

Episode 111: Settle fights between teams?

Sometimes we find ourselves stuck in between two fighting teams.
If we do not work for either one, how do we resolve the battle?



1. Should you join the fight?

If your boss is not shared with either team, ask if this is a fight to engage in.

Before you engage, ask yourself three questions with YES or NO.

- ♦ Do you know the solution to the problem?
- ♦ Are you viewed well by both sides?
- ♦ Is the issue they are discussing, really what they are fighting about?

If the answer to any of these have the answer NO, then take care before you engage.

Now, you may be more senior than all the fight factions and feel the need to help.

If that's true, you may want to talk to your peer managers and let them deal with and fix it.

You may be able to help, but you could frustrate people and not solve the problem.

2. What approach should you take?

You should not solve the problem - the trick is that you need the fighting teams to solve the problems themselves.

Your job is to help or facilitate that resolution. Here are some guidelines:

1. Good relationships 1st - if you want a resolution to last, so must the relationships.
2. Separate people and problems - they have different resolutions.
3. Identify motives: Understand why people are taking the positions they are taking.
4. Two ears, one mouth: You need to start by listening and not talking.
5. Be fact based: Listen to the emotions but don't confuse them with facts, get data.
6. Transparency always: Don't take sides or keep secrets – everything in the open.
7. Do it together: Likely a midpoint or third option will be the final resolution.
8. Celebrate wins: As you solve problems, declare victory and celebrate success.

If you follow these steps – you might get to a good resolution.

3. The management system

As much as you want to be helpful, don't forget the management system.

One of the key benefits of a hierarchy is that it can resolve problems (Or what is it's purpose?)

Just take care before you put yourself in the middle of other people's fights.

Bottom Line: It's good to help teams who need support but in the end, teaching people to work together better is always more important so they can solve the problems themselves.