

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Respectful Conflict Resolution

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Most of us don't know how to have difficult conversations, and see confrontation as scary or adversarial. Avoidance is not the solution. Good boundary setting and healthy confrontation can actually improve relationships at work and home.

Before implementing the 8 step model outlined below, have a brainstorm session on what rules of healthy conversation will look like. This is a great team building exercise to engage everyone's perspective.

“One of the best ways to persuade others is with your ears—by listening to them.”

Joseph Greeny,
Crucial Conversations





Play by the Rules

- **Respect** each team member's ideas.
- **Allow your teammates** to develop their ideas fully.
- **Don't interrupt.**
- **Use polite language** when you disagree.
- **When you disagree, explain** why, clearly and concisely.
- **Offer an alternative** solution.
- **Give credit** where it's due.
- **If a disagreement gets out of hand, stop** and let the team leader sort it out.

Once the team has made a decision, support it wholeheartedly.

Use these 8 steps for conflict resolution with a purpose:

1. I am for YOU - I respect YOU

In the first 30 seconds of the conversation, create safety and respect. Use a soft start up, with an affirmation or an acknowledgement of a win. Be calm and in control of emotions - no anger, impatience, frustration, or disgust is allowed. Speak to the internal judge in that person, as we all know, that internal judge can be harsher than we realize.

2. State the Issue to Confront

Quickly state the concern. Give concrete examples - keep it to three or less. Focus on performance, attitude, or behavior keeping the person's integrity whole. Be specific, without overtalking.

3. Own Your Contribution

It is very rare, that the issue is 100% the other person. State the contribution you made to the problem. Apologize for your part. This will level the playing field, creating another step in safety and respect.

4. Hear Them Out

Allow 2 - 3 minutes to just fully listen. Do not defend or explain. Listen to understand their perspective. Listen for underlying information. After a few minutes, use the five magic words, "Let me get back to." Be in control of the meeting in a positive way that is warm, yet strong.

5. Request Change

With a stance of win/win, specifically describe the change which is required. Attitude issues may be harder; do some homework prior. Examples: "You need to meet the next 4 out of 5 deadlines." "I need you to listen to the other's perspective entirely before you jump in with your own perspective." "I need you to reach out for feedback 3 times a week."

6. Natural Consequences – When Necessary

If it is a repeated issue, or they are not responding well, additional losses may need to be created. Examples: written reprimand, warm distancing, hard boundaries with disrespect in conversation, or no longer covering for lies.

7. Return Back to the "I am for YOU" stance

This is the last step in creating safety and maintaining respect. Grace is poured in to counteract any internal harsh judge that may be beating them up. Examples: "I want to check in right now on how you are doing with what just happened. Do you feel criticized?" "We just had a tough conversation; I want to remind you that you are an important contribution to our team, and I want you to win."

Genuine respect and vulnerability typically produce more of the same: mutual respect and shared vulnerability. Even when the subject matter is difficult, conversations can remain mutually supportive. Don't ignore the tough conversations, lean in and you will find great growth in character and performance. For more practical insight visit www.SimpleDetails.life

Successful people confront well. They know that setting healthy boundaries improves relationships and can solve important problems. They have discovered that uncomfortable situations can be avoided or resolved through direct conversation.

Townsend and Cloud,
How to Have That Difficult Conversation

8. Check-In

Within 24 hours, or the next business day, check back in. Example: "How has it been going since we talked?" "What's become apparent since our last meeting?" This is very effective in creating a final infusion of grace and safety.