Difficult Conversations
An adaptation of Microlearning from Organizational Learning
Introduction to difficult conversations
Agenda

- Interactive poll - Types of difficult conversations
- Watch the [video](#)
- Stories: Real life application of the approach (Staff & Mgr perspectives)
- Vote for a facilitator role play scenario
- Interactive polls - Share your thoughts?
- Additional resources
- Application and conclusion
Which type of difficult conversation do you experience most often?

- Addressing personal conflicts: 33%
- Allocating resources/determining priorities: 11%
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities: 22%
- Dealing with non-supportive person: 17%
- Negative performance feedback: 13%
- Other: 4%
The Blueprint for a Difficult Conversation
Sarah’s Story
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. State your purpose</td>
<td>“I’d like to talk about xyz.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Present your (first-hand) observations</td>
<td>“When xyz happened, I noticed that it had the following effect on me/our group/the room/the environment.”</td>
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</table>

State only facts in a normal tone.

If using secondhand information: Only speak to trends of secondhand information and do not use names.
### Sarah’s Story (Steps 3-4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.   | Listen and invite feedback | “What are your thoughts?”  
“Help me understand how you experienced the situation.”  
Pause and let the other person speak for up to two minutes. |
| 4.   | Acknowledge emotions (if needed) | “I can see that you’re upset/emotional/irritated and that’s okay.”  
“Thank you for being honest with me.” |
### Sarah’s Story (Steps 5-6)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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</table>
| **5. State your request** | “I’d like you to…”  
|   | “Would you consider…?” |
| **6. Create accountability** | “I’d like us to follow up in X weeks. Let’s schedule a time on our calendars.”  
|   | “How can I best support you?” |
Brian’s Story
### Brian’s Story (Steps 1-2)

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| | “How can I best support you?” |
Facilitator Role Play Scenario Videos

1. Promotion request
   Manager & direct report

2. Behavior towards others on team
   Manager & direct report

3. Taking credit for another person’s work
   Peer to peer

4. Supporting work outside of a person’s core role
   Manager & direct report
Vote for the scenario you'd like to watch

- Promotion request: A (26%)
- Behavior towards others: B (44%)
- Taking credit for another's work: C (13%)
- Work outside of core role: D (16%)
The Winner Is…

1. Promotion request
   Manager & direct report

2. Behavior towards others on team
   Manager & direct report

3. Taking credit for another person’s work
   Peer to peer

4. Supporting work outside of a person’s core role
   Manager & direct report
What one word describes your reaction to the Blueprint Approach for Difficult Conversations?
5 Things to Keep in Mind

1. Make sure that **emotions** are in check before engaging

2. There are **many approaches** for Difficult Conversations

3. Pay attention to **impact**. Even good intentions can have unintended impact.

4. If the conversation goes sideways, it is **ok to pause** and revisit after emotions are in check

5. Even if you use all these tools, the conversation still may not go as planned. **Keep trying!**
Share Your Thoughts 1

What aspects may still be difficult even if you use this model, and how might you overcome these barriers?
Share Your Thoughts 2

How could you imagine using this approach in your home-life?
Imagine you’ve had a difficult conversation that didn’t go as planned. What would be your first inclination?
Learn - Try - Apply

One thing I learned that I will apply relating to Difficult Conversations is...

I will circle back for your feedback within X time frame.
Additional Resources

Today’s Session

- Difficult Conversations Approach Worksheet
- The Blueprint for a Difficult Conversation Video

Go Further!

- Microlearning: Impactful Development Conversations
- Difficult Conversations: Helpful Phrases

LinkedIn Learning

- Manage conflict in a remote work environment
- Disagreeing with Someone Senior to You

Harvard Business Review

- How to Make Sure You’re Heard in a Difficult Conversation - Amy Gallo
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Organizational Learning