

Praise for HOW TO BEAT BEDLAM IN THE BOARDROOM AND BOREDOM IN THE BEDROOM

"Have you ever wondered how the boardroom affects the bedroom and vice versa? Ponder no more, the answers are all right here in Jane Gunn's How to Beat Bedlam in the Boardroom and Boredom in the Bedroom!"

— Marshall Goldsmith, million selling author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*,
Succession: Are You Ready? and the upcoming *MOJO*

"With this book Jane Gunn provides a breakthrough work much needed when we are bombarded with quick fixes. Jane provides a map to the most important personal development issue there is to achieve success in all aspects of life – interpersonal relationships. This book requires great honesty in your evaluation of yourself and how well you have fulfilled your potential but Jane's refreshing tone with practical illustrations makes that evaluation do-able. Simply put Jane helps us see things in a different way, to see problems differently to overcome obstacles that are often of our own making – follow the guidance in this book and you will arrive at a far healthier place. Brilliant!"

— Colin Ude-Lewis, Author of *Wisdom Notes*

"Jane Gunn's clearly written book has important insights for everyone, not only professionals working in the conflict resolution field. Combining her experience, wisdom, and engaging writing style, she makes a needed and valuable contribution to how conflicts and disputes can be understood and dealt with successfully."

— Dr. Dudley Weeks, International Peacemaker, Author and Speaker

"This is a very enjoyable read, a great book that sucks you in to self analysis – well crafted and full of insight and practical help... I felt like I'd been through therapy..."

— Ian Jones, Head of Publishing and Content, The National Computing Centre

"Most of us think we live in a linear, rational world. This excellent book shows why things are different. It makes the connections that unlock the secrets of reaching and sustaining agreement. It helps the reader to keep their eyes focused on what cannot be seen!"

— Ian Muir, Global Human Resources Director, ESAB Holdings Limited and author of *The Book of Inner Strength – Quotations for Towering Resilience*

"In this work, Jane Gunn, a highly regarded specialist and leading expert in her field, draws on the insights gained from many years of resolving conflict to provide lay audiences with means of detecting conflict and resolving it successfully. The book does not take a timid approach in suggesting that conflict should be avoided. It instead acknowledges it as a necessary part of life, an every day occurrence. Critically, Jane notes that conflict in one area of life can have unintended and often over-looked consequences in other parts of life. And, drawing on her experience, she explains in highly accessible reading, how people can go about connecting symptoms to the problems, and identifying the best solutions for them."

— Michael McIlwrath, Senior Counsel, GE Oil & Gas,
co-author of *International Arbitration & Mediation: A Practical Guide* and host of CPR's
biweekly podcast, *International Dispute Negotiation*

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"I agree that this is not a sex manual but it is a manual full of stories that help the layman like me to understand and deal with conflict and it also clearly sets out how conflict at home affects work and conflict at work affects home."

— Brian Chernet, Founder, Academy For Chief Executives

"This book has the potential to save you both MONEY and HEARTACHE. Whether you are a CEO, Director, Manager, Business Owner or Employee, if you value your work and your family this book is for you. In it Jane Gunn provides valuable insight and wisdom into how to identify and manage unhappiness and conflict at an early stage before it escalates and becomes both damaging and costly. A VALUABLE read in all senses of the word."

— Dr Tom Hill, Co-Author of *Chicken Soup for the Entrepreneur's Soul*

"This book's great contribution is to render the obvious very readable (with nutshell summaries to help us remember). The world seems slowly to be awakening to the reality that conflict has been too costly for too long and that life on this planet need not be a zero-sum existence. Jane Gunn shows us how we can re-make our world, one relationship at a time. No book could be more highly recommended for the purpose. This one deserves to be read and re-read and to be shared generously with others for the gift it is."

— Jack Levin, Partner & Senior Litigator, Covington & Burling, New York

"Jane Gunn has written an eye-opening, enlightening and empowering book for busy professionals. Act on her advice and it may improve your life forever. Jane is a skilled mediator, successful mother and homebuilder. Her mastery of conflict resolution comes over in a way that is fun to read and easy to digest. It is the kind of book that you can dip repeatedly into and learn more each time. Understand how to improve communication, see beyond "positions" and actually listen properly. What are your family, friends and adversaries really feeling, but not saying? Find out how to figure out what you and they really want. Develop techniques to define what really matters. Heartily recommended!"

— Dr Harjinder S. Obhi, Google's Senior Litigation Counsel EMEA

"I really enjoyed your intuitive and practical guide to achieving more fruitful relationships, thus harmony in all aspects of my life. A must read for anyone looking for a little more peace and happiness!"

— Glenn Watkins, Chief Executive, Ecademy

"This is a wonderful book! It is a great work, invaluable to everybody irrespective of what they do. I cannot even tell where it is more applicable to: the home or the work place. It is in recognition of this fact that you structured each chapter to simultaneously serve both as reflected in the title: How to Beat Bedlam in the Boardroom and Boredom in the Bedroom. Any morning my boss enters the office with a whistle, I know work will be sweet that day and that's thank to his wife (my behind-the-scene or indirect boss). The workplace is actually the place we go to practice what we learn/have learnt at home. (But, please do not change the title. It is a wonderful rhyme)."

— Chris Ameshi, Onshore Project Division, Nigerian Agip Oil Company

**HOW TO BEAT
BEDLAM IN THE
BOARDROOM
AND BOREDOM IN THE
BEDROOM
BY JANE GUNN**

**A LIFE CHANGING GUIDE TO HAPPINESS
AT WORK AND AT HOME**

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The logo for HotHive Books features the word "hthivebooks" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "h" is stylized with a cluster of small dots to its left, resembling a honeycomb or a hive.

All characters and stories in this book are fictional, although some may be based on true events.

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To Peacemakers everywhere

“Blessed are the Peacemakers”

Matthew 5.9

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There are so many members of my wonderfully supportive network of family, friends, colleagues, clients and mentors that in their own quiet way have been an inspiration to me and played an important part in the coming together of this book. Thank you all whether you are conscious of your contribution or not.

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There is no such thing as a “self-made” man. We are made up of thousands of others. Everyone who has ever done a kind deed for us, or spoken one word of encouragement to us, has entered into the make-up of our character and of our thoughts, as well as our success.

— George Burton Adams

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FOREWORD

by Ambassador Ahmad Kamal

Senior Fellow, United Nations Institute for Training and Research

It is tempting to be carried away by the title of this book, or to misjudge the easy flow of its text. The book can be read in a single sitting, but once that is done, it begins to sink in slowly, and the depth of the connections which it makes between the market-place and the home begin to emerge.

In essence, the lessons that it highlights are fairly simple to assimilate, though most of us either ignore or forget them all the time.

Precepts about tolerance and empathy and compromise are all part of the slogans of public discourse. And yet, when it comes to actual negotiations, we all tend to harden our positions, frequently beyond repair, not realising that win-win solutions are far more durable, and satisfying, than results that just end in winners and losers.

That is what makes this book so enjoyably topical. It is to be hoped that this enjoyment will open the door to success in the boardroom and the bedroom equally.

INTRODUCTION

“If a woman is unhappy in her relationships, she can’t concentrate on her work. If a man is unhappy at work, he can’t focus on his relationships.”

— Alan and Barbara Pease

This is not a sex manual!

Before you get excited that this book is a new sex manual designed to enhance your skills in the bedroom, let me explain.

In my work as a mediator I have specialised in the resolution of boardroom, partnership and workplace disputes. I have also coached and run workshops for chief executives and business owners. There are many common themes among the issues that cause unrest and unhappiness between people who work together, but the key thing that strikes me, on nearly every occasion, is the impact of work on home life.

Almost every instance of conflict or dispute at work is the catalyst for, or is mirrored by, conflict at home. In the same way relationships at home have a dramatic impact on our ability to create a productive and harmonious work life.

This experience was highlighted during a workshop I ran recently on how to manage conflict at work for Chief Executives. When we got to the break I joined a group of participants for coffee. It turned out that one of the major problems affecting this group of senior business leaders was how to manage their teenagers at home and how getting this right would transform their lives both at home and at work. As a result we spent the second half of the workshop focused on this issue with each of them taking it in turns to role-play truculent teenagers!

This book seeks to highlight that the same skills and tools can be used to manage conflicts and disputes between individuals, groups of people, organisations and even between nations.

The adversarial approach

Before becoming a mediator, I worked as a corporate lawyer in London. While trying to sell my house to another lawyer I realised that we have created an adversarial culture. I began to wonder whether there might be a better way to help my business clients to manage their affairs.

In the early 1990s Professor Charles Handy challenged a group of business leaders to help him discover the critical factors that would identify 'Tomorrow's Company'.

An enquiry called Tomorrow's Company followed and one of the key findings was that the adversarial approach to relationships is one of the key behaviours that prevents companies from performing at their optimum level.

For me the journey from lawyer to mediator has taken me from adversary to collaborator. Recognising the value of putting relationships first and finding ways to understand what drives and motivates people in dispute.

“The argument culture urges us to approach the world – and the people in it – in an adversarial frame of mind. It rests on the assumption that opposition is the best way to get anything done: The best way to discuss an idea is to set up a debate; the best way to cover news is to find spokespeople who express the most extreme, polarized views and present them as ‘both sides’; the best way to settle disputes is litigation that pits one party against the other; the best way to begin an essay is to attack someone; and the best way to show you’re really thinking is to criticize... Conflict and opposition are as necessary as cooperation and agreement, but the scale is off balance, with conflict and opposition over-weighted.”

— Deborah Tannen

The best outcome

One question that people in dispute frequently find difficult to answer is ‘What outcome do you want?’

The basic question ‘What are you really looking for?’ can lead people to discover surprising things about what is behind their dispute and give them clues as to where the solution may lie.

What doesn’t work, at least in isolation, is money. The outcomes that people generally find most satisfying are relational rather than financial.

As psychologist, Martin Seligman, has discovered, human beings flourish whether at work or at home when they have close relationships with other people. You will discover in the pages that follow that most arguments, even when the issue appears to be about money, are, in fact, about love, respect, understanding and the basic human need to know that you matter and are being heard.

“If I were to summarize in one sentence the single most important principle I have learned in the field of interpersonal relations, it would be this: Seek first to understand, then to be understood. This principle is the key to effective interpersonal communication.”

— Stephen Covey

Everyone is different

I recognise that each of you will have your own style and method of assimilating information. In this book the chapters can be read individually and key messages are often repeated.

If, like me, you like to read a book backwards or appreciate a summary of what you have just read, the last chapter will provide you with just that.

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What is true for one person can be entirely different from what is true for another – and that is exactly what this book is about!

What is important is that you are a seeker with an open mind.

“...what may appear as the truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realised that what appeared to be different truths are like the countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree.”

— Gandhi

1: BEDLAM OR BOREDOM



How conflict affects us all

"The quality of our lives depends not on whether or not we have conflicts, but on how we respond to them."

— Tom Crum

BEDLAM IN THE BOARDROOM

Jim is one of eight directors of a company that manufactures and sells smoothies and juices. Recently, the members of the Board have fallen out about the development and branding of a new product that contains a special blend of herbs and is reputed to have aphrodisiac qualities that the marketing director wants to call 'Blue Heaven'.

Jim thinks they are venturing too far from the company's original vision. Instead of discussing Jim's concerns, his fellow directors have frozen him out of discussions and are making it very difficult for him to carry on with his role as head of the sales team.

Jim has instructed his lawyers to issue legal proceedings. He believes that his fellow directors have deliberately made it impossible for him to do his job well and are now claiming that he is not performing well enough. Jim is feeling hurt and angry, he will not go quietly!

BOREDOM IN THE BEDROOM

Meanwhile, at home Jim's wife, Sally, is thinking of leaving. Jim seems totally obsessed with his work these days and unwinds by spending even more hours on the golf course.

He has put all his energy into the company over the past few years and seems to have little time left for her!

Things seem to have got even worse over the last few weeks and Jim has retreated even further into his shell refusing to say what is wrong. Sometimes Sally feels as though she is totally invisible and worthless.

Stuff happens

- Your business partner is not pulling her weight
- Your co-director is not a good team leader
- Your employees are demanding a pay rise
- Your husband is late home
- Your neighbours are noisy
- Your teenager won't tidy his bedroom
- Your doctor has misdiagnosed a medical condition.

No matter how hard you try to have a perfect life it just doesn't work that way: stuff happens. Along the way you will experience unhappiness, disappointment, dissatisfaction and unmet expectations – conflict!

I would be surprised if anyone reading this book has not experienced a conflict during the last week. Something or someone has caused you to feel unhappy. It might be something they said (or didn't say) or something they did (or didn't do), or it could be their reaction to something you said or did, but the end result was that you felt unhappy. You felt that the relationship or the situation was not as good as it could be and you didn't know what to do to make things better.

Sometimes our reaction to conflict is to fight. We need to prove that we are right, impose our views or solutions on others even if they fight back. If necessary we will employ others (lawyers and advisers) to help us craft the winning argument and to fight on our behalf.

Sometimes our reaction to conflict is to run away or give in. To give up on the person that we perceive is causing the problem. What's the point in trying any more?

Sometimes when we are tired of being unhappy with a person or situation, we no longer have the energy to fight back.

HOW TO BEAT BEDLAM IN THE BOARDROOM AND BOREDOM IN THE BEDROOM

What if we had the skills and tools to anticipate these unhappy situations before they had a chance to damage our work/life relationships?

What if we understood the *rules* for happy relationships and were able to apply them. How valuable would that be?

The cost

Jim has already called in his lawyer to help him assess his legal rights and possibly make a claim against the company. His position as Sales Director of a successful company is in jeopardy and, to be honest, he is devoting very little time to developing new sales leads as he has lost all motivation and is spending most of his time managing the situation at work.

Relationships with his fellow directors have disintegrated and he is hardly speaking to his wife. Jim is not sleeping well and when he visited his GP, it was suggested that he might be depressed and should consider taking some time off work – the last thing he can do right now!

Unmanaged or badly managed conflict can have an enormous cost to us all as individuals, businesses and society. It is not always possible to quantify the loss in financial terms, but the loss or waste incurred includes:

- Expert advice – the cost of lawyers, accountants, counsellors, therapists
- Time and productivity – the value of your time devoted to the conflict
- Relationships – the value of a lost or damaged relationship
- Health – the cost to your mental and physical wellbeing.

The cost to British business of unresolved conflict runs into billions of pounds every year.

The cost to families cannot be estimated!

The value

What if Jim and his fellow directors had been able to catch their disagreement before it had escalated into a dispute, and made a commitment to find a way to resolve their differences? How might that benefit the company in terms of productivity and sales and what impact might that have on relationships and organisational culture for the future?

What most people who are experiencing conflict tend to forget is that difference is the source of all value. The general rule is that because each of us has something someone else lacks and we each lack something someone else has; we gain by interaction.

Catching conflict before it becomes destructive and seeking creative ways to resolve problems and keep relationships on track is the key to adding value instead of generating waste or loss.

If both sides to any conflict – a marriage breakdown, business dispute or a bloody war – truly listen to each other, they can eventually reach a resolution.

Warning signs

Conflict is nothing more than a process. It is the process whereby we or others express our dissatisfaction with another or others, or with a situation. When our efforts at expressing our dissatisfaction or unhappiness do not produce positive results or we ignore the warning signs altogether; we edge closer and closer to a crisis.

When the Mount St Helens volcano erupted at 8.23 am on Sunday 18th May, 1980 in Portland, Oregon, USA, people were unprepared and shocked at the devastation that followed. However:

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- The eruption occurred *two months* after the mountain first started venting
- There had been *many warning signs* that a devastating blast would happen.

Despite these warning signs, 57 men, women and children were killed. Despite predictions of landslides and floods people were sitting in deckchairs on the bridges to get a better view of the volcano – the watery wall of mud and trees that followed wiped out all the bridges!

Al Siebert¹, a Portland resident who happens to be a psychologist who has studied what it takes for individuals and organisations to survive potentially disastrous events suggests that there are many important lessons to be learnt from natural disasters:

- 1. We will deny danger or potential disruption if it is inconvenient.*
- 2. Disbelief prevails over reality – even when there are warning signs, most people will dismiss a threat if it has never happened before.*
- 3. Even when people know that problems might occur, they seldom make plans for dealing with them until they actually happen!*

The truth is that we only change course when we are motivated to do so. Our partner leaves us; we are fired from our job; our work team becomes mutinous; someone lodges a formal complaint; a writ arrives on our doormat! Managing conflict is about learning to recognise and pay attention to the warning signs and *knowing what to do* when we receive them. We learn our biggest lessons and experience the most valuable opportunities when things get tough. Having a strategy to work with conflict and crisis is one of the most important things we can do.

Window of opportunity

If we can pay attention to the warning signs and catch conflict at an early stage, before relationships have broken down and while dialogue is still a possibility, we can save enormous costs and build considerable value.

A window of opportunity exists from the moment that we or others begin to feel unhappy about the way someone is behaving or the way in which a situation is unfolding.

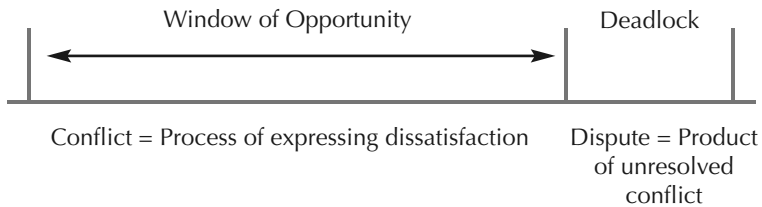


Fig 1.1

Know who and what matters most

How can we apply the principles of conflict resolution to add maximum value and save the most in costs?

Three key principles

1. **Know *who* matters to you and *why*.** Know who is most important to you in your personal and in your business life.
2. **Know *what* matters to them and *why*.** Make sure that you know what matters most to them in terms of your relationship and/or business dealings with them and discover why.
3. **Know *what* matters to you and *why*.** Take time to reflect on what matters most to you and why and learn the best way to communicate this.

If asked, Jim might say that his wife Sally matters most to him in his personal life because she is his constant support and the person that keeps him grounded.

HOW TO BEAT BEDLAM IN THE BOARDROOM AND BOREDOM IN THE BEDROOM

But does Sally *know* that she is the most important person in Jim's life – she certainly doesn't *feel* as though she is.

If asked, Jim might say that *he believes* what matters most to Sally is the house and lifestyle he provides and the social circle they belong to as a result.

But if Jim *asked* Sally what matters most to her, he might be surprised to discover that the house and the lifestyle are pretty low down on her list of priorities. She is more interested in spending her leisure time with Jim and the long-standing friends they made when Jim was less enmeshed in corporate politics and they had a more modest lifestyle. She doesn't have much in common with the smart and superficial acquaintances where they live now.

If Jim took time to ask *himself* what matters most to him, he might find that while he is proud of his achievements at work and of the money and status that follows, it is *relationships* that matter most to him; relationships with his wife, Sally, and with his co-directors; both of which need some attention right now.

Repeating this exercise with his co-directors would provide vital information for Jim to understand how his world and the people and relationships in it fit together.

These are the key principles that underpin every successful relationship, inspired team effort or organisational triumph and explain every disappointment and deadlock.

Changing mindsets

The journey from conflict to resolution requires both foresight and preparation.

The worst times are when things are happening or not happening and we seem powerless to stop them or change them. Then, when it gets worse, we hope that someone outside – an expert or a lawyer – will intervene and put things right.

It reminds me of Kierkegaard's story¹ of the traveller in the hill country who came to a village only to find his road onward blocked by a mountain. So he sat and waited for the mountain to move. Years later, he was still there, old now and white haired, still waiting. Then he died, but he was long remembered as 'the man who waited for the mountain to move'.

But, as you will learn in the chapters that follow, it's not mountains that are the barrier – it's the mindset!

The world is crying out for more people to step out of the prison of their own thinking, to 'break the rules'.

In a nutshell

If we have children or parents or partners or neighbours or colleagues – if we have any relationships at all, we are bound to run into conflict, so we might as well prepare ourselves for it and equip ourselves to cope with it when it happens.

"Somewhere out beyond ideas of right-doing and wrong-doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there."

— Rumi

¹The Danish philosopher, Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855)

JANE GUNN

MAKING MOLEHILLS OUT OF MOUNTAINS

Jane Gunn is known as as The Corporate Peacemaker and specialises in advising organisations how to REDUCE THE COSTS (human and financial) of conflict and dispute in both their internal operations and external trading relationships and personal relationships.

A former city solicitor, Jane has now built an international reputation as a mediator, conflict management consultant and speaker working with businesses and business leaders around the world.

Jane's skill is in providing valuable insight and wisdom into how to identify and manage unhappiness and conflict at an early stage before it escalates and becomes both damaging and costly. She saves high profile organisations and busy executives both MONEY and HEARTACHE.

Keynote Speaking

Jane is sought after as a speaker on the international speaking circuit.

Conference keynotes, concurrent and breakout sessions are available as well as half and full day programmes.

Participants are engaged and entertained by a mix of

- Memorable stories
- Current research
- Takeaway skills and tools
- Lively humour.

Jane is a member of the Professional Speakers Association and of the International Federation For Professional Speakers.



Consulting

Jane works with individuals, partners, teams and entire organisations to help them to manage ongoing conflicts and prevent them escalating into costly litigation or other adversarial processes.

She also helps organisations to design Conflict Management Systems enabling them to collaborate with internal departments and external trading partners to identify potential conflicts at the earliest possible stage.

Conflict Management helps businesses whether large or small to

- ADD VALUE by identifying opportunities for change
- AVOID LOSS of profits, productivity and valuable relationships.

Mediation

Jane is frequently called upon to act as a neutral third party to facilitate the resolution of disputes between businesses and individuals.

As one of the leading mediators in the UK, she has over 12 years experience, and has mediated a wide variety of disputes including, business, partnership, employment, property and construction, personal injury and clinical negligence, trusts and family disputes.

Accredited by CEDR in 1996 she is a Mediator Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and International Mediation Institute (IMI) Certified Mediator.

What Jane's Clients Say

Jane has a natural affinity with her audience and is clearly at the top of her game in the world of Conflict Management. She has constant insight to offer and the organization that secures her services would do well to pay her enormous sums of money!

— James Pirrie, Partner FLIP

Jane is an excellent presenter and speaker, presenting in a practical and humorous manner, which teaches every individual in her audience in a comfortable and effortless style. As a result, the wealth of Jane's experience and knowledge is easily imparted to her audience in a very personal and professional manner.

— Stuart Ness, Director, Rosmartin Associates

Jane has a charming and fun personality, but also a natural sensitivity and perception to the commercial and emotional needs of others. She is also very relaxed at handling and managing people irrespective of their roles, status, age or nationality. All of this makes it easy for her to overcome the barriers to communication at all levels and to facilitate problem-solving.

— Karen Jones, Solicitor, Matthew, Arnold and Baldwin

Armed with her excellent skills, Jane has successfully assisted us in reaching resolution of some very difficult cases using her unique ability to be fair and open to both parties involved. I believe that no party involved in these came away from the experience with anything but respect for the process and Jane's excellent mediation skills.

— Stephanie Seigne, Head of Legal Services & Corporate Risk

Jane is a highly ambitious individual, comfortable working under pressure with tight deadlines and eager to pursue her vision of a peaceful world. Through her communication and interpersonal skills, her skills in relationship management, business development and law, and her deep interest in international affairs, Jane always delivers consistently high standards of work.

— Bob Battye, Chairman, Vistage International

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