



**CAREER COMPASS**

Steer Your Career. Accelerate Our Mission.

# **Challenging Conversations**

**Participant Workbook**

# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Objective .....	3
Agenda.....	3
<b>Challenging Conversations.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>7 Tips for Challenging Conversations.....</b>	<b>4</b>
• Ask yourself what your Goal is.....	4
• Master your Story.....	4
• Learn to Look and Listen.....	4
• Make it Safe.....	4
• Make your Ask.....	4
• Explore the Other’s Path.....	4
• Move to Action.....	4
What is your Goal?.....	4
Master your story: Behaviors vs. Beliefs.....	5
Workshop Exercise: Belief or Behavior.....	5
Learn to Look and Listen.....	5
Make it Safe.....	5
Danger Words.....	6
Make your Ask.....	6
Move to Action.....	7
A Few More Tips.....	7
Summary.....	7
<b>Final Reflection.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Contact Information.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Development Resources.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Course Credit.....</b>	<b>9</b>

# Introduction

## Objective

- Apply steps to navigate challenging conversations and put them into action!



## Agenda

- What is a challenging conversation?
- Tips for approaching challenging conversations

# Challenging Conversations

Challenging conversations involve a situation between two or more people where:

- Opinions vary
- Stakes are high
- Emotions run strong



***Think about a time when a challenging conversation went really well. What helped your conversation go well?***

**Think about a time when a challenging conversation did not go as well as you'd hoped. What made the conversation less successful?**

## 7 Tips for Challenging Conversations

- Ask yourself what your Goal is
- Master your Story
- Learn to Look and Listen
- Make it Safe
- Make your Ask
- Explore the Other's Path
- Move to Action

### What is your Goal?

Knowing that you have a challenging conversation coming up can be very anxiety invoking. It can distract you from work and fill you with dread. It helps to go in with a goal in mind. When you're thinking about the upcoming conversation, think about what you want to accomplish. Make sure that the goal is realistic and healthy.

Healthy Goals	Unhealthy Goals
Learn	Win
Find the truth	Be right
Get results	Punish / blame
Strengthen Results	Look good / save face

## Master your Story: Behaviors vs. Beliefs

Behaviors	Beliefs
Behaviors are what a person is doing	Beliefs are not behaviors
Behaviors can be observed, heard, or experienced	Describe a person's internal judgments
Behaviors can be measured	Beliefs are not directly visible or measurable

### Workshop Exercise: Belief or Behavior?

***Jenna had a major report due on Friday, but she didn't turn it in to her supervisor until the next Monday.***

***Alexis doesn't have good people skills. She can't communicate effectively.***

***In a meeting, Sarah's supervisor rolled her eyes at the group when Sarah made a suggestion.***

### Learn to Look and Listen

- Focus on yourself
- Focus on the other person
- Focus on the environment around you

### Make it Safe

Everyone involved should have the feeling that they will not be punished or have any negative repercussions by expressing ideas, questions, or concerns.

**What do you think are some things that create safety in a conversation? Use the space provided here to capture your thoughts.**

### Danger Words

- Always
- Never
- Should
- But
- Worst
- Can't



### Make your Ask

Do	Don't
Know what you want to ask	Apologize profusely
Create a culture where asking for help is encouraged	Remind people that they owe you one
	Talk about how much their help will benefit you
	Assume you know who and what people know

### Explore the Other's Path

**Questions should be:**

- Open
- Short
- Forward-focused
- Advice Free
- Thought Provoking

***An employee comes to you and says, “I cannot work with Sue anymore- she’s just impossible.” Using the tips you just learned, what’s a question you might ask to help get to the bottom of this?***

## **Move to Action**

Moving to action plays a significant role in crucial conversations. When you’re doing this, don’t lose sight of your relationship with the other person- whether it’s a co-worker, supervisor, or a subordinate employee, focus on the benefits of finding a positive solution. Always keep in the back of your mind during these conversations that the momentum needs to be going forward. If you find that the other person keeps wanting to address things that happened in the past, find a way to get “unstuck” and come up with some specific steps for action. Get the other party to agree on those steps and determine how you’ll ensure those steps take root.

## **A Few More Tips**

- Plan Ahead
- Practice, Practice, Practice
- Take a Break
- Consider your Audience

## **Summary**

- Ask yourself what your Goal is
- Master your Story
- Learn to Look and Listen
- Make it Safe
- Make your Ask
- Explore the Other’s Path
- Move to Action
- Practice

## Final Reflection

- How can you apply these techniques at your workplace?
- What is the most important tip you will share with a co-worker?
- Is there something specific you can commit to start doing in order to be better prepared for challenging conversations when they arise?

***Use the space provided to capture your response.***

## Contact Information

**BD17 Contact Information:** Write to us! We are always seeking to improve our learning and development products and encourage your feedback. Please email us with your suggestions and we will incorporate them into future work. Additionally, we are available to answer any questions about the content you may have and provide additional resources to support your learning endeavors.

- [NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@navy.mil](mailto:NAVFACHQTotalForceDevelopment@navy.mil)

## Development Resources

**Career Compass Resource Center:** An online source of information that provides NAVFAC civilian employees access to professional growth and development opportunities.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ccrc>

To access more content specific to the **Conflict Management** competency:

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ConflictManagement>

**Career Compass Catalog:** an online tool which provides you with information to help you take ownership of your professional development. It identifies options to assist in planning and creating a successful career path within NAVFAC.

- <https://www.navfac.navy.mil/ccc>

## Course Credit

You will receive credit for participating in this course. Email the address below. Make sure to include all the following information:

Component	Include in Email
<b>Address</b>	W_NAVFAC_PRTN_NITC_NFI_ADMINS_US@navy.mil
<b>Email Subject Line</b>	Self-Certification – Challenging Conversations
<b>Course Name</b>	Challenging Conversations
<b>Course Completion Code</b>	Code will differ for the live versus recorded webinar and will be available at the end of each respective course.