

Making difficult conversations doable Jennifer MacKay, Jump Training and Development



Making difficult conversations doable

Far from being just about who is right and wrong,
a conversation is also an exploration about perceptions,
interpretations and values.

3 steps for doable conversations

Determine the situation

Think **DANCE**

Master your **delivery**

Determine the situation

What is the situation?

What would I like the outcome to be?

Is it worth having a conversation?

Fight and flight behaviours

When having a difficult conversation people might behave in these ways:

Fight behaviours	Flight behaviours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think they're right • threaten • push own agenda • blame others • mock • interrupt and not listen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • withdraw • ignore • comply begrudgingly • stifle then blow up • is passive/aggressive • give up.

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Fight and flight language

When in fight or flight mode people might use these words :

Fight language	Flight language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You language • Always and never • However or but • You're wrong • The point is... • Can't you see that ...? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We language • I'm fine/forget it/nevermind • Whatever everyone wants • That's the best I could do • Ummmm and Er • Okay.

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Delivery tips

Delivery Skill	Technique
Eye contact	Keep steady eye contact to show you are serious
Voice	Speak at a calm pace Avoid raising the volume Use the pause for thinking time Resist the temptation to fill silences
Gestures	Be still and don't fidget

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DANCE formula

DANCE is a step by step formula for doable conversations:

- D** = determine the problem
- A** = acknowledge the impact
- N** = enquire and negotiate
- C** = commit to change (contract)
- E** = evaluate

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Dance formula

Notes to self

Determine: What would I like to see changed

Acknowledge: Explain how the behaviour impacts

N enquire and negotiate:

- Enquire about the reasons for behaviour
- Set out expectation and negotiate desired action

Contract: Agree way forward

Evaluate: Set time for follow up

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7 tips for difficult conversations

1. Decide on a win/win outcome
2. Prepare for your conversation
3. Use I statements
4. Ask questions and listen
5. Remember – what's easy for you to talk about
may not be for others
6. Take a break if things get heated
7. Value the relationship

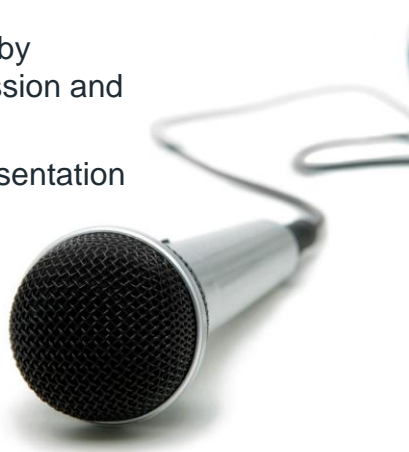
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