

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS
OHSU OCTRI-SOM Mentoring and Career Development Series

April 13, 2011

Niki Steckler

What level of engagement is the best choice for now?

1. Recognize differences and choose not to engage.
2. Acknowledge that we see things differently.
3. Seek to understand others' interests and how they are affected.
4. Discover new opportunities.

Preparing for a Difficult Conversation:

What result am I trying to create?

- Is a conversation the right first step?

Are my emotions “in the basement”? (blaming, judging, demanding...)

Questions for getting “out of the basement”:

- What was my part?
- Why would a reasonable decent person act this way?
- What do I really want for myself, for the other person, for our relationship? What would I do if I really wanted this?

Can I separate out actions, impacts and intentions?

- Actions: What would a video camera capture?
- Impacts: Can I include the personal (feelings) impact?
- Intentions: Can I keep my “story” tentative, open to influence?

Reflect and journal:

- What has happened? Describe specific relevant facts.
- Write about the impact on you personally and the implications for your work.
- What outcome do you want in this situation: for yourself, for the other person, and for the relationship?

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS
OHSU OCTRI-SOM Mentoring and Career Development Series

April 13, 2011

Niki Steckler

Engaging in a Difficult Conversation:

- Share specific relevant facts
- Share the impact and implications
- Introduce your “story” tentatively
- Ask for what you want

Post-Session Assignment:

Choose a learning partner to help you practice a difficult conversation. Initiate the conversation real time to improve your relationship and report back to your learning partner on the outcome.

Recommended Readings on Difficult Conversations:

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High.

Stone, Patton, & Heen, Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most.

Scott, Susan, Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life One Conversation at a Time.

Recommended Readings for increasing Self-Awareness:

Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence.

Reeder, Jesse, Black Holes and Energy Pirates: How to Recognize and Release Them.

Kegan, & Lahey, How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work: Seven Languages for Transformation.