



## **Time to Tango: Key Steps to Managing a Conflict Conversation**



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**Meeting your Conflict Management Needs with Spirit and Strategy.**

## Navigating Conflict Conversations: A Step by Step Process

### A. Prepare.

**B. Set up a time and location** for the meeting with the receiver. Ensure there is minimal time between setting up the meeting and the actual meeting.

### C. Meet and:

**1. Thank the person** for attending and **acknowledge** any anxiety you notice in him/her.

**2. State your positive intention in having the conversation.**

**3. Neutrally state what you would like to resolve.**

- Ask if there is anything the receiver would like to resolve.
- Assess readiness.

**4. Paint your picture.**

- State your concerns.
- Speak to intent and effect behind actions.
- Be curious.
- Include any relevant data.
- Balance.

**5. Pause and attend to the receiver's emotional reaction.**

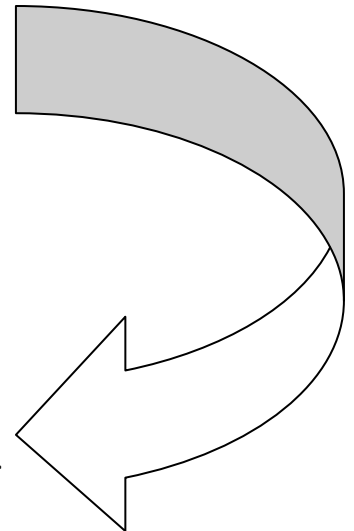
- Use de-escalation skills: empathy, reframing, agree where you can.
- Respond to any questions.

**5. Bridge to your perspective.**

- Catch his/her needs.
- Express your own needs.

**6. Formulate a plan of action to meet needs.**

- Confirm next steps: who, what, where, when, how.
- Confirm who else gets to know.
- Set a time to follow up.



## Preparing for Conflict Conversations

- **Content**

- What is the issue I want to resolve?
- What are specific examples I could share?
- What needs do I want met moving forward?
- What needs does he/she want met moving forward?
- What information do I need to collect to have an effective conversation?
- What might the other person want to know?
- Who else will need to know when/where/outcome of this meeting?
- What outcome am I looking for?

- **Process**

- When is a good time for this conversation?
- Where is a good location for this conversation?
- Who else needs to be present?
- What will I say when I ask to set up a meeting time?
- How will I start the actual conversation?
- Who will I debrief with afterwards?

- **Emotion**

- What is my intention in having this conversation?
- What is my plan for managing my own emotions?
- What emotional reaction(s) can I expect from the other person?
- What strategies may work best to manage his/her emotional reaction?
- What is my alternative if this conversation does not go well? What is his/her alternative if this conversation does not sit well with him/her?

## Debriefing

After a difficult conversation, it is important to either, individually or with a partner, reflect on the following questions to help you release the conversation from your system and heighten your awareness so that you can make future improvements.

1. What did I do that worked well in the conversation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What process did I actually follow in the conversation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How did I manage my emotional reaction?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What strategies did I use to manage the other's emotional reaction?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What might I do differently in the future?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How am I now?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. What, if anything else, do I need to move past this conversation?