

Session 3

Group Exercise

Independent thinking

Think about a specific difficult conversation;

1. What is the problem from your perspective?
2. Who are the actors in this situation?
3. What concerns do they bring to the conversation?
4. What would a successful solution look like?
5. What are the steps that can be taken to get there?

Round Robin exercise in your group

- Each share your difficult conversation and talk through your notes

Group Discussion

Discuss ways to set this conversation up for success:

- How to observe the impact of the problem and talk through it objectively
- How to frame the conversation around what's valuable to the person being spoken to
- How the person might respond (taking into account that humans have complex emotions)

End each conversation by having whoever shared their story make one pledge for how they'll approach this conversation.



Resources Worksheet

Exercise 1: Build Trust

- Should start long before you need to have a difficult conversation.
- Create a space of psychological safety where team members can be vulnerable without negative consequences.
- Be honest and as transparent as possible.

Have you built trust with your team? What are some ways you would know you've built a strong foundation of trust?



Resources Worksheet

Exercise 2: Understand the problem and the impact

- Define the problem from your perspective. Is this an ongoing issue? Is there a catalyst?
- Who are the actors in the situation? What concerns do they bring to the situation? What are they optimizing for? (Thanks Lara :)
- What is the observed impact of the problem?
- What is the cost of not solving this problem?

Do you have a difficult conversation you need to prepare for?

Define the problem below. Be sure to think through the problem from your perspective, the perspective of other actors in the situation and the impact on all involved.



Resources Worksheet

Exercise 3: Determine the desired outcome

- What does a successful solution look like? How would a successful solution improve the situation for your team?
For your report? For you?
- How would you monitor progress and measure success?

Tell us what you'd like to see after having this difficult conversation?



Resources Worksheet

Exercise 4: Plan your approach

- What are the steps to reaching the desired outcome?
- Is there historical context or a complication you need to account for?
- How can you frame the conversation in terms of what's valuable to the person/ people you're speaking with?
- Try role-playing to plan for possible responses.

Talk us through the steps to reaching your desired outcome, thinking through the value for the person you're speaking with.



Resources Worksheet

Exercise 5: Schedule the conversation

- When and where would you likely have the most success speaking about this problem? Be specific - time of day, location, etc.
- Ask when would be the best time to discuss _____.
- Remember: a difficult conversation should not be a surprise.

What are some things you will need to consider when scheduling this conversation?

