



Making Difficult Conversations Easier

Workshop Agenda

Spring 2008

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An Infopeople Workshop

What Makes Difficult Conversations Difficult?

- Is it difficult subjects? Contexts? Roles?
- Is it difficult personalities?
- Some of it is fear. But of what?
- Aaagghhhh!!! What if it's us?
- Secondary gain. What are the benefits of being difficult to talk to?
 - *Exercise #1 - Your Most Difficult Three? Do You See a Personal Theme?*
 - *Exercise #2 - I'm Not. But If I Were. Where Am I Difficult?*

The Basics: Better Interpersonal Skills Make for Easier Conversations

- Attending skills are 65-85% of the game
- Should there be physical contact?
- Keeping track - following skills
- Feelings before facts
- Reflecting back - staying connected
- The Total Effect - There are exceptions to every rule
 - *Exercise #3 - First, Let's Have an Easy Conversation*
 - *Exercise #4 - Now, Let's Have an Easy, Meaningful Conversation*

Turning Conflict into Cooperation

- Accept the undeniable - "you are here"
- The first rule is to "see solutions"
- Keep light - no "position" is *totally* intractable
- Outcomes and solutions
- The big question: confront or avoid?
- It's usually not "fact or fiction"
 - *Exercise #5 - Let's Identify Some Scenarios*
 - *Exercise #6 - The "Zen" of No (no handout)*

Face to Face - Walking the Walk & Talking the Talk

- Ok, let's hold some difficult conversation
- What are the steps and rules?
 - *Exercise #7 - Difficult Conversation: Practice and Role Play*

Summary and Evaluation

There will be two 15-minute breaks and an hour for lunch.