

Tips for Having Tough Conversations*

DO	DON'T
Do go into the conversation ready and calm	Don't talk it out when you are upset or stressed
Do hear the other person and without assuming	Don't respond to every comment
Do keep the focus on one topic	Don't bring up the past
Do practice "I" statements to avoid blame	Don't focus on what they should be doing
Do validate what you agree with	Don't assume feedback is wrong
Do focus on specific behavior not generalizations	Don't attack character, address the problem

* Adapted from CounselingRecovery.org



The Foundations of Good Working Relationships

- Trust
- Mutual Respect
- Mindfulness - Taking responsibility for your words and actions
- Diversity - Accept & welcome diverse people and opinions
- Open Communication: Better and more effective communication leads to richer relationships



Newport-Mesa
Unified School District

Working Together



Build strong, positive relationships based around a foundation of mutual respect



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I have a conflict.... What can I do?

Pause....

Calmly ask to speak to them privately:

- Allow them to save face
- Step outside, find a place to sit
- Go for a walk
- Meet for coffee

Be clear of the goal* of your conversation:

- Problem solve
- Express views and feelings

* if the goal is to “win,” the conflict will likely escalate

Share what situation upset you:

- When happened, I felt...
- I would appreciate it if...
- I thought you said....
- I would like it very much if....

Listen to the other perspective

Problem solve:

- What would help you to move forward
- Can we agree to...
- Can we agree to disagree
- Let's be respectful

Someone Wants to Talk to Me

How to Prepare

- Be Open
- Assume positive intent
- Consider Perspective
- Be Receptive
- Listen

How to Communicate

- Listen without interrupting
- Show understanding of the problem
- Present your point of view
- Explain how you feel

How to be Solution Oriented

- Be open to new information
- Be open to compromise
- Brainstorm possible solutions
- Implement the solution/plan



How to Approach the Conversation

- Listen without interrupting
- Show understanding of the problem
- Present your point of view of the situation
- Explain how you feel
- Use Affective (“I”) Statements
- Use Affective Questions

Affective Statements

Example:

- I feel/am emotion
When/that you behavior
- Focus on how you feel and how what happened has affected you

Affective Questions

- What happened?
- What did you think when you realized what happened?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected/impacted?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?