Bringing Conflict Resolution Skills to Difficult Career Conversations

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion participants will be able to
1. Identify common concerns around having direct and open career conversations
2. Identify the skills needed to manage challenging conversations
3. Understand how to frame conversations about difficult issues in ways that make a positive outcome more likely
4. Identify concrete steps to prepare for having a productive challenging conversation

Abstract:

Challenging conversations are part of every career and workplace. All too often, though people hesitate to have these conversations, preferring to avoid anything that feels like conflict or that makes them seem vulnerable. But there are skills we can learn and practice that make positive outcomes more likely in challenging situations. In this moderated panel discussion, we will draw on the expertise of established professionals in the field of Conflict Resolution, who bring decades of combined experience to the table. Participants will learn about practical ways of thinking and concrete strategies that lead to more open, honest and productive career conversations.

Facilitator:

Anne Kelsch, Ph.D., directs Faculty & Staff Development at the University of North Dakota. In this role, she facilitates the mentoring program for new faculty as well as professional development programs in support of teaching. You can reach Anne at: Anne.Kelsch@und.edu

Panelists:

Kristine Paranica, J.D., is the NDSU Ombudsperson. She previously served as the Director of the UND Conflict Resolution Center for 15 years prior to coming to NDSU in 2014. She is a Fellow of the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation. You can reach Kristine at: Kristine.Paranica@ndsu.edu

Emily Holth is the owner of Sustainable Solution Services, LLC, a professional conflict resolution business in Grand Forks. She also serves as the Conflict Management Consultant for the University of North Dakota. Prior to owning her own business, she worked at the UND Conflict Resolution Center. You can reach Emily at: Emily@sustainablesolutionsgf.com

Upcoming Events:
Civil/Employment Mediation Seminar. January 2-5, 2018. 32 hours. Grand Forks, ND (UND Campus)
Participants will learn and practice skills related to navigating and mediating civil and workplace conflict. They will understand and utilize Transformative Mediation theory and will work in small and large groups, in experiential activities, and perform in role-plays with coaching and feedback from the trainers. Participants will learn about the dynamics of conflict as well as the ethics and standards in mediation practice. Professional Credits available. http://sustainablesolutionsgf.com/events/civilemployment-mediation-seminar/
PREPARATION: The Negotiators Check List

Negotiation strategies need to be developed by considering a whole host of factors that might have a powerful impact on our success. It is also wise to remember that our strategy has to be flexible and will need to be adjusted as the game plays itself out. We cannot know everything before we go into our first meeting, so we need to prepare to adjust our strategy and tactics, as the situations warps and changes shape. Flexibility is vital, but good preparation is essential.

1) Assess the situation
2) What Kind of Negotiation?
3) What Type of Conflict Will We Face?
4) What Does This Negotiation Mean to Us?
5) The Ripple Effect
6) Do We Need to Make an Agreement?
7) Does it Need to Formally Approval?
8) Is the Clock Ticking?
9) Your Place or Mine?
10) Will we be Under the Public Microscope?
11) Will We Need a Third Party?
12) Who is Going to Blink First?
13) Who Are the Decision Makers?
14) How Far Will We Push It?
15) Are We Strong or Weak?

Here are 4 Harvard-approved ways for women in their next promotion or salary negotiations.

1. Think personally, but act communally. In other words, literally replace the word "I" with "we" when negotiating, to remind your counterpart that you care what happens to the larger team and the organization. “Women often have intuition that they can be judged negatively for negotiating, and they’re right,” says Dickinson. “This helps mitigate that.”

2. Sell your ability to negotiate as a good thing. To further mitigate the negative perceptions that come up around women and negotiation, remind the person you're negotiating with that you're actually on the same team. "When you’re asking for a raise or a promotion, these are the only times you’ll be on opposites sides of the table," says Dickinson. "So really, it’s a skill that you’re bringing to the team."

3. Explain why your request is legitimate. "You have to have the goods, and you have to make your case," for the raise or the promotion, says Dickinson. Do so based on your performance and your value in the market, not because your rent went up last month. Research the industry standards using resources like Glassdoor.com, Fairygodboss.com and by speaking to real people (former colleagues and friends, not co-workers.) And make sure to speak to both men and women, and use the men’s salaries as your baseline, adds Dickinson.

4. Ask questions to understand your counterpart’s point of view. This is really the secret to negotiations for everyone; find out what is important to the person on the other side of the table, see where your priorities and their priorities overlap and use that information to come to a compromise.

www.forbes.com/sites/leahginsberg/2016/08/26/negotiation-tips-for-women-men-can-use-them-but-dont-have-to
DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS CHECKLIST

1. Preparing for a Difficult Conversation
   - Understand and accept that we all make mistakes
   - Be honest about all of your intentions regarding the other person
   - Assess and take responsibility for what you’ve contributed to the problem
   - Be aware of where your homeostasis is and the other person’s homeostasis is
   - Choose a good time to have a difficult conversation
   - Set aside a sufficient amount of time to really talk with the other person
   - Let go of trying to control a person’s reactions – use the “And Stance” technique
   - Focus on what you can learn about how a person might respond in a difficult conversation and consider how best to respond to those reactions

2. Having the Conversation
   - Prepare your opening statement - describe, without judgment, the situation and note differences between you and the other person
   - Learn the other person’s story
   - Tell your story
   - Problem-solve together

3. During the Conversation – Speaking Effectively
   - Be descriptive, specific, clear and direct – Use the “Me-Me And” technique or the “Don’t/Do” technique
   - Start with what matters most
   - Only speak for yourself and avoid using “always” and “never”
   - Observe nonverbal communication
   - Use reflections, open-ended questions and check-ins
   - Stay in the moment
   - Don’t make assumptions or judge a person and what he/she is saying
   - Don’t offer solutions by ordering, threatening, moralizing, advising
   - Don’t avoid a person’s concerns by diverting, logical arguments or reassuring

4. During the Conversation – Listening Well
   - Shift your goals from persuasion and winning to learning about a person
   - Stop trying to persuade or force a person to do better
   - Help a person choose to do better
   - Listen, reflect back, ask open-ended questions and acknowledge his/her feelings

5. After the Conversation
   - Allow a person some time to process what was discussed
   - Schedule a follow-up conversation
RESOURCES

**Difficult Conversations**


**Negotiation**

Negotiations, Gender, and Status at the Bargaining Table: Your best tactics in negotiations should take these gender differences into account. Written by PON Staff, Sept. 14th, 2017. https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/leadership-skills-daily/men-women-and-status-in-negotiations/


