



Managing Difficult Conversations

Course Outline

Whether you're delivering bad news, giving a negative performance evaluation, challenging a colleague or client, objecting to additional workload, presenting options during a crisis, or simply letting people know that the direction on a certain project is changing, communicating difficult subject matter can be an emotionally charged event. Understandably, many people would do anything to avoid that situation.

Yet avoiding difficult conversations or mishandling them can result in many negative consequences. This one-day workshop is designed to help you approach difficult conversations with confidence and manage them skillfully so that feelings are spared, and the organization's best interests are kept front and centre.

Session One: Course Overview

- Introductions
- Goals and Outcomes
- Guidelines and Boundaries

Choosing to Have the Conversation

- Considering the Consequences
- Establishing Your Frame of Reference
- Establishing Positive Intent
- Identifying the Desired Outcome

Toolkit for Successful Conversations

- Managing Your Body Language
- Speaking Persuasively
- Active Listening
- Asking Questions
- Probing Techniques



Choosing the Time and Place

- Prepare and Plan
- Choose the Right Time and Place
- Use Constructive Language
- Practice Active Listening
- Seek Win-Win Solutions

Framework for Difficult Conversations

- What's Your Purpose?
- Steps for a Difficult Conversation
- Creating a Conversation Template

Staying Safe

- Supportive Tone
- Acknowledge the discomfort of participants.
- Validate their feelings and contributions.
- Acknowledge that you may be uncomfortable instigating the conversation.

Testing the Waters

- Recommended Reading List
- Post-Course Assessment
- Pre- and Post-Assessment Answer Keys
- Personal Action Plan