



21. Organize dilemma workshops

Challenge

Every person has all kinds of dilemmas on a daily basis. In work situations, it can be helpful to share these dilemmas. This creates (more) interaction between employees and we are working on a culture of discussability and clarity about internal behavior. The interaction between employees ensures that shared values and norms arise: that's how we do it here.

The challenge for the compliance professional is to convince managers to put discussing dilemmas on the agenda and to ensure that employees will do this (on their own).

Solution

One of the ways to discuss dilemmas is to organize a dilemma workshop. In the workshop, people learn how to deal with dilemmas. Various techniques can be used for this.

Biases and environmental factors

In order for the sharing and discussion of dilemmas to succeed, it makes sense to first give guidance on how people judge, act and make decisions. Sharing dilemmas starts with acknowledging that everyone has biases (biases, colored glasses). There is a lot of talk about the bubble in which people are, everyone would think the same but that is not the case. It can be useful to first do knowledge transfer: what are biases, how does it work. Only when people recognize that everyone has biases, discussing dilemmas runs more smoothly.

In addition, there are environmental factors, consisting of the culture itself (what is important within this organization? What is rewarded? How does management behave?) and rules, procedures, processes, etc. that influence the behaviour of employees. In a dilemma session, the environmental factors that stand in the way of desired behavior can also be brought to the surface.

Then the workshop:

It often works well when a workshop starts with sharing a dilemma of a manager – this shows that a manager also has to deal with dilemmas on a daily basis. What is important here is that it is explained what a dilemma is: a right-right situation or a wrong-wrong situation, often a 'gray area'. It is useful to explain the difference between a moral dilemma (for example, which customer do I help first?) and a moral problem (being late, speeding, etc.).



After that, a pallet of different working methods is possible. Here are some examples:

- Draw a line of painter's tape on the ground. Give a dilemma in the form of a question that can be answered with "yes" or with "no". Make sure that the dilemmas are in line with the everyday practice of the participants. Ask the group to take a position. Ask different people why they are in a certain place and ask for arguments. If people agree with the speaker, they can shift (from point of view). This form of work can be used as a warm-up. It becomes more interesting if you ask follow-up questions: then it will probably become clear that not everyone thinks the same and that questions cannot always be easily answered with "yes" or "no". The arguments for everyone's choice are interesting: as a facilitator, ask about people's arguments. Does the group agree? Can the group make a choice?
- Play a dilemma game. This dilemma game consists of multiple choice questions. When preparing, make sure that two answers are based on 'values' driven ideas and two answers on 'result' driven ideas. Based on the answers, people are more value- or more result-driven. Then enter into the discussion: what does this say? Is one better than the other?
- Discuss a dilemma on the basis of a step-by-step plan. There are various step-by-step plans, including those of Henk van Luijk & Edgar Karssing. If people disagree about their choice, ask which of the two choices may apply to each employee and become publicly known.
- In small groups, bring up the cultural aspects and procedures that prevent employees from performing their work properly. Where does it pinch? If employees suffer from a dominant boss or if the rules are not clear, they contradict each other. Let employees name these examples and encourage them to come up with a solution themselves. The solution can be presented to the rest of the group including manager(s).

Follow-up:

Follow up on the workshop by asking the group if there are any dilemmas that have not been addressed today, but that are important/relevant in daily work. So what the group runs into and wants to discuss later. And how they deal with dilemmas tomorrow, next week, next month, next year. Try to get a commitment from the supervisor that this will be repeated regularly throughout the year in abbreviated form. Examples may include:

- Discuss dilemmas as a fixed part of a work consultation.
- Create couples and agree that they will discuss their dilemmas with each other weekly for a certain period of time. This can also be a form of reflection.
- Ask couples if they want to share their dilemmas and especially how they solved the dilemmas. Ask if this can be published. This creates internal moresprudence.



There are various dilemma apps on the market, see, among other things, the dilemma app of the NBA and KPMG.

Good background information is 'Giving voice to values' by Mary Gentile. See: <http://www.darden.virginia.edu/ibis/initiatives/giving-voice-to-values/>. Her main concern is that employees have already practiced what to do when a dilemma arises. It is about "creating new neural pathways/creating moral muscle memory". Her approach also helps if employees are hesitant to address managers or to discuss dilemmas in a group.

See also tool 20. "Encourage bottom-up initiatives".

Actors

- Compliance professional
- Participants training

Techniques

- Facilitation and discussion techniques
- As a compliance professional, make sure you gain knowledge of biases, see e.g. wikipedia.
- Coming up with appropriate dilemmas.

Role Compliance Professional

Facilitating, transfer of knowledge, source of information.