

HAVING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

PREPARING FOR THE CONVERSATION



What is conflict?

A conflict occurs when two polarizing topics (i.e., ideas, interests, or purposes) are deemed as true. The need to label someone or something right over another idea creates a form of communicate that has tension, called conflict.

What is standpoint?

Standpoints develop through your relationships and experiences throughout your life. Through this exposure a set of beliefs and ideas are constructed that create opinions and guide future decisions.



What are the facts of the situation?

What are my feelings from the situation?

What is my relationships with this person?
What is my long-term hope for this relationship?

What is my ideal outcome of the discussion?

What are my needs, wants, motivations behind my concerns?

DURING THE CONVERSATION



DO

- **Set ground rules** - for example, we will focus on the issue at hand and not attack each other's personality
- **Focus on one issue at a time**
- **Focus on the issue, not the person** - chances are, either party didn't intentionally try to be hurtful. By focusing on the issue, there is room to grow and strengthen the relationship versus labeling the other person as 'mean' or 'rude'
- **Ask each other** - how did our perceptions of the situation differ? What can we learn from the others perspective?



DON'T

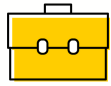
- **Don't assume what happened is obvious** - one's view of events depends on past experiences
- **Don't think of a response while the other person is talking** - stay fully present and hear what the person is saying
- **Don't assume the intentions of the other person** - we can experience harm when no harm was intended
- **Don't ask why they would do something a certain way, instead express how the experience made you feel**

WHY EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION MATTERS



Relationship Building

Nurture your current relationships and make it easier to create new ones



Impacts Future Career

Easier to navigate your workplace relationships with clients, coworkers, and supervisors



Develops Sense of Self

Helps you express to others your values, intentions, and priorities

AVOIDING COMPARISONS, INTERPRETATIONS, OR ADVICE



While it may seem helpful when others are sharing difficult situations, they're in to bring up similar things we've gone through – this may end up having the opposite effect.



Sharing your own experience may have you viewing their situation through your own lens, rather than fully hearing what they're going through. This creates a missed opportunity for empathy.



Giving someone unsolicited advice may make them feel alienated or ostracized. Rather, when a person comes to you with a conflict or dilemma asking them what they would like from your conversation is the most beneficial.

CONFLICT OUTLINE

Utilize this outline as a guide before, after, or while you are engaging in a difficult conversation.

