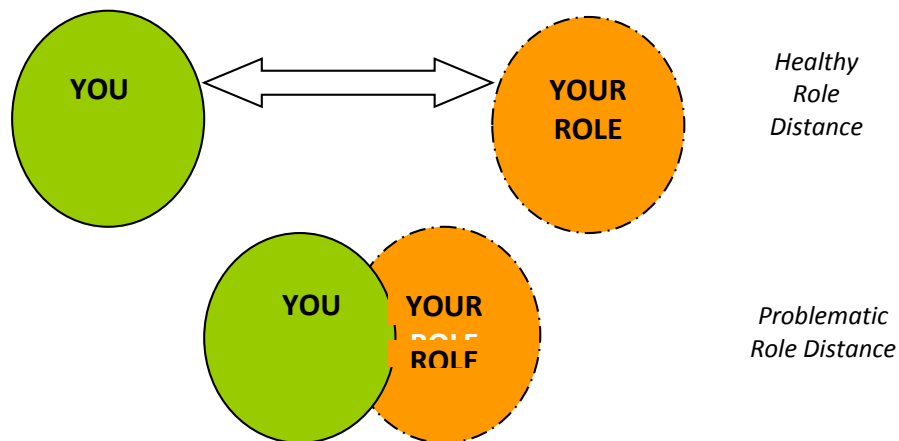


YOU AND YOUR ROLE IN CONFLICT

Individuals can become involved in conflict. However the **role** an individual occupies may also trigger or contribute to the development of a conflict. Think for example of conflicts between unions and business. We would form a false impression if we analysed this scenario as if individuals only – the employer herself and the union representative -were conflicted. It would be more accurate to say that employers and unions are systemically or structurally conflicted. The individuals, in their roles, represent different views and interests.



Similarly many conflicts between staff and managers represent a degree of role conflict. Managers who understand this, and realise the potential for involvement in conflicts between their staff and organisational expectations can achieve greater objectivity and become less personally affected by workplace conflicts. This is known as having **role distance** between yourself and your role.

Managers who have little role distance, and are very identified with their role, tend to have a hard time when they are engaged in conflict as a manager. They take it personally.