



## **LABOR & MANAGEMENT CONFLICT CONFLICT OR COOPERATION?**

The relationship between labor unions and corporate management is often strained at best and strongly adversarial at worst, but does it need to be?

There is an axiom that states: “If you want to bring individuals together, offer them a common enemy”. In United States Postal Services’ Processing & Distribution Facilities and Bulk Mail Centers around the country, we have been able to convince both labor and management that they have a common enemy: Aggression. We use as an illustration the United States Department of Agriculture’s incident in California, where a union steward brought a disgruntled employee to two managers. The disgruntled employee pulled out a weapon and killed everyone in the room including himself. He did not spare the union steward!

Aggression Management® Solutions, incorporated those skills needed to identify and measure the emergence of aggression, foresee the possibility of conflict thereby enabling them to effectively persuade an individual away from their escalating aggression. These skills provide both labor and management with the format to get to a disgruntled employee’s issues and resolve them, without further escalating this employee’s anxiety and aggression. If this disgruntled employee begins to escalate, the union steward and manager, working as partners, will have the skills to effectively defuse this aggression.

One of the clear objectives of Aggression Management® Solutions is the increase in productivity. To this end, we demonstrate to both labor and management that a cooperative relationship produces far more for both parties than an adversarial relationship. The clear benefit of diminished aggression is the increase in an organization’s productivity. At the conclusion of one four-day Instructors’ Workshop for the Northland District of the USPS, we witnessed top union officials and management apologizing for their prior behavior and agreeing to work cooperatively in the future. We heard comments like, “I hope to retire from this organization in a few years and if we don’t learn to cooperate we may not have an organization to retire from!”

We conducted training at the Orlando Regional Transit Authority (LYNX) where Aggression Management® Skills received strong support from unions and management. At the completion of the training the Union President wrote a letter to LYNX’s management commenting, “finally management is doing something that serves the needs of our members, we fully support Aggression Management Training”.

Typically, union leadership and corporate management have settled into to an adversarial relationship. In the absence of motivation and the skills to achieve a cooperative relationship, organizations are doomed to the impacts of loss productive, employee friction, absenteeism, increased employee grievances, higher turnover, lower quality of effort, loss of morale and motivation, and loss of loyalty to the organization. Aggression Management® Solutions provide the opportunity to achieve a more productive, cooperative relationship.