

Coaching for Difficult Conversations

PRESENTED BY

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Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will:

- **Identify ways to start a conversation**
- **Review the mutual learning model**
- **Increase awareness of resources that can help**
- **Have opportunity for questions and discussions**

Responses to Poor Behavior/ Performance

- **Performance/behavior is:**
 - 1. Minimized**
 - 2. Rationalized**
 - 3. Is denied**
 - 4. Generates extreme discomfort, sometimes even fear**

Preparing for the Conversation

1. What is it you want to say?
2. How come you want to say it?
3. What do you want to happen?
4. How do you think the conversation will go?

Preparing for the Conversation

5. Don't deliver feedback using sandwich method.
It is confusing
6. Focus on one thing at a time
7. Be behaviorally specific about the change you are hoping for
8. Try to offer feedback close to the time they will need it
9. Involve the employee in thinking through solutions

Conversation Starters

- I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together more effectively.
- I'd like to talk about _____ with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.
- I need your help with what just happened. Do you have a few minutes to talk?
- I need your help with something. Can we talk about it (soon)? If the person says, "Sure, let me get back to you," follow up with him.

Conversation Starters Cont.

- I think we have different perceptions about _____. I'd like to hear your thinking on this.
- I'd like to talk about _____. I think we may have different ideas about how to _____.
- I'd like to see if we might reach a better understanding about _____. I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.

Everyone Has a Story

Most people do what they do because it makes sense to them to do it that way. That being the case, it is important to learn and understand a person's story before rendering judgment.

The Learning Conversation

- A conversation where both people learn about how the other person sees things and how the other person feels.
- Instead of thinking, “How can she think that?” ask yourself, “I wonder what information she has that I don’t?”
- Move from certainty to curiosity
- Adopt the And Stance

Mutual Behaviors

- State views and ask genuine questions
- Share all relevant information
- Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean

Mutual Behaviors

- Explain reasoning and intent
- Test assumptions and inferences
- Jointly design next steps
- Discuss undiscussable issues

Mutual Learning Cycle

1. **Observe:** What did I see and hear?
2. **Make meaning:** What do I think this means?
3. **Choose:** Why is this worth/not worth saying something about?

Mutual Learning Cycle *Cont.*

- 4. Test observation: “I think I saw/ heard____.
Did I miss anything?”**
- 5. Test meaning: “I’m thinking ____.
What do you think?”**
- 6. Jointly design next steps: “I think it would be
helpful to ____.
What do you think?”**

Consulting with the EAO

1. Significant decline in performance
2. Disruptive behavior
3. Personal/psychological issues

Consulting with the EAO (cont.)

4. Risk for violence

5. Work rule violations

Check Us Out

- Sherry Ray Boeger, *Director*
- Susan Fuszard, *Consultant*
- Mary McCaslin, *Office Manager*
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Discussion

- What are some of the difficult conversations/ conflicts that you face in your workplace?
- In what ways are they addressed?
- What gets in the way of addressing these things?
- What has worked in the past to address difficult conversations/conflict?
- How could you use the mutual learning model to address?