

Designing a Difficult Conversation Worksheet

Imagine that you are preparing yourself for what you anticipate will be a challenging conversation at work.....

Who do you imagine yourself meeting with? _____

What are the emotions you begin to experience as you imagine this conversation?

Step #1: Telling Yourself the Truth

Specifically, where in your relationship with _____ are you not seeing the results you'd like to see? All present and past observations are encouraged here – failed projects, missed goals, objectives, impact on others etc., especially un-workability that you have just adapted to and now work around like BAU. (Business as Usual)

Consider these questions:

- ◆ What results do you want to fix?
- ◆ What other results do you suspect are on hold?
- ◆ What problem continues to re-occur?

As you review your list of ideas from question #1, can you identify the Difficult Conversation(s) that need(s) to be had?

Who else needs to be there* _____

* This conversation must involve all vested parties; it cannot be “about” the vested parties.

Step #2: Start With Vision

What is my motive/intent for having this conversation? Describe to yourself the ideal outcome and **WHY** this matters to you.

Step #3 Think Ahead

What passive or aggressive tendencies might I see during the conversation? Why might I and/or _____ not feel safe* in the conversation?

* Generally “safety” in these conversations is mostly a concern for emotional/psychological issues; pride, etc.

Designing a Difficult Conversation Worksheet (cont.)

Step #4: Make the Situation Welcoming

What actions might I need to take to make sure Mutuality is present, i.e., _____ knows his/her interests are known, cared about and respected?

Step #5: Master My Drama

What stories do I have about _____, myself or the situation that are not beneficial to the conversation _____

Step #6: Express My Perspective

What facts support the "message" I need to share? What specific words am I prepared to say in order to get _____ perspective? "Here's how I see it..." or "In my view these area a few examples" _____

Step #7: Explore How Others See the Situation

If _____ "blows up" or "clams up," am I prepared to be responsible for getting the conversation back on track by 1) Asking questions, 2) Mirroring emotions or body language, 3) Paraphrasing or 4) Priming (suggesting what _____ may be thinking or feeling _____

Step #8: Action Planning

What results am I prepared to commit to _____? What requests do I have of _____? What promises am I willing to make?
