

# Techniques for managing challenging conversations

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# Challenging Conversations

Conversations that...

“Confront attitudinal, performance and behavioural issues ..and  
create impetus for change”

# Conversations that

- Interrogate Reality – get to the heart of the matter
- Provoke Learning – really asking, really listening
- Generate Heat – tackle the tough stuff
- Move Relationships Forward – create positive consequence

# Questions to help focus...

- What is the conversation I have been putting off for day's, weeks, months? What reasons have I given myself?
- If I could improve one relationship at work or in my personal life, which would I improve?
- What idea or issue would I like to share with my boss that could improve the way we get things done?
- Who deserves an apology or deserves praise from me?
- What one new experience do I most want at work or in my life?
- Conversation With/Topic/By When and my ideal outcome

# 7 principles of when and how?

- Obey your instincts
- Tackle your toughest challenge today
- Come out from behind yourself , make it real
- Be here and prepared to be nowhere else
- Interrogate reality – from both perspectives
- Take responsibility for your emotional wake
- Let silence do the heavy lifting

# Challenging conversations – a model

- Name the issue...
- Specific example that illustrates the behaviour or situation...
- Describe your emotions...
- Clarify what's at stake...
- Identify your contribution to the problem...
- Indicate your wish to resolve the issue...
- Invite a response....

# Challenging conversations – a model

- “Mine the issue”
- Seek resolution
- A new agreement

# Your 60 second opening statement

- Issue....
- Example....
- My emotion....
- What's at stake....
- My contribution....
- My wish to resolve....
- Invite response....



# Top Tips... remember

- What's your ideal outcome?
- Really listen
- Honestly challenge... especially denial
- Let silence do the heavy lifting
- Be clear and communicate – what have we agreed?
- Take responsibility for the emotional wake... return to the conversation if needed

**And remember.....**

“ There is something within us all that responds deeply to those who level with us and don't suggest our compromises for us”

**And....**

“The most valuable thing any of us can do is find a way to say the things that can't be said”

**And...**

“A careful conversation is a failed conversation because it merely postpones the conversation that wants or needs to take place”