***CASE STUDY ON CONFLICT MANAGEMENT***The conflict in this case arises from the management styles of two managers, Ralph and George, who head two different departments in the same organization. Ralph’s problem with George is that the latter is taking staff from his department without his approval. On the other hand, George feels that he is doing the right thing by taking staff from Ralph’s over staffed department.

The situation is compounded by the fact that most of the people who work under Ralph are asking to be transferred while Ralph feels that his department is not overstaffed. He feels that George is interfering with his duties while George is sure that Ralph would do well with a leaner workforce. John, the director, has to help resolve the conflict between he two managers after they bitterly confront each other in his presence. Apart form George’s and Ralph’s viewpoints the director also has to consider Henry’s opinion about the conflict. Henry is the immediate Lab manager who was recently replaced by Ralph. He had the same problems that Ralph is having with George, but he was able to take care of them without directly confronting George.  
 It is clear that Ralph and George have both personal and professional differences, which are unfortunately risking their effectiveness at work. Ralph, the new head of Technological development has been having a feud with the manager of Product Engineering, George (Buller and Schuler, 2005). The conflict arose when George started poaching Technical Development personnel to work under him in Product Engineering. Ralph did not want to let any of his people leave the department since he argued that they would have enough work in the near future. To him, George was playing games by stealing personnel from technology instead of sourcing them from elsewhere. The two managers also have dissimilar personalities, and this only compounds rather than helps find a solution to their standoff (De Dreu, Evers and Kluwer, 2001).

George is very confident in his abilities as a manager and he sees Ralph as being incompetent judging by the way he has not been able to effectively handle his new duties. Rather than sit and talk about the differences between them and try to find solutions hat can for both of them, the two chose to directly confront each other in front of their director. They exchanged accusations and counter accusations without offering any meaningful opinion on how they might come to an agreeable solution. To solve the conflict between them George and Ralph used two different styles before they came at each other on ahead to head confrontation.

Before the confrontation, Ralph had been buried deep in his work, and he did not seem to be bothered by George’s poaching activities. This style of dealing with a conflict is known as withdrawing or avoiding (Condliffe, 2008). In this style of addressing conflicts, one stays clear of the conflict regardless of how serious it is. This type of conflict resolution may be advantageous when the opposing party is forceful or attempts aggression. In this case George’s attempts to ‘steal’ personnel under Ralph’s watch seemed aggressive and Ralph might have been waiting for the opportune moment to confront him so as to make him look like what he was doing was wrong. This approach was wrong since it only weakened Ralph’s position, especially when regarded from George’s pint of view.  
 The other style of conflict management that is evident in this case is competing, which is also known as forcing (De Dreu, Evers and Kluwer, 2001). George would have gone to any heights to obtain Ralph’s people is no one stopped him. On the other hand, Ralph was completely sure that he needed every member of his workforce and George had no business poaching them from his department. Each of the managers believed that their actions or opinions were right and the other person’s had to be wrong. Being forceful may result in the quick ending of a conflict; unfortunately it is not the best way to solve a conflict. By being forceful, neither George nor Ralph were able to achieve their objectives, instead they only exposed unprofessional behavior when they decided to exchange words in front of their director.

The best conflict management style that could have worked in this situation is the win-win, also known as the collaborating or problem confronting/solving style.  This style of conflict resolution involves all parties concerned working with one another to find mutually beneficial solution to the problem causing the conflict (Drory and Ritov, 1997). It seems that George’s approach to getting more personnel for himself has been problematic not only to Ralph but also to Henry, Ralph’s predecessor. Both view George as being too ambitious, but Henry was able to curtail George’s attempts to poach his personnel while Ralph has been unable to do so. Instead of waiting to a point where both managers developed animosity and hard feelings towards each other, one or both of them would have tried to find a solution that would have been beneficial to both of them. One such solution would have entailed letting George gain some of Ralph’s personnel through the right channels. This would have helped George get the talent he needed in his department while Ralph would have a manageable personnel size to manage since he could not deal with a big one. He would also have the chance to develop the kind of working environment that had characteristics in which he could optimally work in (Corvette, 2007).  
  
  
GIVEN BELOW ARE FEW LINKS BY WHICH CONFLICT RESOUTION TECHNIQUES CAN BE UNDERSTOOD:-  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDE9PYC3ZKA>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ki2kLL3FIgk>