

Critical Conversations

Course Summary

Description

Whether you're delivering bad news, giving a negative performance evaluation, challenging a colleague or client, objecting to additional workload, presenting options in the midst of a crisis, or simply letting people know that the direction on a certain project is changing — communicating difficult subject matter can be an emotionally charged event. Understandably, many people would do anything to avoid that situation.

Yet avoiding critical and difficult conversations or mishandling them can result in many negative consequences.

Learn how being assertive, open, honest and fair in your critical conversations, and fostering others to do the same, can develop alignment and agreement within your organization.

Encouraging open and honest dialogues around important, emotional, or risky topics – at any level – can significantly reduce and resolve conflict, nurture relationships and boost productivity and efficiency.

This workshop is designed to help individuals, teams and organizations improve the way they approach their critical conversations, with confidence, and manage the conversation skillfully so that feelings are spared and the organization's best interests are kept front and center.

Objectives

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Confront challenging issues with confidence and skill
- Identify when feedback is no longer appropriate, and the right time and place for having a "critical conversation" or confrontation
- Speak persuasively, not abrasively
- Learn how to suspend judgement to check for understanding
- Learn to have healthy, open, honest, respectful discussions
- Engage in effective, consequential conversations that resolve tough challenges

Topics

- What is a Critical Conversation?
- Deciding to Have the Conversation
- Preparing and Mastering Critical Conversation
- How to Stay Focused on What You Want
- How to Turn Critical Conversations into Action and Results

Audience

This course is designed for individuals, team leads, supervisors, managers and directors who would like to improve the way they approach difficult conversations, and manage the conversation skillfully so that feelings are spared and the organization's best interests are kept front and center.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Duration

One day

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Course Outline

- I. What is a Critical Conversation?**
 - A. Define a critical conversation
 - B. Understand why people are afraid to speak up
- II. Deciding to Have the Conversation**
 - A. Know what the possibilities are when faced with a critical conversation
 - B. Understand your options
- III. Preparing and Mastering Critical Conversation**
 - A. Determine your desired outcomes
 - B. Appreciate the profound power of a dialogue
 - C. Getting into the right mindset to have the conversation without jumping to conclusions and making assumptions
- IV. How to Stay Focused on What You Want**
 - A. Use the six sources of influence
- V. How to Turn Critical Conversations into Action and Results**
 - A. Four methods of decision making
 - B. Put decisions into actions
 - C. Four important questions
 - D. Seven steps to mastering difficult conversations