

# Crucial Conversations

Spot the conversations that are keeping you from what you want

Any time you find yourself stuck, there are crucial conversations keeping you there. Identify the crucial conversations that you're not holding or not holding well, figure out where you're going wrong, fix it, and get better at everything. **Follow these 8 principles:**

## 1 GET UNSTUCK

- Identify where you're stuck.
- Backtrack from poor results to the crucial conversation that is keeping you stuck.
- Step out of the content, observe the process, and fix it.
- *Critical Question:*
  - What conversations am I not holding/not holding well?

- Focus on what you really want for: you, them, the relationship, and the organization.
- Refuse the "Sucker's Choice." Move from "or" thinking to "and" thinking.
- *Critical Questions:*
  - What do I really want?
  - Am I behaving in ways that move me toward what I want?
  - Am I making Sucker's Choices?

## 2 START WITH HEART

## 3 LEARN TO LOOK

- Learn to look for when a conversation becomes crucial.
- Learn to look for silence and violence.
- Learn to look for your own *style under stress*.
- *Critical Questions:*
  - Am I noticing signs that safety is at risk?
  - Am I moving to my *style under stress*?

- Apologize when appropriate.
- Contrast to fix misunderstanding.
- Create mutual purpose.
- *Critical Questions:*
  - Have I established mutual purpose?
  - Have I maintained respect?

## 4 MAKE IT SAFE

# 5 MASTER MY STORIES

- Separate facts from stories.
- Watch for 3 clever stories: victim, villain, & helpless.
- Tell the rest of the story.
- *Critical Questions:*
  - Am I pretending not to notice 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?

- **STATE:** Share your facts; Tell your story; Ask for others' paths; Talk tentatively; Encourage testing.
- *Critical Questions:*
  - Am I really open to others' views?
  - Am I confidently expressing my own views?

# 6 STATE MY PATH

# 7 EXPLORE OTHERS' PATHS

- When others move to silence or violence, encourage them to retrace their path to action to its source. When others share feelings or act inappropriately, make it safe for them to share their facts.
- Use **AMPP** to explore others' paths: **A**sk, **M**irror, **P**araphrase, **P**rime
- *Critical Question:*
  - Am I actively exploring others' views?

- Turn conversations into actions and results.
- Determine *Who* does *What* by *When* and how to *Follow up*.

# 8 MOVE TO ACTION

