The best way to prevent conflict

After conducting an 18-month research project to get to the root of conflict in the workplace, leadership expert Cy Wakeman learned one thing: lack of clarity is to blame.

Here are her suggestions for preventing time-sucking toxic conflict:

- **Don't assume everyone is on the same page.** Ensure that everyone fully understands the organization's and team's goals, and what each person must do to support those goals.
- **Build an understanding of each person's roles.** Everyone on your team should fully understand every other person's responsibilities and how those duties help the team meet its objectives. Otherwise, turf wars and infighting could occur or employees could work against one another.
- **Let employees establish procedures.** As a leader, you should definitely set goals, establish roles and hold employees accountable for meeting goals. However, don't micromanage the process. Empower your team to make some decisions on how to do the job and you'll decrease resistance.

— Adapted from <u>"The No. 1 Source of Workplace Conflict, and How to Avoid It,"</u> Cy Wakeman, Forbes, **www.forbes.com**.