

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

A one-day workshop

The overall aim of this workshop is to build knowledge, skills and confidence in having difficult conversations at work. It helps managers conduct effective conversations in challenging areas such as giving feedback, conducting return to work interviews and in relation to a range of concerns including conduct, capability, performance and other sensitive issues. It focuses on planning a structured conversation, communicating assertively and handling difficult responses effectively. It gives participants an opportunity to reflect on the situations they personally find most challenging to address and it provides valuable practice in conducting such difficult conversations in a safe and supportive environment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This programme will help line managers:

- Plan and prepare to conduct effective conversations in a range of 'difficult' situations
- Understand the barriers to conducting such conversations and develop practical strategies to overcome them
- Recognise the importance of communicating effectively and enhance existing communication skills, eg, questioning and listening skills
- Communicate difficult messages assertively and respond appropriately to challenging behaviours
- Provide effective feedback using a range of feedback tools
- Build knowledge, skills and confidence in this area

FORMAT

This one-day programme is highly participative and uses group exercises, case studies and practical exercises to illustrate problems and develop a best practice approach in dealing with them. Group discussions and feedback are used to develop learning points and to enable participants to relate examples to their own situations.

Participants are sent a welcome pack in advance of the session which includes some pre-course work as well as asking them to reflect upon their own experiences and challenges in this area.

AUDIENCE

This programme has been designed specifically for line managers. (A different version can be run specifically for HR professionals.)

SPECIAL FEATURE

If an organisation can provide real-life case studies, then the workshop exercises can be tailored accordingly, making the skills practice sessions even more relevant and useful.

EXPERT TRAINER

This programme was designed and is delivered by Rosanne Bernard, our lead trainer in this area. See her profile below.

FEEDBACK

See what participants have said about our 'Difficult conversations' workshops:

'The training course was brilliant!'

'Well delivered, great content and fun learning.'

'Clearly a very experienced trainer. The pace was just right and the interaction with the group was excellent.'

'Excellent course. Gave me a lot of food for thought and helped me analyse my own management and leadership skills.'

'Has left me with lots to implement that will improve my role as a deputy manager – need to attend more courses like this one.'

'Fantastic course!'

Any questions? Just give **Helen Nuttall** a call on **01582 714280** for a no-obligation discussion about running this workshop for your organisation on an in-house basis, or visit www.maximumperformance.co.uk for more details.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

- 1** Introduction
 - Workshop objectives and benefits from attending
 - Participants' experience and confidence in this area
 - Personal objectives
- 2** Difficult conversations
 - Exploring the range of conversations that participants find difficult and why
 - Understanding what makes these conversations effective – the do's and don'ts
- 3** Planning and preparation
 - The importance of planning and preparation
 - A planning template
 - Understanding performance gaps. Setting clear standards and evidencing performance.
 - Establishing clear outcomes
 - Anticipating difficult responses
 - Exploring our own beliefs and the self-fulfilling prophecy
 - Overcoming other barriers to holding these conversations
- 4** Structuring the conversation
 - A four-stage approach to structuring the conversation:
 - Getting off to an effective start
 - Understanding the situation and exploring issues and reasons
 - Exploring options and agreeing a way forward
 - An effective ending
 - Other structures, eg, WARM approach to return to work interviews
- 5** Key skills
 - A checklist of skills
 - Participants' strengths and development areas
 - Skill-building activities in communication, highlighting the importance of clear and congruent communication and the danger of assumptions. Practical tips and techniques for enhancing communication, including questioning and listening skills.
 - Understanding different behaviour types and the benefits of acting assertively. Assertive communication in practice.
- 6** Practical skill building activities
 - *Exercise: Participants plan for and conduct a 'difficult' conversation, eg, a return to work interview*
 - *Exercise: Dealing with sensitive issues, eg, addressing personal hygiene issues*
 - Practical tips and techniques
- 7** Feedback
 - Feedback on challenging issues, eg, capability, conduct, performance etc.
 - The importance of managing proactively and giving effective feedback
 - Understanding what makes feedback useful. Principles to follow.
 - Feedback approach and style: push v pull
 - Feedback models
 - *Exercise: Planning to give feedback in a range of scenarios and / or real issues*
 - Using a coaching approach
- 8** Managing challenging situations
 - Managing challenging behaviour, eg, anger, frustration, tears, etc
 - Retaining control of the conversation
 - Managing your own emotional response
 - Minimising conflict
 - When a planned approach isn't possible. Responding appropriately when 'put on the spot'.
 - Boundaries and sources of support
- 9** And finally...
 - Open forum – remaining challenges and 'what if' scenarios
 - Action planning – identifying how participants will transfer this learning into the workplace and what else they may need which will help them to do this effectively
 - Review and close

LEAD TRAINER / CONSULTANT PROFILE

ROSANNE BERNARD



Rosanne is an experienced trainer, facilitator and coach with substantial experience gained in both the public and private sectors. She worked for many years as a generalist HR Business Partner and has experience working at a senior level formulating and implementing HR strategy and policies. In addition, she has extensive experience advising and supporting managers with the full range of HR responsibilities, including recruitment, employee and industrial relations issues.

Rosanne also has extensive experience working as a learning and development consultant, trainer and coach. She now runs her own consultancy practice and brings enthusiasm, pragmatism and a real understanding of the challenges facing organisations today.

KEY AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Rosanne's work focuses on:

- training (in the areas of HR skills, management development, skills training and train-the-trainer)
- building high performance teams
- one-to-one coaching
- expert facilitation (of meetings, workshops, strategy development days, etc)

Rosanne is passionate about helping organisations and individuals reach their full potential. She has substantial experience of training and development at all stages, including training needs analysis, designing and delivering training interventions and training evaluation against business outcomes and performance.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Before starting her own consultancy practice in 2002, Rosanne had HR roles at Bedfordshire County Council, British Waterways and, for ten years, at Kodak, where as an HR business partner within a senior management team she provided a comprehensive range of HR services at a strategic and operational level to over 700 employees. This generalist role encompassed resourcing, compensation, industrial relations and employee relations. Rosanne then moved into Kodak's management consultancy service where she designed and delivered management and personal development programmes, facilitated team meetings and events, and coached teams and individuals to maximise their performance.

FEEDBACK

Rosanne gets outstanding feedback from workshop participants, as the following comments show:

'Fantastic! Extremely helpful and very knowledgeable.'

'Rosanne's presentation and knowledge were brilliant.'

'Excellent course in terms of content, right balance of theory and practical sessions. Rosanne made us feel extremely relaxed and gave feedback to help us learn from the practical sessions.'

'I don't think I've ever had such a good day's training – very relevant, good information and the trainer was very good.'

'A lot of information was absorbed. I've not had SO MUCH FUN on any previous course.'

'Excellent facilitator. Can draw the audience and get the best out of them.'

'I think that this is the most useful and enjoyable course I have attended so far, not only in content but also in presentation.'

'Thoroughly enjoyable and highly relevant throughout. Very professionally prepared and presented. Thank you.'

'Really fun, very informative, lots of great ideas.'

'Excellent trainer, very motivating, clear, concise and approachable. A great day's course.'

'Very inclusive, very clear, very informative!'

'Relaxed style and a lot of knowledge.'

'Knowledgeable and wealth of experience means she is able to effectively advise on all HR situations.'

'Confident professional delivery.'

'Very worthwhile course would highly recommend it to all supervisors/managers.'

'Excellent course, valuable info gained and delivered a comfortable pace, especially considering I have had no previous investigation training.'

'Great refresher that all supervisors should attend.'

'A very worthwhile course.'

'Very credible. Rosanne knows her stuff and holds the attention of the group well. Thoroughly enjoyed the day - thanks!'

'Energetic, experienced, knowledgeable.'

'Very knowledgeable. Prepared to listen and adapt. Well presented.'

'Rosanne was really good, I like the way she delivered the training.'

'It brought the group together as a team.'

'Great at identifying shortcomings, positive and negatives.'

'A great programme to allow reflection and the opportunity to re-group.'

'Excellent discussion based event, forward focused.'

'Great facilitator.'

'Excellent and knowledgeable facilitator.'

'Very professional, concise relevant, held my attention all day!!!!'

'Vast knowledge and willing to listen and answer all questions.'

'Excellent, knowledgeable and kept us all on track.'

'Unflappable trainer. Great, would recommend.'

'Great! Well prepared. Asked questions and got delegates to break down their explanations to find out what exactly was required for actions moving forward. Engaging and inviting. Had fantastic conversations at lunch and felt she gave more than just her training tasks. Thank you!'

'Friendly, knowledgeable, fun!'

QUALIFICATIONS, TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
- Post-Graduate Diploma in Personnel Management
- Business Practitioner in NLP
- Qualified coach through the Coaches Training Institute
- Qualified to use a number of psychometric instruments, such as OPQ, MBTI Step 1 and 2, WAVE, FACET 5, TMSDI, Mental Toughness (MTQ 48), etc
- Solutions Focus Practitioner