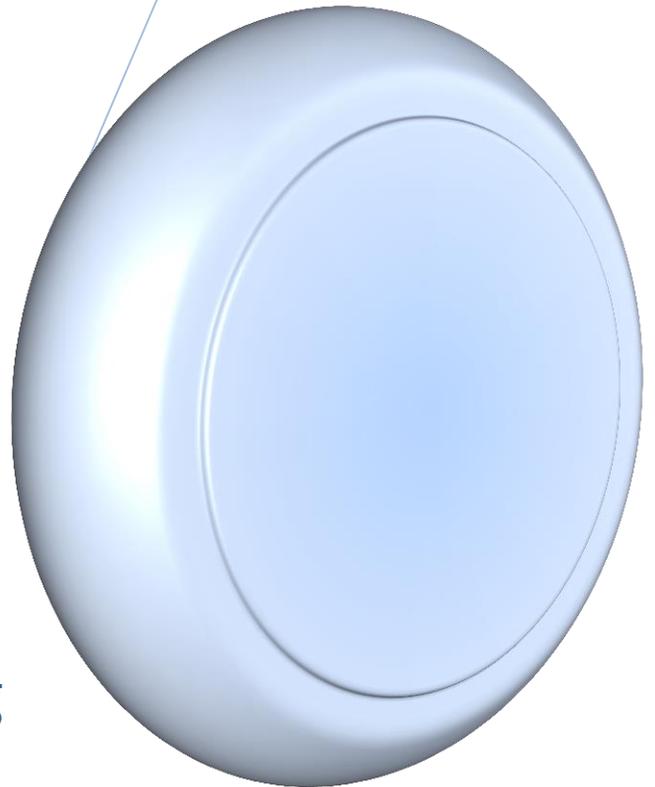


Course Materials

CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS: TOOLS FOR TALKING WHEN STAKES ARE HIGH

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Graduate School of Banking

Crucial Conversations

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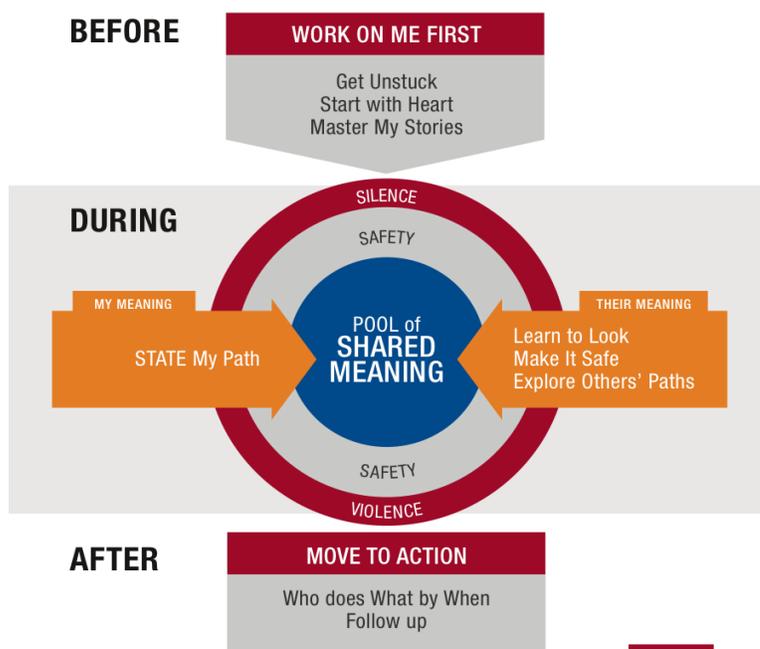
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Get Unstuck – How to Spot the Conversations that are Keeping You from What You Want

What types of conversations, at work would you consider to be “Crucial”?

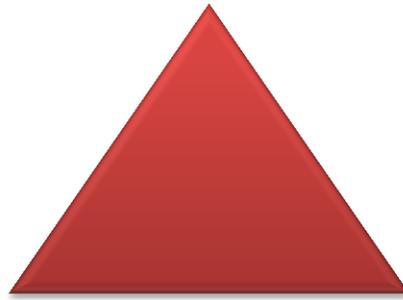
CRUCIAL CONVERSATIONS MODEL



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Pool of Shared Meaning – The facts, experiences, opinions, and feelings held by participants in a conversation that are understood and appreciated by all. NOTE: Agreement is not the objective.

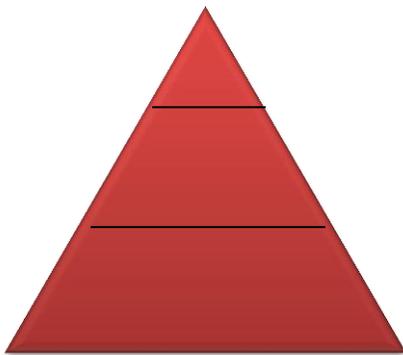
Elements of a Crucial Conversation



The Silence to Violence Continuum – We make a Fool’s Choice. When facing a Crucial Conversation, we often feel we have to choose between responding with silence or with violence. We become blind to the dialogue option.

To Be Stuck – A chronic inability to solve problems or achieve desired results.

Unbundle with CPR



Content – A single instance of a problem.

Pattern – A recurring problem over time.

Relationship – How the problem is affecting your relationship.

Exercise: Will the Real Problem Step Forward?

Your Manager has asked you to produce a complex report for her. She's not asking you because it's part of your job, but rather because you have some background in retail sales analysis and knows how to work with the system. To make matters worse, it's often a last-minute request that takes you away from your other priorities. She's just asked for a "special" last-minute report that is very time consuming to produce. Not only is it tough for you to produce, she's requiring it by 3:00p.m. today (way too condensed of a time frame). To top it all off, you don't believe it will provide her with the information she really needs. But, she's your boss, and if she wants it, she should get it – right?

Content:

Pattern:

Relationship:

Exercise: Real Conversation

With a partner review the examples of Crucial Conversations you identified from page 1. Unbundle with CPR and then pick the issue you think you should address to get unstuck.

Start with Heart – How to Stay Focused on What You Really Want

Review: Your Style Under Stress – Silence or Violence? Both? Depends.

Work on me First

- How to get your heart right by understanding what it is you really want.
- How to get your head right by mastering your stories and creating new emotions that help you return to dialogue.

Unhealthy Motives	Healthy Motives = Dialogue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be right• Look good/save face• Win• Punish, blame• Accuse• Hidden Agenda• Avoid Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn• Seek the Truth• Produce Results• Strengthen the Relationship• Get Unstuck

Restart Your Brain by Asking:

1. “What am I acting like I want?”
2. “What do I really want?”
 - For myself
 - For the others
 - For the relationship
 - For the results
3. “How would I behave if I really did?”

Exercise - Real Conversation

Refer to the example you shared with your partner earlier. Answer the following questions.

- What is your Style Under Stress with the person in your example?
- What were you behaving like you wanted?
- What did you really want for yourself, the others, for the relationship or for the organization?
- What could you say to make what you really want clear? Remember healthy motives.

“My reason for bringing this up is.....”

Master My Stories – How to Stay in Dialogue when you're Angry, Scared, or Hurt.

Your Path to Action – Our Stories Create Our Emotions; We Create Our Stories



Describe the Downward Spiral

Retrace Your Patch to Action.

- Skilled people cut off their unhealthy emotions at the source.
- They stop telling and believing the story.
- Instead, they retrace their path to the source – and focus on what they saw and what they heard. (FACTS)

Separate Facts from Stories.

How do stories differ from facts?

- **Judgments**
- **Conclusions**
- **Attributions**

Watch for Three Clever Stories

- **Victim Stories** – “It’s not my fault!” With these stories, we’re innocent sufferers.
- **Villain Stories** – “It’s all YOUR fault!” These stories emphasize others’ nasty qualities and typically rely on ugly labels.
- **Helpless Stories** – “There’s nothing else I can do!” These stories convince us that we have no healthy options for taking action.

Which stories have you experienced in your bank?

Tell the Rest of the Story

Victim	“What am I pretending to not notice about my role in the problem?”
Villain	“Why would a reasonable, rational, decent person do what they did?”
Helpless	“What should I do right now to move closer toward what I really want?”

Exercise: Real Conversation

Recall a conversation you had with the person referenced in your example on page 1. Maybe things didn't go so well. You were frustrated or maybe they were. Recall the full intensity of your feelings and thoughts about the person or people involved in your example.

1. Write your frank and honest story here.
2. Now tell your experience to your partner.
3. Together, separate facts from stories.
4. Watch for three clever stories. Which, if any, did you tell?
5. Tell the rest of the story with your partner by asking:
 - “What am I pretending not to notice about my role in the problem?”
 - “Why would a reasonable, rational, decent person do what they did?”
 - “What should I do right now to move closer toward what I really want?”
6. Go back to your Path to Action and tell a more complete and accurate story. How will you feel and act next time you face this person if you tell yourself the rest of the story?

STATE My Path – How to Speak Persuasively, not Abrasively

Express your views in ways that maintain safety.

- **Confident.** We must willingly contribute our ideas.
- **Humble.** We must be willing to allow others to disprove our point.

STATE My Path

Share your Facts Tell your Story Ask for others' Paths	"WHAT" Skills
Talk Tentatively Encourage Testing	"HOW" Skills

Share Your Facts

- Start with what you saw and what you heard. You may need to include how what you saw and heard differs from your expectations. This will add clarity. You might say:
 "What I saw was....."
 "What I heard was...."
 "What I observed was...."

Tell your Story

- Facts themselves don't always paint the whole picture. You are not sharing a story in order to justify your feelings and actions; you are using it to help the other person understand why the facts you've shared are of concern to you.
- It's why you are thinking what you are thinking. It's why you are feeling what you are feeling...based upon the facts that you shared. You might say:
 "It leads me to conclude that...."
 "I'm beginning to wonder if...."
 "I start to think that...."
 "I believe that...."

Ask for Others' Paths

This is where you "invite" the other person to respond to the facts and stories you just shared.

You might ask:

- "How do you see it?"*
- "Can you help me understand?"*
- "What happened?"*
- "What's your view?"*

Talk Tentatively

- Allow room for others' stories to be shared.
- Tell your story as a STORY not as a FACT. Avoid using absolutes.

Encourage Testing

You might ask, "If you see it differently, I would like to hear from you."

Exercise: The Strange 3-Headed Co-Worker

FACTS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I saw that..."• "I heard that..."• "I noticed that..."
STORY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "I'm starting to think..."• "It seems to me that..."• "I'm wondering if..."
ASK <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "What happened?"• "How do you see it?"• "Help me understand?"

Notes:

Exercise: Real Conversation

- Pair up with your partner and review your Real Conversation from page 5. Separate the facts from the stories and record them in the first two columns of the grid below.
- Think about how you could describe the facts that have caused you to tell the story you're now carrying around. Add these facts to your grid.
- Have your partner ensure that you haven't mixed your story with your facts.
- Add the question (The ASK) you would like to ask; which is inviting them to reply to the Path you have just shared.

The Facts	My Story	The Question I will Ask

Learn to Look – How to Notice When Safety is at Risk

When a conversation turns crucial for you, think about how you feel and act. Record your responses below.

My emotions are:

My physical responses are:

I then act or behave like:

Silence is any action taken to withhold information from the Pool of Shared Meaning.

Violence is any action taken to compel others toward your point of view.

Make It Safe

People rarely become defensive about WHAT you are saying. (The Content).

People typically become defensive because of WHY they think you are saying it. (Your Intent).

When You Notice Safety is at Risk:

Step out of the content. Stop talking about the issue and address the safety concerns.

Rebuild Safety.

Mutual Purpose. Others believe that you care about their goals and vice versa.

Mutual Respect. Others believe that you care about them as a person and vice versa.

Then step back in.

Skill #1 – Apologize When Appropriate. When respect is violated, apologizing is the first step back toward dialogue.

Skill #2 – Contrasting. When others misunderstand you or become defensive, this is the skill to use.

A Don't/Do Statement

In the “don’t” half of your statement, answer:

- How might others mistake my purpose?
- How might others feel disrespected?

In the “do” half of your statement, answer:

- What is my real motivation?
- What is my true intention? What do I really want?

“I’m not saying_____”	“What I am saying is _____”
“I don’t _____”	“I do_____”
“I don’t mean_____”	“What I do mean is _____”
“My intention isn’t _____”	“My intention is _____”

Skill Practice

Skill #3 – How to Create Mutual Purpose

Look out for these!

- People start off with a commitment to seek mutual purpose, but then skip directly to brainstorming. This shuts down dialogue because it feels as if they are only interested in getting their way. Drive home the fact that recognizing the purpose BEHIND the strategy and inventing a Mutual Purpose are the steps in the process that really link people together.
- Once you do get to brainstorming, it has to be okay to return to inventing a Mutual Purpose – especially when people come up with solutions that don't seem to satisfy their joint purposes.

Creating a Mutual Purpose

1. Commit to Seek a Mutual Purpose
2. Recognized the Purpose Behind the Strategy
3. Invent a Mutual Purpose
4. Brainstorm possible Solutions/Strategies

Exercise: Real Conversation

In your example from page 5, is there a conversation you might be willing to attempt now that you know something about restoring safety? Think of how the other person might misunderstand your purpose. Come up with a contrasting statement and prepare to share it with your partner. Identify a potential Mutual Purpose as it applies to your example.

Explore Others' Paths – How to Listen When Others Blow Up or Clam Up

Learn to help others leave silence and violence behind and join you in dialogue by retracing **THEIR** Path to Action. Your objective is to get to the facts behind their stories.

Power-Listening Skills

Ask – Invite them to share their thoughts, feelings and reactions to what you just said.

“How do you see the situation?”

Mirror – When people say one thing but their body language is saying something different.

“You’re saying XXXX but your tone of voice and posture is saying XXXX.”

Paraphrase – Restate in your own words what you understood them to say.

“So what I understood you to say was XXXXX.”

Prime – Take a guess at why they’re feeling what they’re feeling. It is similar to asking leading questions.

“Is it because you didn’t receive the promotion that has you upset?”

Exercise: Real Conversation – With your partner, discuss the following:

- What is the WORST possible response you could get with your Real Conversations?
- What skills would you use to address it?

Move to Action – How to Turn Crucial Conversations into Action and Results

Never, ever, EVER end a Crucial Conversation without discussing:

- Who does What
- By When
- And how will we Follow Up?

What has been most helpful for you from this program?

What is one thing you will apply or do differently when you get back to your bank?