FREE GUIDE · MANAGERS

The conflict radar

12 weak signals to spot in your team, and the question to ask to understand before you act.

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A conflict never explodes without warning. For weeks, it sends signals.

If you don't see them, it's not negligence. You have a thousand things to manage, and these signals are made to go unnoticed.

I appreciate that you're taking this time for your team. Now, I invite you to make this radar a habit: five minutes a month, before the tension gets expensive.

Ayoub

A signal is not proof

A signal tells you where to look, not what's happening. We never solve a problem we don't understand.

Your role isn't to resolve the conflict for people. It's to go and understand, then help them resolve it themselves.

1. Once a month, take 5 minutes with this list.
2. Check off the signals you've seen this month.
3. One signal: observe. Two or three: go and understand, one-on-one.

1 Silent in the meeting, critical in private

Someone says nothing in the meeting, then criticizes in the hallway.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	The disagreement hasn't gone away: it has moved somewhere else.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"I get the feeling you have a view on this. How do you see it?"**

2 The yes that comes too fast

Everyone agrees, right away.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE Nobody dares to say what they really think.

TO UNDERSTAND **"What could make you hesitate about this decision?"**

3 Humour with a sting

Jokes that always target the same person, or the same topic.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE A criticism nobody dares to make directly.

TO UNDERSTAND **"I've noticed a few jokes about this. Is something bothering you?"**

4 Absences on the rise

Someone misses more and more team meetings.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE They may be avoiding someone, not the meeting.

TO UNDERSTAND **"I've seen less of you at meetings lately. How are things going for you?"**

5 Everything goes in writing

Two people only talk by email now, with everyone copied.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE They're protecting themselves from each other, and keeping a paper trail.

TO UNDERSTAND **"I see a lot of written exchanges between you two. What makes talking difficult?"**

6 An engaged person who no longer suggests anything

They used to have ideas. Not anymore.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE Disengagement, sometimes because of a conflict that was never resolved.

TO UNDERSTAND **"You used to bring a lot of ideas. What has changed for you?"**

7 The real discussion happens after the meeting

Everything gets said in the hallway, nothing around the table.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE The meeting isn't a place where people feel safe to speak.

TO UNDERSTAND **"What would help you say this in the meeting next time?"**

8 One departure after another

Someone leaves "for a new challenge", then a second person.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	A tension that was never addressed, especially by the second departure.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"If you could change one thing in the team before you leave, what would it be?"**

9 Complaints that come through others

You hear about a problem from someone other than the person involved.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	The direct line between you and this person has weakened.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"I'd like to hear your side. Can you tell me more?"**

10 Arguments over details

An outsized reaction to something trivial.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	A real issue, buried underneath.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"I get the feeling this touches on something bigger. What's really going on?"**

11 The automatic "everything's fine"

The answer is always perfect, whatever you ask.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	Nobody is telling you the truth, perhaps out of fear of how you'll react.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"If one thing could be simpler in your work, what would it be?"**

12 Cliques

Two groups who eat lunch separately, always back each other up, decide as a bloc.

WHAT IT MAY HIDE	The team has split around a disagreement nobody ever named.
TO UNDERSTAND	**"How would you describe the mood in the team right now?"**

Your radar this month

Have you ever asked yourself what a conflict left to simmer really costs? A resignation, weeks of tension, a team that goes quiet. I invite you to do it now, in five minutes.

1. **The signals I saw this month:** numbers and the people involved.

2. **Who I'll talk to first, one-on-one:**

3. **My question to understand:**

4. **When:** the day and the time.

When to step in yourself

First let people resolve their disagreement, with your support and a follow-up.

Step in when it affects the work or the team climate, when they can't manage it, or when they don't yet have the courage or the tools.

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