

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY FOR GAME CHANGING CONVERSATIONS

Here you will find a detailed explanation of the 8 steps in the Worksheet. Our purpose is to provide “the why” for recommended reflections, behaviors and actions because most of us learn better and retain more when we understand why we are doing something. If you are new to using the Worksheet, we recommend that you read through this Context and Methodology document, then refer back to it anytime you need a refresher.

1



IDENTIFY
my concern or challenge.

It is important to get clarity on your presenting issue or concern. This will keep you from getting derailed or caught up in a different agenda or conversation. It is foundational for staying on track to achieve the outcome you want.

2



What's my
ROLE in this?

Difficult conversations can have a strong emotional charge. This is what makes it important to step back and view your situation objectively. Being willing to reflect on how you may have contributed to the current situation can take you off the defensive and give you a broader, more balanced perspective.

3



Ground yourself in
APPRECIATION

Authentic appreciation is incredibly powerful and is the number one thing people say they most need. We recommend that you start your conversation with something you appreciate about the other—even if it happens to be appreciating the difficulty of the situation. To get yourself into a good mindset, first reflect on what's working. Then speak your appreciation to the other person. It works wonders for setting a positive tone for the entire conversation.

4



CLARIFY
the goal or desired outcome

It is important to first identify what both parties want—and this may not be immediately obvious. So dig deep until you find it. Once you have it, articulate this collective interest to the other. You will be amazed at how powerful it can be to speak to what you both want.

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5



Understanding the obstacles that might be in your way is essential to achieving your desired outcome. Don't miss this step! If you are working in a team environment, take advantage of that collective wisdom. Once you identify the obstacle, agree on a solution or mitigation. Then identify the task owner and deadline for resolution.

EVALUATE

potential obstacles

6



In this step, you will paint a vivid word picture of the outcome you are imagining and how good it will be when it comes to pass. You will share this with the other party and invite their thoughts and feedback. As you expand this vision together, seek to inspire everyone involved to enthusiastically embrace a unified way forward. We recommend spending some time developing this step, even writing it out in detail.

VISUALIZE

the end outcome

7



Make a REQUEST

By now, there should be some consensus as to what is wanted—and maybe even some ideas for how to get there. One of the best ways to move the action forward is to make a concrete request for a next step. This could be as simple as asking to meet next Tuesday at 2:00 in your office—to define roles, to nail down deadlines and task owners, etc. Whatever it is, make it concrete. Give the other party the opportunity to make a request of you, too.

8



Emotional and mental REHEARSAL

This is an incredibly important step that supercharges your ability to achieve any outcome. The reason it works is because you are aligning your emotional and mental “bodies” with the outcome you want. It also predisposes your nervous system to relax. When you are relaxed, you think more clearly.

Here's the process: In your mind's eye, simply imagine the end of the conversation as though your desired outcome has occurred. You might imagine feeling a spirit of goodwill in the room and being at ease with the other person. You could also imagine your relationship being stronger as a result of the conversation you just had. Or maybe it's simply a feeling of relief. Now feel the satisfaction of having achieved your outcome. And feel gratitude for this end result.

Practice emotional-mental rehearsal for 30 to 45 seconds before any important conversation or meeting—two to three times, if you can. Using this simple and powerful process will help you prime yourself for the best possible outcome available, for you and for everyone involved.