

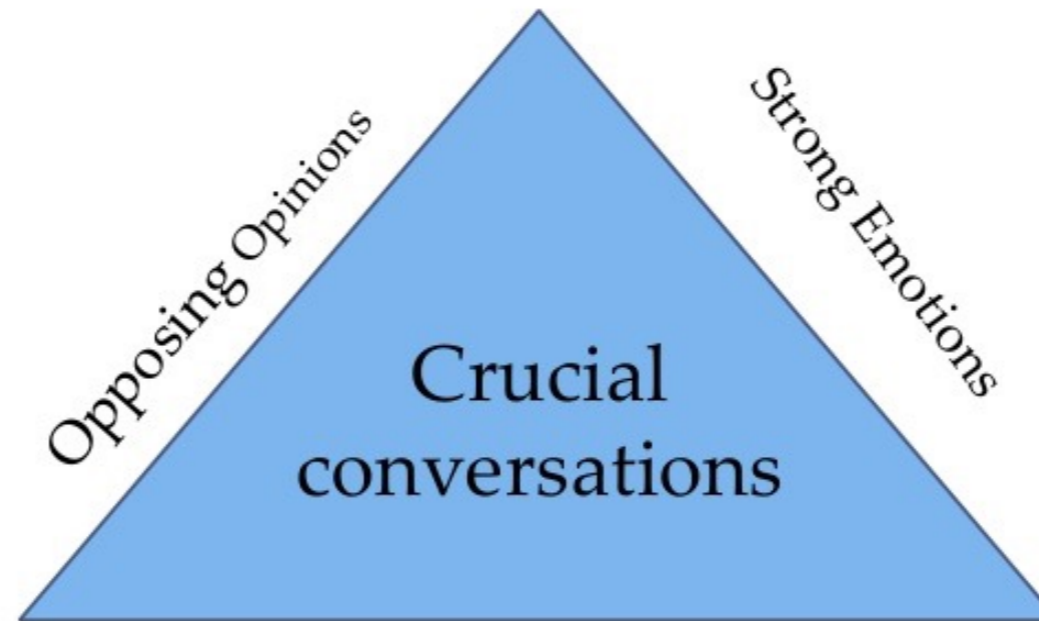
***Understanding***

***“Communication”***

***“Crucial Conversations”***

***LMD Page 63.***

# What are Crucial Conversations?



- Any conversation can be crucial when emotions run strong, diverse opinions are apparent, and the content is important to you.
- Without Crucial Conversations we would have a meaningless life!

## Seven Crucial Skills

1. Start with Heart
2. Learn to Look
3. Make it Safe
4. Master My Stories
5. STATE MY Path
6. Explore Others' Path
7. Move to Action

## Ingredients of Safety

### Mutual Purpose

The Entrance Condition

You know that I care about your goals.

People **NEVER** become defensive about what you're saying.

People become defensive because of **WHY** they think you're saying it.

## You know a conversation is crucial when...

- Your first reaction is: fight or flight
- You feel you must choose between peace and honesty or winning and losing.
- You fail to think about relationship, responsibility, what should be the outcome of the interaction.

Direct &  
Insensitive =



Think **objectively**,  
removing your feelings, about  
**the essence** of the  
message...

***One usually responds poorly if not prepared for a crucial conversation.***

- *Usually we respond poorly when we are the most stressed.*
- Do you yell or scream? Do you bring up other situations of wrong-doing even if it is not related to the conversation? Do you walk away in a huff or puff, muttering hurting words under your breathe (but almost loud enough to be heard?)
- Are you willing to loose a relationship, a important or meaningful opportunity for a quality ex-change in order to avoid the conflict?
- You prefer to be defensive and stubborn and lack the skills to handle the situations differently?

## **Avoid the “either/or” goal trap**

“I can EITHER give honest feedback OR lose a friend”

“I can EITHER shut this person down OR look like I don’t have the answer”

## **Search for the “AND”**

I can give honest feedback AND maintain a good relationship?

How can I be open to different viewpoints AND maintain the respect of my followers?

# Fear of Conflict

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**Conflict** - perceived incompatible differences that result opposition.

- **Traditional view of conflict** - the view that all conflict is bad and must be avoided.



So, Is Conflict Always a Bad  
Thing?

**Clearly Not**

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# How Do I Begin? Now Practice / Pair share

Here are a few conversation openers...

- I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together more effectively.
- I'd like to talk about \_\_\_\_\_ with you, but first I'd like to get your point of view.
- I need your help with what just happened. Do you have a few minutes to talk?
- I need your help with something. Can we talk about it (soon)? If the person says, "Sure, let me get back to you," follow up with him.
- I think we have different perceptions about \_\_\_\_\_. I'd like to hear your thinking on this.
- I'd like to talk about \_\_\_\_\_. I think we may have different ideas about how to \_\_\_\_\_.
- I'd like to see if we might reach a better understanding about \_\_\_\_\_. I really want to hear your feelings about this and share my perspective as well.

place to start coaching yourself or others. This column includes a list of questions that will help you apply specific skills to your conversations.

### Coaching for Crucial Conversations

Principle	Skill	Crucial Question
1. Start with Heart (Chapter 3)	Focus on what you really want.  Refuse the Sucker's Choice.	What am I acting like I really want? What do I really want? • For me? • For others? • For the relationship? How would I behave if I really did want this?  What do I <i>not</i> want? How should I go about getting what I really want and avoiding what I don't want?
2. Learn to Look (Chapter 4)	Look for when the conversation becomes crucial. Look for safety problems. Look for your own Style Under Stress.	Am I going to silence or violence? Are others?

**Coaching for Crucial Conversations (Continued)**

<p>3. Make It Safe (Chapter 5)</p>	<p>Apologize when appropriate. Contrast to fix misunderstanding. CRIB to get to Mutual Purpose.</p>	<p>Why is safety at risk? • Have I established Mutual Purpose? • Am I maintaining Mutual Respect? What will I do to rebuild safety?</p>
<p>4. Master My Stories (Chapter 6)</p>	<p>Retrace my Path to Action. Separate fact from story. Watch for Three Clever Stories.</p>	<p>What is my story?  What am I pretending not to know about my role in the problem? Why would a reasonable, rational, and decent person do this? What should I do right now to move toward what I really want?</p>
<p>5. STATE My Path (Chapter 7)</p>	<p><u>S</u>hare your facts. <u>T</u>ell your story. <u>A</u>sk for others' paths. <u>T</u>alk tentatively. <u>E</u>ncourage testing.</p>	<p>Am I really open to others' views? Am I talking about the real issue? Am I confidently expressing my own views?</p>
<p>6. Explore Others' Paths (Chapter 8)</p>	<p><u>A</u>sk. <u>M</u>irror. <u>P</u>araphrase. <u>P</u>rime.</p>	<p>Am I actively exploring others' views?</p>

(continued)

## Coaching for Crucial Conversations (Continued)

Principle	Skill	Crucial Question
	<u>A</u> gree. <u>B</u> uild. <u>C</u> ompare.	Am I avoiding unnecessary disagreement?
7. Move to Action (Chapter 9)	Decide how you'll decide. Document decisions and follow up.	How will we make decisions? Who will do what by when? How will we follow up?

### Let's See How It All Works

Finally, we've included an extended case here to show how these principles might look when you find yourself in the middle of a crucial conversation. It outlines a tough discussion between you and your sister about dividing your mother's estate. The case is set up to illustrate where the principles are applied. We briefly

## Activity

- Think of an upcoming crucial conversation this week
- Activity...Practice and choose an opening statement and start a conversation with your partner.
- What is your “AND” goal for this conversation?
  - What do you really want?
  - What you really DON'T want

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Think of a conversation that you have recently had.

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- How might you have used these skills in that conversation?
- Essential questions: What questions might you have asked during the conversation to ensure clarity of communication?
  - Confirmatory paraphrasing: How might you have used paraphrasing to confirm your understanding of the other person's point of view and demonstrate active listening?
- Summarizing: Write a summary of the conversation here. What are the main points and/or agreements?