Experiencing problems at work? Your Ombuds Team can help.

“Raise your hand if you have ever experienced any kind of conflict at work.” In a room of five, ten, or even one hundred employees, it is likely that most hands would raise in response. Conflict is a natural part of working in a diverse environment with others who have different backgrounds, perspectives, needs, goals, and personal experiences that may impact how they show up at work. While conflict is common and to be expected, it doesn’t mean that it is easy to deal with. From an eye roll, a colleague’s failure to return a smile, or a rude comment, to discrimination, harassment, and abusive behavior, dealing with conflict at work can be one of the most stressful and life-impacting experiences someone can have. Conflict is often complex and confusing, and high emotions can often cloud the ability to manage it well. This is where [CLIENT’S] Ombuds Team can help.

**What kind of problems can the ombuds help with?**

An employee can talk to an ombuds about any workplace-related issue, big or small. Here are just a few examples of situations that employees can bring to the ombuds:

* Communication challenges
* Unfair treatment by a boss or colleague
* An abrasive or avoidant boss, colleague, or employee
* Difficult group dynamics
* Harassment or discrimination issues

**How can the ombuds help?**

The ombuds will first listen and ask questions to understand the situation as the employee experiences it. Then, they will talk through different options that might help. The ombuds can help an employee:

* Sort through *if* they want to do anything, and if so, determine *what* might help get them what they need
* Learn how to voice their concerns in a way that doesn’t escalate the situation
* Develop strategies to manage or mediate group conflict
* Have a facilitated conversation with another employee
* Understand how to navigate policies, procedures, and other organizational resources

The ombuds doesn’t tell anyone what to do or advocate for any particular outcome but can help an employee develop a plan that they feel good about.

**How is the ombuds resource different than other resources?**

The ombuds resource is unique in that it is strictly confidential, impartial, informal, and independent. It is a safe place to share all concerns and explore options without the possibility of anyone else getting involved or knowing about the issue. The only exceptions to confidentiality are if there is imminent risk of harm to someone or if the employee gives permission to the ombuds to share their name and the ombuds agrees. The ombuds cannot participate in any formal processes like grievances, investigations, etc., but can help an employee understand how to navigate formal reporting channels if desired.

**How can an employee set up a meeting with the ombuds or learn more?**

To learn more or book a confidential appointment, visit [www.mwi.org/INITALS-ombuds](http://www.mwi.org/INITALS-ombuds).