

Bridging Differences: Strategies for Respectful Interactions at Work



Facilitator: Sandra Reder
President & Founder

SESSION OVERVIEW

- Explore strategies for conflict resolution and handling difficult conversations.
- Learn how to promote inclusivity and understanding in the workplace.
- Discover the keys to compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and human rights legislation.
- Empower your workplace with skills to communicate effectively.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONFLICT AND A DISAGREEMENT?



Disagreements are normal in any organization. They don't normally require intervention because usually they signify collaboration and communication.

Conflict occurs when disputes go beyond professional opinions and involve personal attacks, rudeness or resentment.

STRATEGIES FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Determine if it is a disagreement or a conflict.
- If it's a conflict of interest for you, then you may want to get a neutral 3rd party involved.
- Refer to the "Code of Conduct" section in your organization's policy handbook. The handbook should have policies on bullying & harassment, sexual harassment, theft, absenteeism, etc. These policies can be helpful when trying to resolve conflict.
- Meet with everyone involved.
- Set the ground rules for the meeting.
- Work together to find a solution.
- Meet again, if needed. You don't always resolve conflict in the first meeting.
- Monitor progress.
- If no progress is made, escalate. You may have to ask for assistance through formal mediation.

HANDLING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

TYPES OF DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS:

- Feedback on poor performance
- Inappropriate behaviour in the workplace
- Conflict between co-workers
- Pay
- Terminations



PREPARING FOR A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION:

- Be clear on what the issue is
- Plan out the conversation
- Have specific examples to share during the conversation
- Link your expectations to prior performance reviews, the job description and the company Policy Manual
- Determine what level of discipline you are prepared to take
- Think about possible solutions
- Develop an “agenda”
- Share the agenda with the individual when you book the meeting
- Ensure that you hold the meeting in a private location and allow enough time



HOW TO HAVE A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION:

- Be direct
- Be specific
- Watch your language
- Manage your emotions
- Be empathetic
- Allow the other person to ask questions
- Focus on the fix
- Gain agreement
- Document the conversation



TIPS: SAMPLE PHRASES TO USE DURING A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

- I didn't realize this was going on, so please tell me more
- I want to listen to your point of view, but I can't do it when you are yelling at me
- I understand your point of view, but I see it differently
- Both of us need to put more effort into this if it's going to work out
- Can you tell me why don't you agree with me?
- Since we can't seem to agree, can we continue talking about it another day so we can think of more solutions?
- What can I do to improve communications, so this does not happen again?
- What can I do to make this less difficult for you?

PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY & UNDERSTANDING IN THE WORKPLACE



“Inclusion is not a matter of political correctness. It is the key to growth.”

–Jesse Jackson (Activist)

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS



Unconscious biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.

TYPES OF UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Gender Bias

Affinity Bias

Confirmation Bias

Name Bias

Beauty Bias

Heightism

Anchor Bias

Ageism

Halo Effect

Horns Effect

Conformity Bias

Nonverbal Bias

Authority Bias

Contrast Effect

Attribution Bias

Affect Heuristic

Recency Bias

HOW TO FOSTER A WORKPLACE FREE FROM UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

- Educate employees
- Review and revise policies
- Diverse hiring panels
- Objective criteria
- Collect and analyze data
- Inclusive leadership
- Diversity and inclusion programs
- Anonymous feedback mechanisms

KEYS TO COMPLIANCE WITH OHS and the HUMAN RIGHTS CODE

- Employees have the right to refuse dangerous work and know that they're protected from reprisal. The right to know about workplace hazards and have access to basic health and safety information. The right to participate in health and safety discussions and health and safety committees.
- Employees have the right to: work in a respectful, inclusive environment free of discrimination. Be accommodated for their needs based on protected grounds to the point of undue hardship. Make a complaint to the Commission if they believe they have experienced discrimination based on a protected ground.

HUMAN RIGHTS CODE

The protected grounds of discrimination in British Columbia:

- Race
- Colour
- Ancestry
- Place of Origin
- Political Belief (only protected in employment advertisements & employment)
- Religion
- Marital Status
- Family Status (not protected in purchase of property)
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Unrelated criminal conviction (only protected in employment and union and association membership)



KEY LEGISLATION TO BE AWARE OF

- WorksafeBC – Bullying & Harassment Training and written policy
- BC Pay Transparency Act
- WorksafeBC legislation – New First Aid Requirements



EMPOWER YOUR WORKPLACE WITH SKILLS TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY.

- Lead by example
- Encourage and seek feedback
- Provide feedback channels
- Offer constructive feedback
- Clarify expectations
- Create opportunities for teambuilding
- Listen actively
- Plan weekly meetings
- Create an open-door policy/safe space for communication
- Ensure confidentiality
- Reward and recognize open communication
- Invest in a communication platform



FINAL THOUGHTS

“To effectively communicate, we must realize that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.” — Tony Robbins, author and speaker

THANK YOU

Sandra Reder
President & Founder
Vertical Bridge HR

www.verticalbridge.ca

606-682-2262

Toll-Free 1.866.295.3274

