rarely.**
- **23,40% sometimes.**
- **6,30% frequently.**
- **And none of them face it very frequently.**

However, the causes or triggers are really different for each organization. Indeed from our interviews we get as many different responses as managers that consider that conflict is present in their company. Regarding the main concerns of managers, we can define four major responses:

- **65,60% want to find a solution to resolve it as quickly as possible.**
- **15,60% are concerned about determining the cause of conflict.**
- **10,90% think about the impact that the conflict would have on their team.**
- **4,70% about the impact that it would have on the performance of their employees.**
- **The rest of them believe that all these responses can be used depending on the conflict.**

Again the type of activity appears to be determinant in the occurrence and the manager's concerns as well as his personality.

d) Type and source of conflict

- **Most of the conflicts within the organizations are between employees for 42,20% of the managers.**

From our interviews, we can add that the main cause is personal differences between employees. In this kind of conflict, managers describe that communication becomes more difficult, relations are damaged and working together becomes impossible. Complementarity comes often as a clue if both parts work closely together but the source of conflict in many cases is due to intern competition such as wages, goals, profitability, responsibilities, or interdependence. The second source of conflict can also be the knowledge. Indeed, working in-group can appear as a problem if the tasks are not well defined or if people do not know how to do it. Then, it can also be due to their personal lives. Indeed, conflicts are sometimes really far from the reality of the activity and the company. Employees often bring their problems from home creating difficult situations with their colleagues without a clear professional reason. Finally cultural or intellectual differences can lead to misunderstandings between employees, fostering conflict if communication is not well developed.

- **Then, for 20,30% of the managers conflicts can also be due to the « authority relationship » between employee and manager.**

Authority has to be used conscenstiously as it can be badly interpreted by people that do not accept to be managed, directed or do not want someone to give them rules and correct their errors. In our interviews, most of the managers mentioned the importance of communication in these relations, explaining that if both parts can express their feelings and listen to the others, conflicts will be avoided. The same way, being on the field will help the manager to prevent these situations. However, these conflicts are less recurrent for our managers but they still came in second position.

- **14,10% of the managers believe that the majority of their conflicts take part between different persons of a group or a department and 7,80% between different departments of an organisation.**

- **Finally, the last category could be due to external organizations or clients for 11,80% of the managers.**

Indeed, as organizations will have different goals, collaboration became difficult creating sometimes situations of failure. Nevertheless, during our interviews, most of them said that they consider these conflicts as less important as they are « easier » to solve because they are

not due to « human » problems. The solutions will then be more technical and can even end up in the courts.

As a conclusion, communication appears to be the clue to solve most of the different kind of conflicts. However, we will analyze later the different factors that we mentioned before such as the age, the type of organization or the size of the team that can have probably an impact on the conflict or on the way to manage it.

e) Conflict resolution techniques and management style

- **Three words have been recurrent when talking about conflict resolution during all our interviews: communication, compromise and confrontation.**

Most of the managers consider that a strong field presence is necessary to understand the conflict and be able to resolve it. Diagnosis appears this way to be the first step in the conflict resolution. Listening and communicating will then follow it. If employees are able to express their feelings, the agreement will be easier to reach. Adaptation is fundamental as conflict occurs between humans, meaning that everyone will react differently. Finally, confrontation is sometimes necessary to find a compromise or an agreement.

The results from our questionnaires were similar on this point, indeed:

- **68,80% consider communication as the main source of conflict within their company.**
- **43,80% believe that they are due to the differences in objectives of their employees.**
- **23,40% because of the interdependence of employees in their tasks, activities etc.**
- **17,20% due to the specialisation of their employees.**
- **17,20% because of authority.**
- **The rest of them mentioned really specific interpersonal conflicts, such as competition or jalousy.**

Referring to the techniques used, the responses were the following:

- **73,40% used compromise.**
- **48,40% confrontation.**
- **17,20% decide on their own.**
- **1,60% ignore them.**
- **The rest of them used communication and adaptation to resolve conflict.**

Furthermore, most of the times, the intervention of a third party can help to smooth the conflict and find a solution.

- **However, most of the managers, 43,80% said that they never use these persons in case of important conflicts.**
- **28,10% use them rarely.**
- **18,80% sometimes.**
- **7,80% frequently.**
- **And only 1,60% very frequently.**

However, from our interviews, we can say that they mainly use **intern third parties such as supervisors, line managers or persons from other departments,** because they think that it would be more efficient if the person knows well the structure and the company. Nevertheless, almost all of them affirm that in case of big conflicts or strikes (high levels of conflict), they will call extern people such as lawyers, mediators or trade unions.

f) Necessary skills

- Most of the managers declare that the necessary skills to be able to face conflicts are linked **with communication skills (89,10%), interpersonal skills (81,30%), analytical skills (53,10%) and finally negotiation skills (39,10%).**
- However some of them also believe that there is a major skill that manager might need, **adaptation, because humans are all different.**

From our interviews, we can also add that exemplarity is also an important notion as the manager often represents the image of the company and is in many cases responsible of the working atmosphere. This way, his attitude is determinant. A major discussion concerns the trainings. Indeed some people believe that managers are born, making this way trainings unnecessary. The other point of view is that trainings give some tools to managers to face conflict and understand the different situations, goals and the global vision. Finally, managers believe that creating a good atmosphere is fundamental. In this purpose, they propose informal meetings such as breakfasts or Christmas dinners to foster relationships.

As a conclusion, we might say that there are as much different managers as different people but some common skills such as communication or interpersonal skills appear in these different profiles.

5.2 Analysis of the results

As we have presented before, the managers that we interviewed have different levels of experience, from only one year to more than twenty years and they manage different size of teams, from four persons to nearly two hundred and fifty. This allows us to have a broad range of experiences and visions about conflict management.

Starting with satisfaction and level of stress, the global average mean of managers' satisfaction is relatively high, 3.64/5 and the level of stress is relatively different depending on the company, its activity or the objectives of each employee. Indeed from this question we can conclude that the level of stress can not always been controlled by managers and that it is often due to external factors. However, it may have an impact of the productivity of the employees that's why managers should take it into account when dealing with them and try to transform it into motivation and something positive. Indeed it will help to improve the productivity of the company.

About the occurrence of conflict, we have seen that 23,40% of managers consider that they have conflicts sometimes whereas 53,40% face it rarely. If we analyze this response in more details, we can see that there is no clear influence of any factor studied on these results. Indeed every manager has a really different profile, different age and experience, trade sector, size of their group or type of organization. Obviously, some situations will have an impact on organizations and can create situations of conflict, but there is no specific characteristic of managers that will determine if they will have more or less conflict. It is more about their personality, the influence they have on their company and their current situation than an objective factor.

However, the type of organization and the kind of activity developed will have an impact on conflicts within an organization and will determined managers' concerns. Indeed, if the activity is mainly operational, managers will be more concerned about the performance and results whereas in other cases, they will care about the impact of the conflict and will try to resolve it as soon as possible and determine its cause. In this case we have also observed another similarity, managers that are in the first situation are in most cases women. However, as women represent only 27% of our interviewees, we cannot really proceed to any conclusion and we should realize other interviews to prove this tendency.

About the type and source of conflict, personal conflicts represent 42,20% of the managers' responses. In this case, we determine thanks to our interviews that conflicts are created due to differences in experience, diversity, background and other personal aspects.

This way, the manager has a really small role in the creation of the conflict but he will be very important in its resolution. On the other side, 20,30% of the managers also mentioned the occurrence of conflicts due to authority problems. In our interviews, the three managers that mentioned this problem come from big structures, but they manage small and medium groups. We can this way imagine that these authority problems are mainly due to their structure, they have more intermediary managers and so communication is much more difficult as it has to be efficient at different levels, and sometimes these managers have to apply rules from the top hierarchy that are not well perceived or understand by their employees. So it is really difficult to implement an efficient intermediary management without having conflicts. However, we cannot take this conclusion from our questionnaire, so it represents just a first approach and a deeper analysis should be done on this subject. Then, 14,10% of the managers believe that the majority of their conflicts take part between different persons of a group or a department and 7,80% between different departments of an organisation, so they usually face intragroup and intergroup conflicts. This kind of conflict appears to be more related to common objectives or interdependances between people. Finally, some of them, 11,80%, have also conflicts due to external reasons, so in this case the role of the manager will also be focused on the resolution of conflict.

Managers' techniques to resolve conflicts are based for 73,30% of them on compromise and 48,40% on confrontation. In our interviews, the world collaboration was also recurrent. Based on the literature review and on these results, we can define that they have a style in-between accommodation, sharing and collaboration depending on the situations. However, really few of them talked about obliging or avoiding anyone or anything. Furthermore, managers also use sometimes third party intervention techniques to resolve conflicts but mostly internal ones that are task-oriented. However, not the majority of them are concerned by these techniques, indeed 43,80% never use them.

Finally, most of them believe that communication and interpersonal skills are key and essential to develop managerial functions.

5.3 Research conclusions

These interviews allowed us to have an insight on the attitudes of managers towards conflict in France, and more especially in the region of Bordeaux. The main conclusion will be that globally managers are satisfied of the productivity of their company and of their employees in general, and that employees do not suffer from stress or from their conditions at

work. However, there are still some conflicts within these organizations, and mainly personal conflicts. Most of the managers are focused on compromise and confrontation for resolving them, with more or less good results. In general they do not have a really good knowledge of all the existing conflict resolution techniques and they mostly use their common sense when they are confronted to conflict. When talking about the most important skills, nearly all of them agree about communication and interpersonal skills. We can also conclude that we could not define a clear impact of objective factors such as the age, experience, gender on conflict management, whereas the type of organization or the activity could have a direct influence in some specific situations.

We will know discuss these results based on the conceptual framework and we will then present some recommendations to French managers.

6. Discussion and recommendations

6.1 From a conceptual framework to a real situation

In the third chapter, we defined a conceptual framework based on the literature review made in precedent chapters. After our interviews and research analysis, we will know compare this conceptual framework to what managers experience on their day-to-day and to their way of dealing with conflict. We will now go through each step in order to establish the main similarities as well as the main differences.

1. Identify the source of conflict

For 15,60% of the managers interviewed, the major and first preoccupation was to identify the source or the cause of conflict. Even if they do not represent the majority, most of them are aware of the hot buttons that may cause a conflict within their companies. Indeed they define different types of conflict that may affect their company: between employees, between manager and employees, inside a department or between departments and finally external conflicts, between different organizations. However, most of the conflicts are interpersonal for 42,20% of the managers. We could then think that if the conflicts are based mostly on personal differences, managers should organize activities or seminars to foment relationships between their employees, help them to learn and understand each other. Every people has a different vision, different objectives and so working together is not always easy. However, it is possible to learn to work with others and it could pass through trainings for example.

2. Look at conflict from another perspective

We can say that most of the managers consider each part involved in the conflict to have a global view over it and understand completely what is going on. However, 43,80% said that they never use a third-party intervention in case of important conflicts. When dealing with conflict, having these different perspectives is really important as it will help managers to come to a more adapted and efficient response and solution. The solution will be then to have a discussion and confrontation with both parts as most managers do but also to involve someone more neutral, and so this could be a point of improvement for the managers of this regional area.

3. How could the situation be changed?

This step is about understanding how to resolve the problem or improve the situation. Most of the managers talked about communication, confrontation and compromise, their main objective being the resolution of the conflict for 65,20% of them. However almost none of them talked about positive conflict during our interviews and they did not make any differences between functional or dysfunctional conflicts. The same occur with feelings. Managers talk about feelings but only regarding their impact on the performance. They did not mention the importance of the control of the emotions nor the link with the emotional intelligence. This way, it could be interesting for managers to have more information about this subject, or to participate to trainings to apply these concepts to their management of conflict.

4. Identify a compromise that both parts can support and accept

In almost all our interviews, managers talked about a compromising conflict resolution or a collaborating conflict resolution style. So French organizations and managers are aware of the different conflict resolution techniques that exist and understand their impact on their organizations and employees. However as we commented before, most of them are conscious about the existence of third party intervention techniques but they usually do not use them. When talking about skills, most of them agree that communication skills are the most important ones for a manager, followed by interpersonal skills, analytical skills and finally negotiation skills. Adaptation is also mentioned as an important skill as managers deal with persons. However, they have divergent opinions about formation and trainings. Some of them believe that you can learn and improve your management and conflict resolution skills whereas others think that you are born with them. This way skills appear as fundamental but it is not clear if trainings can bring them or not and so if managers can learn to be more efficient and resolutive when dealing with conflict.

5. Agreement

Only few managers talked about the agreement or the result of the conflict and mentioned the analysis of the causes of conflict. This analysis is really important to prevent further conflicts and take measures. However, in most of the cases, this step is forgotten or ignored.

After comparing the conflict resolution model to the managers' interviews and questionnaires, we can conclude that French organizations and French managers have some common points with the model developed. Indeed, they follow almost every step of it. However, they are not aware of all the concepts involved in this model, and maybe the development of these notions will help to improve the conflict situations as well as the companies' performance. This way, we will now develop some recommendations for French organizations, based on this analysis.

6.2 Recommendations

After analyzing the results of our research and comparing them to the conceptual framework established previously, we will now present our main recommendations to French organizations and managers.

Recommendation 1. Organize trainings or seminars for developing relationships between employees, managers and teams. As we presented before, the major source of conflict in French organizations is due to personal differences. This way, interpersonal conflicts are predominant. One solution that we can this way imagine is to develop relationships between employees and give them tools to understand each other and make their work together easier. Indeed people that feel integrated and engaged in their organizations will be more efficient and so will benefit their organizations.

One kind of training could be for example team-building activities. They can help to develop certain skills and resources necessary to work within a good atmosphere and environment. However, it needs to be repeated and followed on time to be effective and at the end it will be part of the companies' culture. Before starting this process, you need to understand what is fundamental for the development of your teams, what are the positive aspects about it and the negative ones and on what points you need to focus on. This activity starts with a first phase that will consist of knowing each other better. Each person of a team has a different background, different ambitions but also different needs, this way knowing each other will help to prevent certain behaviors or understand certain reactions. To achieve this, you can for example organize a breakfast once a month or simply have drinks with everyone after work. Knowing people in a different environment will also help everyone to feel more comfortable and confident and so they will be more willing to open up about themselves, their personalities or ambitions. Team building exercises or activities can also be

a good way to give employees tools to solve certain situations or certain weaknesses. For example you can focus through exercises on certain skills such as communication, strategic thinking or creativity. However, they need to be uncompetitive exercises or it will unavoidably create tensions between team members.

Another kind of training could be called soft skills development training. Soft skills can be defined as « personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people (Oxford University Press) ». At first sight it is really similar to team building, however it is often related to different topics such as emotional intelligence or conflict resolution and it is often made through an online platform or an individual training.

These are some ideas of what could be make to develop relationships between managers, employees and teams. Obviously, each company is different as well as its employees, so you will need to adapt these trainings to your situation and your needs.

Recommendation 2. Learn about conflict management concepts such as emotional awareness, functional and dysfunctional conflicts. As we presented before, emotional awareness can help managers to understand conflict and have the best reactions considering its own or others feelings. Indeed it has been proven that negotiators that have developed emotional intelligence skills are more able to determine what is going on and take the best decision according to the emotions involved in the conflict. Furthermore it will help managers to understand also how their own reactions can affect their employees, so it will develop their own self-awareness. This way, participating to trainings focused on emotional awareness and intelligence can help to improve conflict management skills. On the other hand, most of the managers interviewed did not make any difference about functional and dysfunctional conflicts. They did not think about conflict, as something that could in some situations be positive, but at the opposite, they try to stop it and resolve it as soon as possible. However, in some cases, it is good for the company to have a conflict because it will help to improve certain situations, deal with something that has been hidden for a long time or simply find a solution to increase or improve results. Making this difference is this way really important as it can impact the performance of a company and so that's why managers should learn to differentiate both types of conflict to take the best decisions. Emotional awareness is indeed closely link with these concepts, as it will give the manager the tools to perceive and determine whether it is functional or dysfunctional. As we just discussed, some skills and learnings are fundamental to be able to manage efficiently a group of people and we believe

that some of them and some concepts can be learned from trainings and courses. However, we recommend these trainings to be both theoretical and practical as it will be then easier to implement it in your company.

Recommendation 3. Use of third-party intervention techniques when needed. The third party interventions techniques combine different techniques, with different budgets and levels of difficulty. The use of these techniques can help the resolution of a conflict bringing some neutrality and another point of view to it. These techniques may not be used or less used than needed because of different reasons such as the lack of knowledge about these techniques, the budget that it may represent or the consideration that these techniques can be used only when the conflict escalates. This way, trainings that incorporate the roles of mediators, conciliators or other figures may help managers to be introduced to these techniques, learn from them and be more conciliate to use them. Role-plays help also to understand these roles, to play them and figure out why they are needed. These roles can also be introduced in a company internally, representing this way a smaller budget, through employees from other departments or other functions than the ones implicated for example. The introduction of these techniques will help managers to improve their conflict resolution skills and techniques as well as the relationships within their companies.

Recommendation 4. Development of the last step of the conceptual framework: agreement and analysis of the conflicts' causes. Indeed we have seen that most of the managers, nearly all of them, did not have this step of agreement and analysis in their process and approach of conflict management. However, it is one of the most important steps as it will prevent conflicts to appear again and it will help employees to identify and understand the response to a specific conflict. Indeed if the solution is seen by everyone has effective, it will be used by employees before conflict emerge again and so it will save time and negative impacts for the team and the organization itself. It does not need much effort to be implemented but it could make a big difference at long term.

These are some recommendations that we can make to French organizations and French managers based on the analysis of the interviews and on the previous research. We believe that they can bring some important benefits at short and long term if they are adapted and applied to each concrete situation.

7. Conclusions

The ability to manage conflict appears as an essential skill for managers as they can be confronted to it frequently in their daily life at work. This way, we decided to have an insight on this topic, focusing essentially on small and medium group teams in France, in the region of Bordeaux. This study has been a long and interesting process that started with the decision to study this topic and ended with the final recommendations to French managers and companies. Through this research, we have been able to establish the main definitions of conflict, its views and nature but also the different types of it, its processes and approach and finally the resolution and management techniques more adapted to each situation. We have also directed eight interviews and sixty-four online questionnaires with managers from the region, with different backgrounds, experiences and in different companies and sectors to have an overview of it.

We can now conclude that managers in Bordeaux are mostly confronted to conflicts based on personal differences and that they use in nearly every case communication, compromise and confrontation style to resolve it. However, sometimes, they lack of certain knowledge of concepts that could help them to be more effective and have a positive impact on their performance instead of decreasing it. We can also establish a link between the type of activity developed and the occurrence of conflict based on the research analysis that we have made.

However, we have also met some limits during our research. Indeed, this topic appears sometime as confidential for managers, so they are not willing to disclose this kind of information to external people or not with a lot of details. Furthermore, talking about your own management can be difficult and sometimes influenced by your personality and vision. We had the chance in some cases to discuss with employees too, however, we were confronted to the same bias as in some cases they were afraid of the consequences of being completely honest and without filters. That's why we encountered some difficulties when collecting data for our research.

Nevertheless, we hope that the recommendations made will help managers to improve their knowledge, acquire new techniques and develop a new mindset about conflict in order to improve their efficiency and performance but also their relationships with their employees.

This research has been made in a regional context, Bordeaux, in France. This way, it could be interesting to do a future investigation in another region or country to establish similarities or differences between conflict management techniques and see if it could have an impact on it or if at the opposite a more general conclusion can be made.

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9. Annexes

9.1 Interviews questionnaire

a) Questionnaire in English

1. How long have you been a manager?
2. How many persons do you manage?
3. Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?
4. Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?
5. Do you often have conflicts among employees?
6. What is your main concern when a conflict appears?
7. What kind of conflict do employees have at work?
8. What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?
9. What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?
10. Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?
11. What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

b) Questionnaire in French

1. Depuis quand êtes-vous manager?
2. Combien de personnes gérez-vous?
3. Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés?
4. Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail?
5. Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés?
6. Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît?
7. Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail?
8. Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organization?
9. Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits?
10. Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits?
11. Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits?

9.2 Interviews

a) Interview with M.Lozano Hita, the Chancellor at the Spanish consulate in Bordeaux.

Interview on Monday, February 20th, from 13pm to 15pm. M. Lozano Hita, the chancellor at the Spanish consulate in Bordeaux, refused to be recorded. The interview was in Spanish as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Desde cuando es usted manager? How long have you been a manager?

«Empecé siendo manager cuando fuí militar, durante uno o dos años. Después, trabajé para asuntos exteriores en el departamento de retribuciones. Después comenzó mi etapa en el extranjero en 1982 en Moscú y en 1985 fuí director de organización y ocupé puestos de coordinación. He tenido cinco puestos de canciller y mi especialidad es el cuerpo de gestiones públicas. También he participado en la negociación del personal laboral, dirigiendo un grupo de quinientas personas y en relaciones sindicales.»

I started being a manager when I was military, for one or two years. Then, I worked for foreign (external) affairs in the compensation department. After this, I started working in foreign countries in 1982 in Moscow and in 1985 I became director of organization and held coordination posts. I have had five chancellor positions and my specialty is the public management. I have also participated in the negotiation of « personnel labor», leading a group of 500 people and in trade union relations.

Cuantas personas dirige? How many persons do you manage?

«Dirijo equipos de entre 12 o 20 personas, y soy un manager ecónomico pero también de personal. Actualmente en Burdeos, tengo un equipo de 12 personas.»

I run teams of 12 or 20 people, and I am an economic and staff manager. Currently in Bordeaux, I have a team of 12 people.

Está usted satisfecho del nivel de productividad/rendimiento de sus empleados? Por ejemplo, en una escala del 1 al 10. Y porque? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Si, estoy satisfecho del nivel de rendimiento de mis empleados. Me gusta mucho trabajar en equipo. Aprendí a trabajar en equipo en Bruselas en 1981, cuando trabajé para la

coordinación de cinco departamentos. Yo estaba de prácticas pero asistia a todas las reuniones de trabajo, y todo el mundo tenía que participar en ellas. Ahí aprendí que las soluciones muchas veces las tiene alguién de fuera, que no está en el conflicto. El empleado es el que trabaja y el que sabe.»

Yes, I am satisfied with the level of performance of my employees. I like to work as a team. I learned to work in teams in Brussels in 1981, when I coordinate five departments. I was doing an internship but I was able to attend all the work meetings, and everyone had to participate in them. There I learned that someone that is not in the conflict really often brings solutions. The employee is the one who works and the one who knows.

Se quejan vuestros empleados de nervios/estrés en el trabajo? Siempre, de vez en cuando, a veces o nunca? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Si, se quejan algunas veces. Hay que buscar la causa y minimizarla. Esta situación de nervios puede deberse a una acumulación de trabajo, un problema de procedimiento, el trabajador pasa demasiado tiempo en una tarea y no le da tiempo a hacer otras cosas o un problema de medios materiales y técnicos, el trabajador no tiene el material adecuado para trabajar de una manera adecuada.»

Yes, they complain sometimes about it. You have to look for the cause and minimize it. This situation of stress can be due to an accumulation of work, a procedural problem, for example the worker spends too much time on a task and so he does not have enough time to do other things or also a problem of material and technical means, the worker does not have the right material to work in a proper way.

Tienen vuestros empleados a menudo conflictos? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Existen muchos conflictos debidos a un alto individualismo. Depende de las situaciones pero muchas veces se debe a que unos piensan que trabajan más que otros, que un empleado se lleve mejor con el jefe. Se tiene que fomentar une relación de compañerismo y no de amistad.»

There are many conflicts due to high individualism. It depends on the situations but it is often because some of them work more than others or some of them have a better relationship with the boss for example. You have to create a teamwork spirit, instead of friendships.

Cual es vuestra preocupación principal cuando surge un conflicto? **What is your main concern when a conflict appears?**

«Mi primera preocupación es analizar las causas y después intentar minimizar las causas cuando no se puede solucionar directamente. Muchas veces los conflictos surgen por motivos no profesionales. Hay que tener cuidado que las personas no busquen aliados dentro de la organización, fomentando el conflicto y empeorando la situación.»

My first concern is to analyze the causes and then try to minimize them when the conflict cannot be solved directly. Conflicts often arise for non-professional reasons. A bigger conflict can arise if people look for allies within the organization, increasing the conflict and making the situation worst.

Que tipo de conflicto suelen tener vuestros empleados? Diferencias personales, conflictos entre grupos de trabajo, con la jerarquía o con otras organizaciones? **What kind of conflict do employees have at work?**

«La mayoría de los conflictos de mis empleados surgen por diferencias personales, diferencias de carácter y por lo tanto problemas de comunicación entre ellos. Para ello, el manager tiene que poner de acuerdo a la gente y se tiene que fomentar el trabajo en equipo, la relación de compañerismo y así crear una conversación entre esas dos personas que no se entienden para que puedan intercambiar puntos de vista, opiniones y llegar a un acuerdo.»

Most of my employees' conflicts arise from personal differences, differences in character and therefore communication problems between them. The manager has to create a good situation of communication for the employees, making them agree on a solution, encouraging teamwork and team spirit and thus creating a conversation between the two persons that do not get along, so that they can exchange point of views, opinions and reach an agreement.

Cual es según usted la principal fuente de conflictos en vuestra empresa? Mucha especialización de los empleados (no conocen los objetivos de los demas y las preocupaciones), diferentes objetivos, interdependencia entre los empleados, distintos niveles de jerarquia, diferencia de estatus, problemas de personalidad, diversidad o comunicación? **What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?**

«Creo que el principal problema es la interdependencia entre los empleados. Los trabajos se mezclan y por lo tanto, los compañeros deben esperar el trabajo del otro, no están satisfecho de la manera en que esta hecho el trabajo y los perfiles de trabajo no están bien

definidos. Para ello, se llevan a cabo encuestas de trabajo para poner definir de manera adecuada el trabajo de cada uno. Así se podrá dar también a sus empleados más responsabilidad. Crear una relación de grupo sana, que todos entiendan que están en el « mismo barco », que luchan por los mismos objetivos y así fomentar ayuda entre la gente.»

I think the main problem is the interdependence between employees. Jobs are mixed and therefore, people have to wait for the work of others, they are not satisfied how the job is done and the job profiles are not well defined. For this, work surveys are carried out to define adequatly the work of each one. This will also allow you to give more responsibilities to your employees. You should create a healthy group relationship, let everyone understand that they are in the « same boat », who strive for the same goals and thus promote help among people.

Que técnica utiliza para resolver un conflicto? Ignorarle, intentar llegar a un acuerdo entre las dos personas, confrontación entre ellas, compromisos o una solución completamente distinta de la imaginada. What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?

«En un primer tiempo, suelo entrar, mirar e intentar mejorar la situación. Hay que aconsejar a los empleados pero también dejarles iniciativas. Si no tienen respuesta, en ese momento se interviene para ayudarles. En situaciones complicadas, suelo convocar a las personas directamente. Conversamos tranquilamente, sin engañar, ni mentir. En algunos casos, hay que entrar en lo que llamamos la negociación: ambas tienen que ceder. Muchas veces los conflictos surgen por problemas de perspectiva por lo cual hay que tener un poco de imaginación.»

In a first time, I usually go in, look and try to improve the situation. It is necessary to advise the employees but also to let them take initiatives. If they do not have an answer, then you can intervene to help them. In complicated situations, I usually intervene directly. We talk quietly, without « cheating » or lying. In some cases, we must enter into what we call the negotiation: both have to yield. Many times conflicts arise due to problems of perspective so you have to have a little bit of imagination.

Usa usted una tercera persona, más neutra, para ayudarle a resolver estos conflictos? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Si en grandes conflictos, suele intervenir una tercera persona más neutra. Tiene que ser neutra pero también considerada por las partes. Lo llamaremos conciliador. En sitios pequeños como aqui, es más fácil reunirse, juntarse y llegar a un acuerdo. Si se trata de un

conflicto en el que el manager está implicado, lo mejor es acudir a una tercera parte, fuera de la estructura. Sin embargo deben de conocer bien la estructura, no vale cualquiera. Si es alguién de dentro, es peligroso.»

Yes, in major conflicts, a third person is more neutral. It has to be neutral but also considered by both parts. We will call it « a conciliator ». In small places like here, it is easier to talk together and reach an agreement. If it is a conflict in which the manager is involved, it is better to go to a third party, from outside the structure. However they must know the structure well. If it is someone from the company, it could be dangerous.

Que tipo de competencias o cualidades piensa usted que un manager tiene que tener para ser capaz de gestionar los conflictos? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Creo que es necesario tener capacidades de negociación, no tomarse las cosas a título personal, ser capaz de afrontar el conflicto de manera tranquila, no ser autoritario, saber tratar con las personas, saber comunicar y convencer, ser respetuoso pero también tener sentido práctico.»

I think it is necessary to have negotiating skills, not to take things personally, to be able to face the conflict in a quiet way, not to be authoritarian, to know how to deal with people, to know how to communicate and convince, to be respectful and also practical.

b) Interview with M.Rousseau, Deputy General Manager at ENEDIS in Bordeaux.

Interview on Wednesday, February 22th, from 14pm to 15.30pm. M. Rousseau, the deputy general manager at ENEDIS in Bordeaux, refused to be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis 1999, depuis donc 17 ans maintenant. Tout d'abord au sein du groupe EDF, EDF/GDF services. Puis dans le sud de la France à Toulon et Nimes, où j'ai dirigé ma plus grande équipe, 500 personnes. Aujourd'hui je dirige le raccordement et inginerie de la région Aquitaine Nord, et je suis à la tête d'une équipe de presque 250 personnes ou parfois même plus, presque 300 personnes dans certains cas.»

I have been a manager since 1999, for 17 years now. First of all within the EDF Group, EDF/GDF services. Then in the south of France in Toulon and Nimes, where I directed my biggest team, 500 people. Today I manage the « raccordement et inginerie » service of the Aquitaine North region, and I am at the head of almost 250 persons and sometimes more, nearly 300 people, in some cases.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Maintenant, globalement oui. Avant j'ai rencontré quelques problèmes, notamment dans le sud de la France. Mais je dirais qu'aujourd'hui, je suis satisfait, je donnerais un 7/10.»

Now, overall yes. I have met some problems before, especially in the South of France. But I would say that today I am satisfied, I would give a 7/10.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Oui, globalement oui. Le stress au travail peut se manisfester de différentes façons, collectives ou individuelles. De manière collective, on aura plus des manifestations à travers des mouvements de grève, des pétitions alors qu'individuellement cela peut se voir à travers un mal-être ou pire, un burn out. La médecine du travail nous aide dans ce domaine là. Souvent il s'agit d'une combinaison de problèmes personnels et professionnels.»

Yes, overall yes. Stress at work can be manifested in different ways, collectively or individually. Collectively, we will have strike movements or petitions for example while individually it can be seen through a malaise or worse, a burn out. « La médecine du travail » helps us in this area. This is often a combination of personal and professional problems.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Oui, on peut rencontrer des conflits entre les employés, mais aussi avec des managers de proximité. Par exemple, à Perpignan, j'ai rencontré de forts mouvements de grèves allant même jusqu'aux menaces de mort. Au sein de ce mouvement de grèves, des intérêts individuels se mélangeaient à des intérêts professionnels, ainsi les travailleurs qui ne faisaient pas grèves ont été considérés comme des traîtres, qui se sont désolidarisés et ont ainsi été menacés par les salariés les plus revendicatifs.»

Yes, you may encounter conflicts between employees, but also with local managers. For example, in Perpignan, I encountered strong strike movements and even death threats. During this strike, individual interests were mixed with professional interests, so workers who did not strike were considered as traitors and thus the most demanding workers threatened them.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principale préoccupation est de me poser, écouter les parties prenantes, diagnostic, résolution, adaptation, rappel à l'ordre. Le problème serait si des tensions irreversibles seraient amenées à apparaître. Lors d'un conflit collectif, nous faisons appel au dialogue social, afin de discuter auprès des personnes concernées.»

My main concern is to listen to each part, diagnosis, resolution and adaptation. The problem would be if irreversible tensions would appear. In a collective conflict, we use to participate with the « social dialogue » in order to discuss with the people concerned.

Quel est le type de conflict que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Parfois les conflits sont dûs à une nature revendicative d'une personne mais parfois cela peut être aussi dû à des managers de proximité, peu formés. Certaines qualités sont nécessaires afin de pouvoir gérer des personnes. Il faut être très vigilant sur le harcèlement.»

Sometimes conflicts are due to the personality but sometimes it can also be due to poorly trained local managers. Certain qualities/skills are necessary in order to be able to manage people and we must be very viligant about harassment.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Parfois cela est dû aux caractères des personnes, s'il s'agit de personnes complémentaires ou non. Au sein de l'entreprise nous utilisons ce que l'on appelle le management intergénérationnel: les jeunes maîtrisent mieux les nouveaux moyens de communications et tout ce qui est logiciel et informatique tandis que nos employés plus âgés possèdent l'expérience. Ainsi, ils sont ravis de pouvoir transmettre leur savoir, il s'agit d'une forme de reconnaissance. C'est valorisant et cela donne une expérience aux plus jeunes. Des conflits surgissent aussi dû à des profils identiques, ils sont donc en compétition et cela amène souvent à des conflits. Enfin la communication peut parfois être un frein ou un levier de conflits. Il existe des groupes où l'information circule mieux et d'autres où elle rencontre plus de difficultés. Nous avons trois niveaux hiérarchiques: les managers, les cadres, les responsables équipes et enfin les employés. Toutefois, la prise de conscience se fait sur le terrain. Dans certains cas de mauvaise communication, nous avons été amené à remplacer des managers. Ainsi il est important d'accroître notre présence ponctuelle sur les sites les plus sensibles. La charge de travail est bien calibrée mais pas linéaire. En effet, la charge est plus importante au printemps, automne, fin d'année. Souvent nous ne pouvons pas faire appel à des intérimaires puisqu'il s'agit d'un travail très technique. Des contraintes externes au processus accroissent aussi parfois la charge de travail. Cette charge de travail peut amener à un stress supplémentaire et parfois mêmes des conflits. Nos employés ont souvent la même quantité d'objectifs mais ils varient qualitativement: nos employés seniors auront des affaires plus complexes. Cependant parfois ils doivent travailler avec des organisations extérieures ou d'autres départements et cela peut engendrer des conflits car la collaboration devient difficile, les objectifs étant divergeants. C'est pourquoi nous essayons de proposer désormais des objectifs croisés.»

Sometimes, this is due to the people personality, whether they are complementary or not. Within the company we use what we call intergenerational management: young people have better control of new ways of communication, softwares and computers while our older employees have the experience. Thus, they are happy to be able to transmit their knowledge; it can also be a form of recognition. It is rewarding and it gives an experience to the

youngest. Conflicts arise also from identical profiles, they are therefore in competition and this often leads to conflicts. Finally, communication can sometimes be a source of conflicts. There are groups where information flows better and others where it encounters more difficulties. We have three hierarchical levels: the managers, the executives, the team managers and finally the employees. However, you have to be aware of the existing conflicts, and the best way for that is to be on the field. In some cases of poor communication, we have had to replace managers. Thus it is important to increase our punctual presence on the most sensitive sites. The workload is well calibrated but not linear. Indeed, it is more important in spring, fall and at the end of the year. Often we cannot call on temporary workers because this is a very technical job. External contraints to the process also increase the workload. It can lead to additional stress and sometimes even to conflict. Our employees often have the same amount of objectives but they can vary qualitatively: our senior employees will have more complex businesses. However, sometimes they have to work with outside organizations or other departments and this can lead to conflicts because collaboration becomes difficult, as the objectives are divergent. That's why we are trying to propose cross-objectives.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? **What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?**

«J'utilise différentes techniques:

- Une forte présence terrain, aménager des moments de parole libre comme par exemple des petits-déjeuners.
- Déléguer aux managers de proximités.
- Travailler avec les organisations syndicales.

Pour prévenir ces conflits, nous utilisons aussi:

- Des enquêtes annuelles MyEDF: 40-50 questions. Service par service: 20 personnes.
- Des taux d'absentéisme: si un fort taux, peu d'implication des employés.
- Taux d'accidents du travail: un fort taux peut indiquer du stress, un mal-être…
- Taux de grèves récurrentes.

Ces outils nous permettent de faire un diagnostic rapide. En cas de mauvais résultat, il faut aller très rapidement sur le terrain, prendre la température et utiliser tous les léviers pour les résoudre. Cependant, parfois les décisions dépendent de niveaux supérieurs. Ces conflits sont souvent plus longs et plus violents, comme par exemple à Perpignan.»

I use different techniques:

- A strong field presence, to set up « free moments » of conversation like for example breakfasts.
- Delegate to line managers.
- Work with trade unions.

To prevent these conflicts, we also use:

- My EDF Annuel Surveys: 40-50 questions. Department by department: 20 persons.
- Absenteeism rate: if high rates, little involvement of employees.
- Work accidents rate: A high rate may indicate stress, discomfort…
- Rate of recurrent strikes.

These tools allow us to make a rapid diagnosis. In case of bad results, it is necessary to go very quickly on the field, to take the temperature and to use all the levers to solve them. However, sometimes decisions depend on higher levels. These conflicts are often longer and more violent, as for example in Perpignan.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Nous pouvons faire appel à des managers modérés qui feront la liaison entre la direction et les employés ou à des syndicats afin d'être le plus rationel possible.»

We can use « moderate » managers who will make the link between managers and employees or trade unions in order to be as rational as possible.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Les compétences nécéssaires pour être un bon manager seraient:

- Écoute
- Qualités relationnelles: la personne sait adapter sa communication selon la personne.
- Créer des conditions de travail agréables.
- Être exigeant, avoir une culture du résultat.
- Être exemplaire: pas de fausse note.

Face au conflit:

- Écoute et résistance au stress.
- Défendre l'intérêt de l'entreprise.

- Savoir convaincre.
- Savoir communiquer.

Il faut avoir des qualités de bases mais on peut y travailler en participant à des formations adaptées. L'entreprise propose notamment des formations sur des techniques de communication et dialectique. Tous les ans ou tous les deux ans, l'entreprise propose une formation spécialisée aux managers.»

The skills needed to be a good manager would be:

- Listening
- Relational qualities: the person knows how to adapt his communication according to the person.
- Creating pleasant working conditions.
- Being demanding, having a culture of results.
- Be exemplary: no false note.

When confronting the conflict:

- Listening and resistance to stress.
- Defend the interests of the company.
- Know how to convince.
- Know how to communicate.

It is better if you already have these qualities and you can work on them by training for example. The company offers traning courses on communication and dialectical techniques. Every year or every two years, the company offers specialized traning for managers.

c) Interview with M.Mourlan, manager at Mourlan's company in the Gironde region.

Interview on Thursday, March 9th, from 15h00pm to 15h45pm. The interview with M. Mourlan, the manager at Mourlan's company in the Gironde region, was by phone and so it cannot be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis environ dix ans, manager de personnel et je gère environ 46 personnes.»

I have been a manager for about ten years; staff manager and I manage around 46 persons.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Je suis globalement satisfait du niveau de productivité et performance de mes employés, et sur une échelle de 1 à 10, je donnerais un 8.»

Overall, I am satisfied with the level of productivity and performance of my employees, and on a scale of 1 to 10, I would give an 8.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Non, ils ne se plaignent jamais du stress au travail. Il s'agit d'un travail purement manuel, il n'y a pas de délai ou de travail à la chaine qui pourraient être stressant pour les employés mais ils se plaignent parfois de niveau de bruit très fort, d'un travail long et douloureux mais pas de stress.»

No, they never complain about stress at work. They have purely manual work, there is no delay or line-production work that could be stressful for them but they sometimes complain of very loud noise level, painful work but not stressful work.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Oui cela peut arriver de temps en temps. Ce n'est pas récurrent mais ça peut arriver de temps en temps. Ce sont souvent des problèmes personnels comme par exemple des insultes racistes entre membres du personnel. Cela amène des clashs entre les personnes, et il faut faire très attention à ces conflits car cela peut entraîner des accidents du travail. Un autre type de conflit que l'on peut avoir concerne les femmes, les femmes travaillent principalement dans les bureaux et elles auront plus tendance à avoir des conflits dus à de la jalousie. Ce sont des conflits plus longs et beaucoup plus difficiles à cerner et qui couvent très longtemps.»

Yes, it can happen from time to time. It is not recurring but it can happen from time to time. There are often personal problems such as racist insults between staff members. It brings problems between people, and you must pay close attention to these conflicts because they can lead to accidents at work. Another type of conflict that may occur is between women, women work primarily in the office, and they are more likely to have conflicts due to jealousy. There are longer conflicts and much harder to understand. They are also long-lasting conflicts.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principale préoccupation serait de le résoudre assez rapidement, donc je demande des explications et assez régulièrement je sépare les personnes afin d'éviter que le conflit ne prenne plus d'ampleur et n'affecte plus l'activité et les autres employés.»

My main concern would be to resolve it quickly so I ask for explanations and quite regularly I separate them so that the conflict does not get bigger and does not affect the activity and other employees.

Quel est le type de conflict que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Comme je commentais auparavant, les conflits sont principalement et majoritairement personnels, du à des différences personnelles entre employés. Ce sont néanmoins des conflits épisodiques. Cependant, on peut parfois aussi avoir des conflits professionnels par exemple si les employés n'ont pas le même salaire, les mêmes objectifs. Nous n'avons jamais eu cependant de grève ou de conflits majeurs, de plusieurs personnes à

la fois, ce sont toujours des conflits concernant deux personnes. On peut aussi avoir des conflits commerciaux, avec des clients par exemple, mais ce sont des conflits complètement différents dont la cause est souvent financière. Dans ce cas là, il n'y a pas de problème d'humanité et cela finit souvent aux tribunaux. Les conflits sociaux sont beaucoup plus difficiles et cela peut engendrer un problème très important si les autres employés suivent ou prennent partie dans ces conflits.»

As I said before, conflicts are mainly personal, due to personal differences between employees. They are nonetheless episodic conflicts. However, there may also be professional, for example, if the employees do not have the same salary, the same objectives. Though, we have never had a major strike or conflict between several people at the same time, there are always conflicts involving two people. We can also have commercial conflicts, with clients for example but there are completely different conflicts, which cause is often financial. In this case, there is no human problem and it often ends up in the courts. Social conflicts are much more difficult and it can lead to a very serious problem if other employees follow or take part in these conflicts.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Mes employés parlent peu entre eux du à leur activité, donc ce sont des conflits très basiques dûs à des problèmes personnels souvent différents de l'activité et du cadre du travail. Par exemple, un employé qui a des problèmes à la maison sera plus sur les nerfs et pourra entrer en conflit avec un collègue pour une raison futile. Effectivement on peut aussi avoir certaines fois des conflits liés à l'interdépendance entre des personnes, parfois nos employés sont amenés à travailler en groupe, mais ils ne savent pas tous le faire donc cela peut aussi emmener des conflits. Enfin nous pouvons aussi avoir des conflits en liaison avec l'autorité, avec un manager ou autre mais c'est très rare car nous avons une bonne communication malgré nos différents niveaux hiérarchiques.»

My employees do not speak a lot to each other due to their activity, so there are very basic conflicts due to personal problems often really far from the activity and the work. For example, an employee who has problems at home will be more annoyed and may have a conflict with a colleague for a futile reason. Indeed we can also sometimes have conflicts related to the interdependence between people, sometimes our employees have to work in groups but they do not know how to do it so it can also lead to conflicts. Finally we can also

have conflicts in relation to authority, with a manager or others but it is very rare because we have good communication despite our different hierarchical levels.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?

«Je n'ai pas de technique spéciale pour résoudre ces conflits, il s'agit d'humains et donc il faut pouvoir s'adapter à chaque personne et condition. Il faut savoir détecter le conflit et parfois sortir la personne du groupe, pouvoir parler avec les gens, faire intervenir des intermédiaires en faisant par exemple des réunions. Cependant il s'agit d'un petit groupe d'employés mais aussi d'un petit village donc on sait rapidement tout sur nos employés et leurs problèmes. La présence terrain n'est pas obligatoire et dans certains cas, elle n'est pas très efficace car en tant que patron, les employés ne réagissent pas de la même façon lorsque nous sommes présents et donc nous ne percevons pas les mêmes choses.»

I do not have a special technique to solve these conflicts, it is about humans and therefore it is necessary to be able to adapt to each person and condition. You have to be able to detect the conflict and sometimes get the person out of the group, be able to talk with people, involve intermediaries, for example with meetings. However, it is a small group of employees but also a small village, so it is easier to know everything about our employees and their problems. The presence on the field is not mandatory and in some cases it is not very effective because as a boss, employees do not react the same way when we are present and therefore we do not perceive the same things.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Nous n'avons jamais eu recours à un médiateur mais nous avons recours à des cabinets d'avocat en cas de problèmes sociaux majeurs, même si cela reste très grave. Cependant, nous faisons intervenir plusieurs personnes dans les conflits, afin d'être plus neutre surtout si le conflit est entre un patron et un employé, afin d'éviter la dualité.»

We have never had a mediator, but we are in contact with lawyers in case of major problems. However we involve several people in conflicts, in order to be more neutral especially if the conflict is between a manager and an employee, this way we can avoid duality.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Il n'y a pas de qualités spéciales, car nos employés ont des profils différents, des conflits différents et propres à chacun. L'entreprise est à l'image du patron, donc chacun aura besoin de qualités différentes pour gérer les conflits au sein de son entreprise. Il faut cependant avoir du bon sens et de l'écoute, savoir s'adapter mais aussi savoir voir ce qu'il y a derrière ce conflit afin de le résoudre au mieux. Nous n'avons jamais eu de formation sur le conflit, cela n'a jamais été proposé au sein de notre entreprise même si nous avons eu d'autres formations managériales. Cependant, nous proposons des activités pour favoriser l'entente entre nos employés et réduire les conflits comme par exemple des repas de Noël, des repas en été, des petits déjeuners ou des ateliers, pour créer du lien et de la sympathie.»

There are no special qualities/skills, because our employees have different profiles and different conflicts. The boss influences the company, so everyone will need different qualities and skills to manage conflicts within his own company. However it is necessary to have common sense, to have the capacity to listen to people, to adapt but also to know what is behind this conflict in order to solve it in the best way. We have never had training on conflict, it has never been offered within our company even though we have had other managerial training. However, we offer activities to promote understanding between our employees and reduce conflicts such as Christmas meals, summer meals, breakfasts or workshops to create good relationships between people and sympathy.

d) Interview with M.Groelier, chairman at Canaelec, a company located in Bordeaux, Angoulème and Périgueux.

Interview on Friday, March 24th, from 9h00am to 9h55am. M. Groelier, the chairman at Canaelec, refused to be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je gère des équipes depuis 1994 mais je suis responsable de l'entreprise depuis 2000. J'ai actuellement à ma charge 120 personnes et le maximum a été 140 sans compter les intérimaires.»

I have been managing teams since 1994 but I have been in charge of the company since 2000. I currently manage 120 people and the maximum has been 140, without counting the temporary workers.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Oui mais de manière différente selon les différents sites, par exemple à Périgueux je mettrais une note de 7/10, pour Bordeaux un 9/10 mais pour Angoulème un 5/10. La performance dépend aussi de la mentalité des gens, de leur implication. Les agences ont l'impression d'être moins considérées que le siège, c'est pourquoi maintenant je suis en déplacement à Angoulème du lundi au jeudi.»

Yes, but differently depending on the different locations, for example in Périgueux, I would give a score of 7/10, for Bordeaux a 9/10 but for Angoulème only a 5/10. Performance also depends on the mentality of people and on their involvement. The different offices seem to feel less considered than the headquarters, that's why I am now working in Angouleme from Monday to Thursday.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Non, car comme il s'agit d'une SCOP, les salariés sont associés et le PDG élu donc c'est aussi leur entreprise mais cela n'empêche pas les conflits.»

No, because it is a SCOP, the employees are associated and the CEO elected, therefore it is in some way their company but this does not always prevent conflicts.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Entre employé et employeur, oui. Aujourd'hui nous traversons un moment de difficultés financières et nous avons dû faire appel à un plan de sauvegarde (dette de 7 ans). Nous sommes passés de 55 à 21 employés sur le site d'Angoulème, notamment en réalisant des mutations à Bordeaux. Mais nous avons aussi eu des démissions, des ruptures conventionelles et trois licenciements économiques pour lesquels nous avons du aller aux Prud'hommes. Les conflits sont cependant rares entre les employés, nous n'en avons connu qu'un majeur et nous nous sommes séparés des deux personnes, la principale source de conflit étant la relation chef/employé qui les opposait.»

Between employee and employer, yes. Today we are going through a time of financial difficulties and we had to face a back-up plan (7-year debt). We have reduced our staff, going from 55 employees to 21 in Angoulème, notably by making transfers to Bordeaux. But we also had resignations, breaks and three economic dismissals for which we had to go to the labor court. Conflicts are, however, rare between the employees. We only had one major conflict and we juste fire the two of them. The main source of conflict was the chief/employee relationship that opposed them.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principale préocuppation serait de résoudre le conflict le plus rapidement possible, et de les confronter assez rapidement afin d'éviter que la situation ne s'envenime.»

My main concern would be to resolve the conflict as quickly as possible, and to confront them quickly in order to prevent the situation from getting worse.

Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Il s'agit surtout de conflits professionnels, ils travaillaient à deux et ne s'entendaient pas. Il s'agit de la relation chef/employé dont je vous parlais auparavant.»

It was mainly professional conflicts; they worked in pairs and did not get along. This was the chief/employee relationship I was talking about before.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Nous avons plusieurs types de clients dus à plusieurs types de marchés. Cependant, certaines activités sont plus rentables que d'autres et donc le travail dans ce cas est beaucoup plus gratifiant même si la quantité de travail fournie est la même. Cela produit donc de la frustation chez nos employés. Nous avons aussi des petits conflits dus à de la compétition ou de la jalousie. Cependant la communication au sein du groupe est très forte du fait que nous sommes une SCOP donc les personnes sont au courant de tout ce qui se passe au sein de l'entreprise et cela réduit forcément les conflits. Les employés sont donc moins revendicateurs. Nous avons aussi plusieurs équipes mais elles arrivent à communiquer puisque nous avons des causeries pour la qualité ou la sécurité. J'essaie aussi d'avoir une forte présence sur le terrain et donc une certaine proximité pour comprendre et percevoir le conflit dès son début. Nos équipes sont cependant assez similaires sur le plan de leur background puisque en général ce sont des personnes que nous formons. Nous avons des difficultés à intégrer des personnes d'autres provenances, d'autres entreprises. Nous avons du mal à avoir un mélange de formation mais nous l'avons au niveau de la diversité culturelle puisque nous avons des personnes de toutes nationalités même si la dominance reste tout de même française. Enfin, nous organisons des réunions informelles pour les anniversaires par exemple afin de créer une bonne ambiance de groupe.»

We have several types of customers due to several types of markets. However, some activities are more profitable than others and therefore the work in this case is much more rewarding even if the amount of work provided is the same. This situation produces frustration among our employees. We also have small conflicts due to competition or jealousy. However, communication within the group is very strong because we are a SCOP so people are aware of everything that happens within the company and this necessarily reduces conflicts. Employees are therefore less demanding. We also have several teams but they get to communicate because we organise talks about quality and safety. I also try to have a strong presence on the field and therefore certain proximity to understand and perceive the conflict from the beginning. Our teams are fairly similar in terms of backgrounds, since in general we train our employees before being part of the company. However, we have problems integrating people from other companies or backgrounds. We do not have a mix of backgrounds concerning studies for example but we have it at the cultural level since we have people from different nationalities even if we have still more French people than other

nationalities. Finally we organise informal meetings for birthdays for example to create a good group atmosphere.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?

«Lorsqu'un conflit apparaît, j'essaie d'aller voir les personnes sur le terrain, dans leur environnement plutôt que de les convoquer dans mon bureau. Si un conflit surgit entre deux employés, j'essaie de les convoquer un par un puis de les confronter mais je convoque aussi leur supérieur hiérarchique/conducteur de travaux direct afin que différentes versions ne soient pas données.»

When a conflict occurs, I try to go and see the persons on the field, in their environment rather than make them come to my office. If a conflict arises between two employees, I try to call them one by one and then confront them. But I also call their supervisor in order to avoid people to give different versions.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Extérieure à l'entreprise jamais, non. Au sein de l'entreprise oui. J'essaie de ne pas intervenir directement parfois et donc je fais appel à des niveaux plus bas et plus neutre pour réduire l'ampleur du conflit.»

From outside the company no, never. Within the company yes. I try not to intervene directly every time and so I use people from « lower levels », more neutral in order to reduce the importance of the conflict.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Oui je dirais qu'il existe des compétences spéciales comme par exemple une présence terrain, une certaine sensibilité, être ouvert au dialogue, avoir des capacités de négociation, une vision globale et bien sûr du respect. Il est très difficile pour le département de RH de résoudre des conflits puisqu'ils ne maîtrisent que leur domaine alors qu'un bon manager doit avoir une vision globale et être à même de savoir ce qui se passe dans chaque département. Il doit pouvoir comprendre ses employés. Nous avons eu il y a quelques temps une formation

sur la gestion du conflit mais cela fait un moment maintenant mais c'est une bonne chose pour les encadrants.»

Yes, I would say that there are special skills such as a strong field presence, a certain sensitivity, being open to dialogue, negotiating skills, a global vision and of course respect. It is very difficult for the HR department to resolve conflicts since they only master their domain while a good manager must have a global vision and be able to know what is going on in each department. He must be able to understand his employees. We had some training on conflict management some time ago, but it has been a while now, however, it is a good thing for the supervisors.

e) Interview with M. Marco, director of the technical services at the football club « Girondins de Bordeaux » located in Bordeaux le Haillan.

Interview on Wednesday, March 29th, from 14h30pm to 15h15pm. M. Marco, director of the technical services at the football club « Girondins de Bordeaux », refused to be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis 23 ans maintenant, donc depuis 1993-1994. Le nombre de personnes que je gère peut varier, aujourd'hui en moyenne j'ai une quarantaine de personnes du lundi au vendredi et à peu près quatre-vingts les jours de match.»

I have been a manager for 23 years now, so since 1993-1994. The number of people I manage can vary, today on average I have about forty people from Monday to Friday and about eighty on match days.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Oui je suis très satisfait du niveau de productivité de mes employés, j'ai la change d'avoir le budget et les moyens pour choisir mes employés et de leur proposer des formations régulières, ainsi je donnerais un 8/10 par rapport à leur performance globale.»

Yes, I am very satisfied with the level of productivity of my employees. I have the chance to have the budget and the means to choose my employees and I offer them regular trainings, so I would give an 8/10 for their performance.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Non, jamais. Je considère que ce qui n'est pas bon pour moi, ne l'est pas pour les autres non plus. Ainsi je procure toujours adapter mes effectifs et mes moyens à notre charge de travail, je fais tourner mes équipes et j'anticipe les moments de l'année où je sais que nous aurons plus de travail. Notre seul source de stress peut être provoqué par d'autres services, départements qui eux ne respectent pas les délais, ou s'organisent différement et qui donc peuvent provoquer du stress chez mes employés car ils doivent faire face à des situations inattendus. Notre travail quotidien n'est donc pas une source de stress pour nos employés.»

No, never. I consider that what is not good for me, is not good for others either. I always adapt my staff and resources to our workload, I rotate my teams and I anticipate the moments of the year when I know we will have more work. Other departments, which do not respect deadlines or organize themselves differently and which can cause stress to my employees because they have to deal with unexpected situations, can be one of our only source of stress. Our daily work is not a source of stress for our employees.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Il est très rare que nous ayons des conflits entre nos employés. Cela peut nous arriver par exemple avec d'autres départements ou services, mais souvent avec une intervention des deux supérieurs, le conflit est vite réglé.»

It is very rare that we have conflicts between our employees. This can happen for example with other departments or services, but often, with an intervention from the two superiors, the conflict is quickly resolved.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principale préoccupation serait de vite régler ce conflit. Le danger devient très important lorsque le conflit se développe dans le dos du manager et s'il ne parvient pas à sentir ce conflit, à l'anticiper et ainsi à trouver une solution, cela peut mener à une très forte dégradation des relations et de la situation.»

My main concern would be to quickly resolve this conflict. The danger becomes very important when the conflict is behind the back of the manager and if he fails to feel this conflict, to anticipate it and thus to find a solution, this can lead to a very serious deterioration of the relations and the situation.

Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Cela fait un moment que nous n'avons pas eu de conflit mais il y a un moment, nous avions des conflits principalement entre employés. Souvent, il s'agit de nouveau personnel qui ne respecte pas les valeurs et process des anciens, des règles imposées, surtout en matière de sécurité. On peut aussi avoir des conflits du à des différences personnelles comme par exemple la religion. Nous avons des équipes avec une forte mixité mais parfois les

générations plus anciennes ont du mal à accepter certaines opinions ou différences. La jalousie peut aussi être un exemple de ces conflits là. Nos employés ont pratiquement tous le même niveau de salaire, mais ne font pas tous la même chose de cet argent là et cela peut créer de la jalousie au sein du groupe. Enfin nous avons aussi des conflits avec des organismes extérieurs mais dans ce cas là, le conflit est plus facile à régler. Par exemple, cela est souvent du à un travail baclé et donc dans ce cas là nous imposons des sanctions à l'organisme extérieur.»

We did not have a conflict for a while, but a while ago, we had conflicts mainly between employees. Often, the new staff does not respect the values and processes of the old ones, and the rules imposed, especially in terms of security. We can also have conflicts due to personal differences such as religion. We have teams with a strong diversity and sometimes, older generations have difficulties to accept certain opinions or differences. Jealousy can also be an example of conflict. Our employees have more or less the same level of wages, but all of them do not use the money the same way, and this can create jealousy within the group. Finally, we also have conflicts with external organizations, but in this case, the conflict is easier to resolve. For example this is often due to a botched job and therefore in this case we impose sanctions to the external organizations.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Nos principaux conflits sont souvent dus à une mauvaise communication, par exemple, comme je mentionnais auparavant les anciennes générations ont parfois du mal à s'entendre avec les plus jeunes et cela peut ammener à des conflits. Une meilleur écoute et communicaiton reduierait sans doute ces problèmes. Cependant, nous n'avons aucun problème d'autorité puisque tout le monde a pratiquement le même salaire et des niveaux de responsabilités similaires. Je considère ainsi que nous avons plus des moments de débat que de réels conflits.»

Our main conflicts are often due to poor communication, for example, as I mentioned earlier, older generations sometimes find it difficult to get along with the younger ones and this can lead to conflict. A better listening and communication would probably reduce these problems. However we do not have problems of authority since everyone has more or less the same wage and similar levels of responsibility. I consider that we have more moments of debate than real conflicts.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? **What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?**

«J'essaie de toujours séparer les personnes. Il est important d'avoir une bonne comunication avec ses équipes. Ainsi je reçois une par une les personnes concernées par le conflit et je donne des conseils à chacun pour ammener un compromis. A la suite des deux ou plusieurs entretiens, j'analyse le conflit puis je négocie avec les personnes ensembles dans mon bureau et nous arrivons à un accord, une action à mettre en place. Si il s'agit d'un conflit important, lorsque nous sommes arrivés à un compromis, je réunis le groupe afin de communiquer la décision, les causes et conséquences de ce conflit mais aussi afin d'éviter les ragots et que le conflit ne se reproduise. J'essaie d'avoir une discussion avec l'ensemble du groupe.»

I always try to separate people. It is important to have a good communication with your team. Thus I receive one by one the persons concerned by the conflict and I give advices to each one in order to find a compromise. After two or more interviews, I analyze the conflict and negociate with the persons together in my office, and we come to an agreemeent, an action to be put in place. If it is a major conflcit, when we have reached a compromise, I gather the group to communicate the decision, the causes and consequences of this conflict, in order to avoid gossips and prevent the conflict to arise again. I try to have a discussion with the whole group.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? **Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?**

«En générale la personne qui m'aide à résoudre les conflits et que je considère plus neutre est mon assistante. Elle a une forte culture d'entreprise et de part son age, une forte expérience/recul et savoir-faire. Elle agit comme un médiateur, un lien entre les différentes parties.»

In general the person who helps me to resolve conflicts and whom I consider more neutral is my assistant. She has a strong corporate culture and by her age, a strong experience and know-how. She acts as a mediator, a link between the different parties.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? **What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?**

«Je dirais qu'il y a trois compétences majeurs. Dans un premier temps, savoir s'entourer, avoir des gens compétents et pouvoir écouter différentes opinions afin de pouvoir partager, débattre et enfin évoluer. Ensuite il faut avoir de réelles compétences et qualifications afin d'être respecté et d'avoir une certaine authorité au sein de son entreprise. Par authorité, j'entends un respect, une vision et en aucun cas, il ne faut être authoritaire mais au contraire laisser ses équipes participer dans tous les processus. Enfin, il est très important d'être à l'écoute, de connaître ses employés afin d'avoir leur confiance mais aussi de les faire grandir et évoluer. Ainsi il est nécessaire d'avoir un bon dialogue, un bon échange, être ouvert au dialogue et abordable et cela passe souvent par une forte présence terrain et une certaine proximité. Il faut aussi savoir manager et déléguer. Nous avons régulièrement des formations par les ressources humaines, elles sont très importantes car nous avons différents corps de métier et il est important de pouvoir coordonner, comprendre et diriger nos différentes équipes. Cependant, la gestion du conflit est un travail quotidien.»

I would say that there are three major skills. At first, it is important to be well surrounded, to have competent persons in your team and to be able to listen to different opinions in order to be able to share, debate and finally evolve. Then you have to have real skills and qualifications in order to be respected and have some authority in within your company. By authority, I mean respect and vision, and no authoritarian, we should let our team participate in all the processes. Finally it is very important to be attentive, to know his employees in order to be trusted by them but also to make them grow and evolve. So it is necessary to have a good dialogue, a good exchange, to be open and available, and this often requires a strong field presence and certain proximity. You need to know how to manage but also delegate. Human resources regularly train us. These trainings are very important because we have different type of jobs and it is important to be able to coordinate, understand and direct our different teams. However, conflict management is a daily task.

f) Interview with Ms. Lafarge, Reception and Ticketing Manager at « Congrès et Expositions de Bordeaux» located in Bordeaux.

Interview on Wednesday, April 5th, from 15h00pm to 15h50pm. Ms. Lafarge, reception and ticketing manager at « Congrés et expositions de Bordeaux », refused to be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis le 1er Janvier 2016 et je gère donc actuellement 4 personnes. Lorsque nous avons un événement, il m'arrive de gérer jusqu'à environ 70 employés temporaires. Cependant je suis cadre depuis 2008.»

I am a manager since the 1st January 2016 and I currently manage 4 people. When we have an event, I manage up to around 70 temporary employees. However I am an executive since 2008.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Je suis pas totalement satisfaite du niveau de performance de mes employés car je n'ai pas choisi mes employés. Cependant ils sont dans l'ensemble motivés même si parfois nous sommes amenés à revoir nos objectifs. Je donnerais donc un 7/10.»

I am not totally satisfied with the level of performance of my employees because I didn't choose my employees. However, they are generally motivated, even though we sometimes have to review our objectives. I would give a 7/10.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Non, ils ne se plaignent pas de stress au travail. Nous avons un travail operationnel, donc nous n'avons pas la même pression que les commerciaux par exemple. Notre stress se manifeste plus par la necessité de s'adapter au terrain, la mise en place de l'événement et enfin l'augmentation de la charge de travail sur une période. Mais en général, il n'existe pas un réel stress pour notre travail.»

No, they do not complain about stress at work. We have an operational job, so we do not have the same pressure as the sales people for example. Our stress is manifested more by

the need of adaptation to the field, the setting up of the event and finally the increase of the workload over a period. But in general, there is no real stress for our work.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Non, pas souvent mais cela peut arriver. Nous sommes dans une période plutôt bonne, car nous n'avons jamais ou très peu de conflits.»

No, not often, but it can happen. We are in a quite good time, because we never have conflicts or very few.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principale préoccupation est le résultat. Nous avons très peu de conflits mais nous avons des désaccords parfois, par exemple sur l'action à faire ou la manière de le faire. Ma préoccupation à ce moment là est de faire l'action et de respecter notre objectif.»

My main concern is the result. We have very few conflicts, but we sometimes have disagreements, for example on what to do or how to do it. My concern at this point is to do the action and respect our goal.

Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Nous avons plus de conflits manager-employé que employé-employé. Nos employés ne font pas les mêmes choses donc elles n'ont pas les mêmes objectifs. De plus il leur arrive de travailler en groupe mais du à leur personnalité, les conflits sont très rares. De plus le manager doit organiser le travail de chacun afin d'éviter les conflits. Nos conflits les plus récurrents sont cependant avec nos employés en CDD mais la solution est beaucoup plus rapide puisque en cas de petit conflit, du par exemple à des absences récurrentes, on les informe qu'on ne le reprendra plus, pour des conflits plus grave, comme par exemple le vol de la caisse, on a une confrontation directe puis un licenciement immédiat.»

We have more manager-employee conflicts than employee-employee ones. Our employees do not do the same things so they do not have the same objectives. Moreover, they sometimes work in groups, but because of their personality, conflicts are very rare. In addition, the manager must organize the work of each one in order to avoid conflicts. Our most recurrent conflicts are with our employees that have fixed-term contracts, but the

solution is much faster, since in case of small conflict, for example with recurring absences, they are informed that they will not be renewed or employed again, for more serious conflicts, such as a theft of cash, we have direct confrontation and then an immediate dismissal.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Nos désaccords sont principalement du à un travail cyclique. En effect nous faisons face à des périodes de tensions du à ces cycles mais nous avons l'habitude de faire face à ces cycles, et donc nous savons faire la part des choses. Cela fait partie des valeurs de l'entreprise: respect et acceptation. Nous acceptons d'ailleurs la diversité au sein de nos équipes, car nous pensons que la compétence ne dépend ni du sexe, ni de la religion, ni d'aucun autre critère.»

Our disagreements are mainly due to our cyclical work. In fact we are facing periods of tension due to these cycles but we are accustomed to face these cycles, and therefore we know how to balance these situations. This is part of the company's values: respect and tolerance/acceptance. We also accept the diversity within our teams, because we believe that competences do not depend on sex, religion or any other criterion.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?

«Il est très important d'avoir une très bonne comunication. Cela peut passer par des échanges individuels ou collectifs et chacun contribue au bon fonctionnement de l'équipe et de l'entreprise. Il faut que chacun puisse trouver sa place, pour être receptif au travail et rentable. Enfin lors d'un conflit grave, je pense qu'il est nécessaire d'agir directement en forçant la confrontation directe.»

It is very important to have a very good communication. This can be achieved through individual or collective exchanges and each one should contribute to the smooth functioning of the team and the company. Everyone must find his or her place, in order to be receptive to the work and make it profitable. Finally, during a serious conflict, I think it is necessary to act directly by forcing direct confrontation.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Nous faisons toujours appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre et il s'agit dans beaucoup de cas de mon supérieur hiérarchique. Il a les compétences nécessaires et une neutralité suffisante pour pouvoir intervenir lors de conflits importants. Nous n'avons jamais eu appel à un médiateur mais nous avons la possibilité de faire appel à un délégué du personnel ou à un avocat dans le cas de conflits graves. Cela ne nous est jamais arrivé malgré un 35% de renouvellement du staff au cours des dernières années.»

We always call on a third person, which is more neutral and in many cases it is my superior. He has the necessary skills and sufficient neutrality to intervene in important conflicts. We have never had a mediator but we have the possibility to call a staff representative or a lawyer in case of a serious conflict. This has never happened to us despite a 35% of renewal of staff in recent years.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Je dirais principalement l'écoute, mais aussi le recul. Il ne faut pas répondre à chaud et ne pas hésiter à se faire aider si besoin. La formation est une étape clé afin d'avoir les connaissances pour gérer des conflits mais je pense que tu nais manager ou non. Ici au sein de l'entreprise nous avons eu deux formations de manager en 2016. La notion de gestion de conflit est évoqué mais très peu approfondi. Je pense que le conflit devient plus important lorsque le manager est à un niveau hiérarchique très élevé puisqu'il a moins le contact avec le terrain et avec ses employés.»

I would say mainly listening, but also the hindsight. You should not respond on the spot and do not hesitate to be helped if needed. Training is a key step in getting the knowledge to handle conflicts but I think you are born manager or not. Here in the company we had two managerial trainings in 2016. The notion of conflict management is mentioned but not in-depth. I think that the conflict becomes more important when the manager is at a very high hierarchical level since he has less contact with the field and with his employees.

g) Interview with M. Chiron, Head Manager of « Alliance Inox Industrie», a company located in Bordeaux.

Interview on Friday, October 13th, from 8h00am to 9h30am (including a visit of his plant). M. Chiron, head manager of « Alliance Inox Industrie », refused to be recorded. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis 2004, avant j'ai été directeur commercial pendant une dizaine d'années. Je gère une quinzaine de personnes fixes, plus en moyenne deux ou trois sous-traitants et deux intérims, soit une vingtaine de personne.»

I have been a manager since 2004, before I was a sales manager for a decade. I manage about fifteen fixed people, and two or three subcontractors and two more interns, that is to say twenty people.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Je suis très satisfait, je donnerais un 8/10. Ils ont un très bon niveau de performance. Cela est surement du au fait que le temps gagné sur le temps de fabrication est rémunéré sous forme de primes annuelles. Cela représente entre 5% et 10% de temps gagné par an. La prime est donnée au groupe complet mais la présence individuelle est valorisée. En effet, si par exemple un employé est absent sur la durée d'un projet, il ne recevra pas la prime liée au temps gagné sur celui-ci. Cela réduit le taux d'absentéisme et accroit la motivation.»

I am very satisfied I would give an 8/10. They have a very good level of performance. This is probably due to the fact that the time saved on manufacturing time is paid in the form of annual premiums. This represents between 5% and 10% of the time earned per year. The premium is given to the full group but the individual presence is valued. Indeed, if for example an employee is absent over the duration of a project, he will not receive the bonus related to the time earned on it. It reduces the rate of absenteeism and increases motivation.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? **Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?**

«Non, en général ils ne se plaignent pas du stress au travail. Il n'y a pas de pression managérielle sur eux. La pression est plutôt individuelle. Il s'agit d'un travail très technique donc la pression pourrait conduire à un risque plus élevé d'erreurs, malfaçons ou une baisse de niveau de qualité. Chaque individu a sa propre technique et nous le prenons en compte lors de la décision d'équipe par rapport à la productivité. Ainsi nous nous adaptons aux capacités de chacun. De plus nous formons de manière continu des employés, sous contrats d'apprentissage donc nos employés ont aussi des responsabilité de ce côté là.»

No, they usually do not complain about stress at work. There is no managerial pressure on them. The pressure is rather individual. This a very technical job so the pressure could lead to a higher risk of errors, poor workmanship or a drop in quality level. Each individual has his or her own technique and we take it into account when making a team decision in relation to productivity. Thus we adapt ourselves to the capacities of each one. In addition, we train employees continuously on « apprenticeship contracts », so our employees also have responsibilities in this regard. »

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? **Do you often have conflicts among employees?**

«Non jamais, il y a une très bonne ambiance entre nos employés donc les conflits sont très rares voir inexistants. Si jamais un conflit surviendrait, j'interviendrais de manière directe.»

Never, there is a very good atmosphere between our employees so conflicts are very rare or nonexistent. If a conflict arises, I would intervene directly.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? **What is your main concern when a conflict appears?**

«Ma principale préoccupation est le bien-être de mes employés. Ils sont la base de notre entreprise donc ma volonté est qu'ils soient heureux de venir travailler avec nous. Il peut exister des petits conflits entre eux mais c'est très vite résolu. Si jamais il s'agierait d'un conflit plus important, j'interviendrais de manière directe, en negociant ou médiant ces conflits. Cependant il y a une très forte entraide entre mes employés et un très fort esprit d'équipe.»

My main concern is the well being of my employees. They are the basis of our business so I really want them to be happy to come to work. There may be small conflicts between them but it is very quickly resolved. If there was a greater conflict, I would intervene directly, and negociate or mediate these conflicts. However, there is a very strong mutual assistance between my employees and a very strong team spirit.

Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Un conflit pourrait surgir du à une dépendance au niveau du travail. Cependant, nos employés ont quand même un travail individuel, un par cuve, il n'existe pas de travail à la chaîne. C'est un travail beaucoup plus valorisant pour chacun et permet aussi une plus grande polyvalence. Cependant certains employés sont plus techniques que d'autres et donc plus compétents.»

Conflict could arise from dependency at work. However our employees still have individual works, one per tank, and there is no work chain. It is a much more rewarding job for everyone and also allows greater versatility. However some employees are more technical than others and therefore more competent.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Mes employés sont très spécialisés mais polyvalents. De plus les objectifs sont adaptés à chaque employé, lors de la réunion planning de chaque vendredi. Le chef d'atelier a un certain contrôl et une volonté d'organisation mais il n'est pas autoritaire, ainsi les conflits sont très réduits. La base est aussi une très bonne communication. Ma porte est toujours ouverte, nous avons de très bonnes relations et je suis très présent sur le terrain. Il faut aussi donner de l'importance à chaque employé car ils représentent la force de l'entreprise.»

My employees are very specialized but versatile. In addition, the objectives are tailored to each employee during a meeting each Friday. The workshop manager has some control and leads with the organization of the work, but he is not authoritarian so the conflicts are very limited. The basis is also a very good communication. My door is always open, we have very good relationships and I am very present on the field. It is also crucial to give importance to each employee as they represent the strength of the company.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? **What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?**

«Je pense qu'il faut être compréhensif et laisser un temps de réflexion afin de prendre la meilleure décision pour tout le monde. L'implication de l'équipe complète est nécessaire je pense. Souvent eux-mêmes trouvent les solutions à leurs propres problèmes ou conflits. Ils ont un poids important dans la décision. L'équipe est « petite » donc c'est aussi plus facile. D'ailleurs j'ai une forte volonté de rester « petits » afin de valoriser le contact et la qualité finale.»

I think we have to be understanding and allow time for reflection in order to make the best decision for everyone. The involvement of the complete team is necessary I think. They often find themselves the solutions to their own problems or conflicts. They have a significant weight in the decision. The team is « small » so it is also easier. Besides, I have a strong will to remain « small » in order to value the contact and the quality.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? **Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?**

«Pour des sujets très précis. Par exemple, j'ai développé une mutuelle bien avant qu'elle soit obligatoire mais il existe une forte variation des conditions, des prix, etc. Ce qui avait crée une gêne, un desaccord voir un conflit entre nous et nos employés. Vu la difficulté à justifier ces variations, nous avons fait intervenir une tierce personne, compétente sur le sujet afin de transmettre de meilleures explications et une plus grande neutralité sur ce sujet pas directement lié à notre production.»

Only for very specific subjects. For example, I developed a health insurance a long time before it became compulsory. However, there was a great variation of conditions and prices each year and it created disagreements or conflicts between our employees and us. Given the difficulty in justifying these variations, we called in a third party, competent on the subject to transmit better explanations and more neutrality on this subject that was not directly related to our production.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? **What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?**

«Je pense que les principales compétences seraient les suivantes: l'anticipation et la communication par le dialogue et la proximité. Le respect mutuel est aussi important. Enfin

parfois il faut être directif sans être autoritaire, en effet après avoir écouté et analysé, la décision revient quand même au manager. Toutes ces compétences permettent la proximité, la diversification et le sur-mesure. Je pense que l'expérience aporte ces compétences et pas tant l'école. Il faut toujours avoir une approche qui favorisera les deux parties. J'apprends beaucoup aussi à travers le syndicat national de la chaudronnerie car les participants sont parfois des gens extérieurs, experts dans d'autres domaines et je peux ainsi avoir une autre vision sur certains aspects de notre métier.»

I think the main skills would be anticipation and communication through dialogue and proximity. Mutual respect is also important. Finally, sometimes it is necessary to be directive without being authoritarian, indeed after listening and analysing the situation, the decision still returns to the manager. All these skills allow proximity, diversification and tailor-made solutions. I think the experience develops these skills, and not so much university. There must always be an approach that will benefit both parties. I also learn a lot through the national « boilermaking » trade unions because the participants are sometimes external people, experts in other fields and I can thus have another vision on certain aspects of our profession.

h) Interview with Ms. Tremoulinas, Manager at the Charles Perrens Hospital, located in Bordeaux.

Interview on Friday, October 3rd, from 18h00am to 19h15pm. Ms. Tremoulinas, manager at the Charles Perrens Hospital, refused to be recorded due to the confidentiality of the data exposed. The interview was in French as it is his mother tongue and will be summarized. The interview will be translated to English.

Depuis quand êtes-vous manager? Combien de personnes gérez-vous? How long have you been a manager? How many persons do you manage?

«Je suis manager depuis 5 ans à l'hôpital Charles Perrens. Je gère une équipe de six personnes ayant pour objectifs d'accompagner les adolescents qui souffrent de troubles mentaux.»

I have been a manager for 5 years at Charles Perrens Hospital. I manage a team of six people whose goal is to accompany adolescents with mental disorders.

Êtes-vous satisfait du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés? Are you satisfied with the level of productivity/performance of your employees?

«Oui, je suis très satisfaite du niveau de performance de mon équipe, sur une échelle de 1 à 10, je mettrais 8 car il y a une certaine cohésion et solidarité entre employés, c'est ce qui fait la force de l'équipe et son excellente performance malgré des conditions de travail parfois compliquées. Il est tout de même difficile de parler de productivité car on n'a pas de résultats quantitatifs à atteindre mais notre niveau de performance pourrait être défini grâce à la qualité du travail fourni et le bien-être de nos adolescents.»

Yes, I am very satisfied with the level of performance of my team, on a scale of 1 to 10, I would put 8 because there is certain cohesion and solidarity between employees, that makes the strength of the team and its excellent performance despite sometimes complicated working conditions. It is still difficult to talk about productivity because we do not have quantitative results to achieve but our level of performance could be defined thanks to the quality of the work provided and the well being of our teenagers.

Vos employés se plaignent-ils du stress au travail? Do your employees often complain about stress at work? And how?

«Oui, parfois, car notre métier est compliqué pour différentes raisons comme par exemple le manque de personnel ou le manque de matériel. Le nombre d'enfants augmente

d'année en année mais les moyens tant humains que matériels n'évoluent pas. De plus c'est un métier qui éxige un engagement émotionnel important.»

Yes, sometimes, because our job is complicated for various reasons such as the lack of staff or lack of equipment. The number of children is increasing year by year but the means, both human and material, are not changing. Moreover, it is a job that demands a lot of emotional commitment.

Avez-vous souvent des conflits entre vos employés? Do you often have conflicts among employees?

«Non, rarement, car comme j'ai pu le dire auparavant la cohésion et la solidarité caractérisent mon equipe.»

No, rarely, because as I said before, cohesion and solidarity characterize my team.

Quelle est votre principale préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît? What is your main concern when a conflict appears?

«Ma principal préoccupation est que cela impacte l'ensemble de l'équipe et crée une mauvaise ambiance mais aussi que cela influe sur la qualité de leurs travails et du service apporté au patient. Nous avons un métier au sein duquel nous sommes en contact direct avec nos patients mais aussi avec l'ensemble du personnel. Nous mangeons ensemble, faisons des gardes ensemble et partageons donc beaucoup de moments. Ainsi un conflit peut avoir une influence sur l'ensemble de l'équipe et sur leur travail. C'est pourquoi il est très important d'anticiper le conflit ou de le résoudre au plus vite.»

My main concern is that it would impact the entire team and create a bad atmosphere but also affect the quality of their work and the service they provide to the patient. We have a job in which we are in direct contact with our patients but also with all the staff. We eat together, do some guards together and so share a lot of time. Thus a conflict can have an influence on the whole team and on their work. That is why it is very important to anticipate the conflict or resolve it as soon as possible.

Quel est le type de conflit que vos employés rencontrent au travail? What kind of conflict do employees have at work?

«Le peu de conflits que j'ai pu rencontré sont surtout dus à des différents personnels comme par exemple lors de la sélection des jours de vacances surtout pour des dates importantes comme les période de l'été ou Noël. Donc nous avons mis en place un système

de partage qui permet de résoudre ce type de conflits. De plus comme j'expliquais auparavant, nous sommes tout le temps en contact entre nous, une personne peut avoir une mauvaise journée et le répercuter sur son collègue. Mais cela reste assez rare car nous sommes avant tout là pour nous entraider et partager nos moments de travail afin de soulager notre quotidien.»

The few conflicts that I have encountered are mainly due to different personalities such as for example when selecting holiday days especially for important dates such as the summer period or Christmas. So we have set up a sharing system that resolves this type of conflict. Moreover, as I explained before, we are always in contact with each other, a person can have a bad day and pass it on to his colleague. But this case is still rare because we are here to help each other and share our moments of work to relieve our daily work.

Quelle est selon vous la principale source de conflit au sein de votre organisation? What are the main sources of conflict in your organization?

«Je dirais principalement la cohabitation constante entre employés et la dépendance constante les uns des autres. Par exemple, certains employés sont qualifiés pour certaines choses, d'autres ont d'autres capacités mais tous travaillent constamment entre eux ce qui inévitablement peut amener à des petites discussions ou conflits. Mais cela reste peu important car nous respectons tous profondément le travail des autres. Ainsi tous nos employés ont des personnalités différentes et les désaccords sont donc normaux tant qu'ils restent au stade de désaccord. Souvent ce n'est même pas au niveau du travail mais plutôt sur les temps de pauses ou discussions.»

I would say mainly the constant cohabitation between employees and the constant dependence of each other. For example, some employees are qualified for certain things; others have other abilities but all work constantly together, which inevitably can lead to small discussions or conflicts. But there are not important conflicts because we all deeply respect the work of the others. Thus all our employees have different personalities and disagreements are normal as long as they remain at this stage. It is often not even during the work time but rather on breaks or discussions.

Quelles techniques utilisez-vous pour résoudre ces conflits? What techniques do you use to resolve conflicts?

«Je considère qu'un bon manager doit être une interface de communication. Je privilégie toujours le dialogue car je travaille avec des adultes et non pas des enfants, donc

tous comprennent les enjeux de notre travail, nos responsabilités et essayent de collaborer au mieux. La communication est primordiale pour résoudre les conflits mais aussi pour les anticiper. J'opte toujours pour réunir les deux parties et nous discutons ensemble pour trouver des terrains d'entente.»

I consider that a good manager must be a communication interface. I always favor dialogue because I work with adults and not children, so everyone understands the issues of our work, our responsibilities and try to collaborate at best. Communication is essential to resolve conflicts but also to anticipate them. I always choose to bring the two parties together and we talk to find a common ground.

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits? Do you often use the intervention of a neutral person to resolve conflicts?

«Je n'ai jamais eu à faire appel à une tierce personne car comme je le disais nous n'avons que des petits désaccords ou discussions. Ainsi nous n'avons jamais eu la nécessité de faire intervenir une personne externe ou interne à notre groupe. De plus, je considère que je connais bien mes employés, qu'ils me font confiance et que nous sommes un petit groupe donc la communication est plus facile que dans le cas de multinationales ou grands groupes.»

I never had to call a third person because as I said we have only small disagreements or discussions. Thus we never had the need to involve an external or internal person to our group. In addition, I consider that I know my employees well; that they trust me and that we are a small group so the communication is easier than in the case of multinationals or large groups.

Quel type de compétences/qualités pensez-vous qu'un manager doit avoir afin d'être capable de gérer des conflits? What kind of skills do you think that a manager should have to be able to manage conflicts?

«Je dirais qu'il doit avoir deux compétences primoridales: la communication et l'empathie. Un bon manager doit savoir communiquer avec son équipe mais aussi se mettre à la place de l'autre, et comprendre les intérêts de chacun. Les relations sont très importantes car la confiance permet d'aborder certains sujets plus facilement et de communiquer plus librement. Au niveau des formations, nous avons souvent des séminaires, des formations mais pas forcément sur le thème du management, plutôt sur les compétences propres à notre métier. Je pense que certaines choses peuvent s'apprendre, comme par exemple des

techniques pour affronter les conflits mais la personnalité du manager aura forcément un impact sur ses capacités et sur sa façon d'aborder les problèmes.»

I would say that he must have two main skills: communication and empathy. A good manager must know how to communicate with his team but also put himself in the shoes of the other, and understand the interests of everyone. Good relationships are very important because trust makes the approach to certain topics easier and the communication more freely. At the level of training, we often have seminars but not necessarily on the theme of management, rather on the skills specific to our job. I think that some things can be learned, such as techniques for confronting conflict, but the personality of the manager will inevitably have an impact on his abilities and his approach to problems.

9.3 Online Questionnaire

La gestion du conflit en entreprise

*Obligatoire

Sexe *

○ Masculin

○ Féminin

Votre âge

Votre réponse

Quel est le plus haut niveau d'étude que vous ayez atteint ? *

○ BAC

○ BAC +2

○ BAC +3

○ BAC +5

○ Autre :

À quel secteur appartient votre entreprise ? *

○ Agroalimentaire

○ Banque / Assurance

○ Bois - Papier - Carton - Imprimerie

○ Chimie / Parachimie

○ Commerce / Négoce / Distribution

○ Édition / Communication / Multimédia

○ Électronique / Électricité

○ Études et Conseils

○ Industrie Pharmaceutique

○ Informatique - Télécoms

○ Machines et équipements / Automobile

○ Métallurgie / Travail du métal

○ Plastique / Caoutchouc

○ Services aux entreprises

○ Textile

○ Transport / Logistique

○ Autre :

Type d'organisation *

○ Publique

○ Privée

Depuis combien de temps êtes-vous manager ? *

○ 1 à 5 ans

○ 6 à 10 ans

○ 11 à 15 ans

○ 15 à 20 ans

○ Plus de 20 ans

Combien de personnes gérez-vous ? *

○ 1 à 5 personnes

○ 6 à 10 personnes

○ 11 à 20 personnes

○ 21 à 50 personnes

○ 51 à 100 personnes

○ 101 à 250 personnes

○ Plus de 251 personnes

Êtes-vous satisfait(e) du niveau de productivité/performance de vos employés ? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Pas satisfait(e) du tout	○	○	○	○	○	Extrêmement satisfait(e)

Vos employés se plaignent-ils de stress au travail ? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Jamais	○	○	○	○	○	Régulièrement

Si oui, quelles en sont les raisons principales ?

Votre réponse

Avez-vous des conflits au sein de votre équipe ? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Jamais	○	○	○	○	○	Régulièrement

Quelle est votre plus grande préoccupation lorsqu'un conflit apparaît ? *

○ En déterminer la cause

○ L'impact qu'il aura sur la performance de vos employés

○ Trouver une solution pour le résoudre

○ L'impact qu'il aura sur votre équipe

○ Autre : _____

Quel type de conflit rencontrez-vous majoritairement sur votre lieu de travail ? *

○ Entre employés

○ Entre les employés et leur manager

○ Entre différentes personnes d'un groupe ou d'un département

○ Entre différents départements de votre organisation

○ Entre différentes organisations/entreprises

○ Autre : _____

Quelles sont les principales sources de conflit au sein de votre entreprise ? Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☐ La spécialisation de vos employés

☐ Des objectifs différents

☐ L'interdépendance entre employés, départements ou organisations

☐ L'autorité

☐ La communication

☐ Autre :

Quelles sont les techniques que vous utilisez pour résoudre ces conflits ? Plusieurs réponses possibles. *

☐ Vous les ignorez

☐ Vous confrontez les personnes

☐ Vous essayez de trouver un compromis

☐ Vous prenez une décision seul

☐ Autre : _____

Faites-vous appel à une tierce personne, plus neutre, afin de vous aider à résoudre ces conflits ? *

	1	2	3	4	5	
Jamais	○	○	○	○	○	Régulièrement

Si oui, quel type d'intervention utilisez-vous ?

Votre réponse

Quel type de compétences sont selon vous indispensables pour un manager ? Plusieurs réponses possibles. *

- ☐ Capacités analytiques
- ☐ Capacités de communication
- ☐ Capacités relationnelles
- ☐ Capacités de négociation
- ☐ Autre :

Merci pour votre participation !

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