

Types of Differences

How to identify and address them



There are three major types of differences one faces at their work – **task-based differences, personality-based differences, belief differences.**

Grounding your interactions with your team following the basic principles of active listening, communications go a long way towards differences management. Along with following these basic principles, these three types of differences also benefit from targeted resolution strategies.

Type of Differences	How to Identify
Task-based Differences	• Issues related to employees' work assignments. • Can include discussions/ arguments about how to divide work, differences of opinion on procedures, and managing expectations at work
Personality-based Differences	• Arises from differences in personalities, working style, as well as differences styles
Belief Differences	• Different beliefs: People are arguing because they have different strong beliefs (e.g., about religion, politics, or what's right and wrong). • Work-related arguments: The differences is about important work decisions • Strong emotions: People feel upset, defensive, or distant from each other. • No compromise: People refuse to give in because they feel too strongly about their beliefs.

Type of Differences	How to Resolve
Task-based Differences	• Important to understand the root cause of the differences • Rivalry: Feeling like you can do the job better • Not having a clear understanding of each person's roles and areas where work may overlap • Engaging all parties involved in a deeper problem-solving process. • Working together to find solutions helps consider everyone's views and needs.
Personality-based Differences	• If you feel a sense of differences with your colleague, you can try to eat a meal together to initiate resolution. • Finding things in common can help you understand each other better, making it easier to solve the differences. • You might belong to the same area • Your children could be the same age • You could have similar hobbies or interests • You could share similar concerns about work or other issues. • If you feel comfortable, bring up the source of tension. Focus on listening to their point of view. • Avoid arguing or trying to defend your point of view.
Belief Differences	• Focus on understanding: Both sides should explain their beliefs clearly, without needing them to agree. • Stay neutral: Try to describe your view without taking sides or showing emotion. • Find common ground: Shift the focus to things all sides care about, like fairness or kindness. • Avoid blaming: Don't make anyone feel like they are wrong. Avoid blaming anyone and focus on being respectful during the discussion.