

LEADING Through Conversations



A 2-day practical clinic
on tools to apply 7 key
Principles to lead more
Constructive Conversations



Designed and delivered by
Bill Cropper

Conversational mastery is a powerful tool and critical competency for any capable leader!

► Why Conversations Matter...

The calibre of conversations you have is a telling indicator of team culture, leadership climate and change success and a key element for the effective functioning of any group or team. Through conversations, we connect with others, inspire, influence, energise, motivate and set the emotional climate to build positive working relationships. Ultimately, it's conversations that determine the performance culture of your workplace.

Conversations are at the core of everything we do and they're simply too important for leaders to ignore. Whether building a business, leading change, dealing with difficult discussions, revitalising a team, energising classrooms, coping constructively with complaints or creating an exceptional customer service climate – the essential actions leaders take happen almost entirely through conversations. Knowing when and how to use different conversational approaches and tools is a vital but neglected element for personal mastery, inspirational leadership and business success.

► What is *Leading through Conversations* about?

As a leader, you're the role model for the way conversations happen in your place. Your ability to conduct more skillful conversations is an indispensable leadership tool! This 2-day practice-intensive clinic takes you through 7 essential principles for more constructive conversation that can positively strengthen your leadership approach. Supported by a substantial self-directed Toolkit, it provides you with a useful set of foundation tools to get your conversations out of unproductive debate/argument mode and steer them toward more constructive dialogues. Topics we touch on include:

- The conversational nature of leadership
- Diagnostic - what are you like in conversations?
- 7 Principles for Constructive Conversations
- Debate to Dialogue: Discussion continuum
- Conversational assumption-making
- Perceptual Positions & precision questions
- How to connect with others in 2nd position
- What conversational roles do you play?
- Prac session: Conducting a dialogue circle
- Balancing your say with hearing their say
- Being persuasive: assert yourself positively
- Say what you need to say – cleanly & clearly
- Skillful Discussion - prac session on protocols
- The 5-P Model of more Skillful Discussion
- The Conversational Coaching Scorecard
- Set conversational coaching improvement goals

In the thick of things at work, it often seems too risky to try out a new approach and you rarely get feedback about your conversational behaviour. Our coaching clinics deal with real-life conversational challenges and actual tools practise in a safe, small group environment to help build your confidence to use the tools to manage your future conversations in a more mindful and effective manner.

► Working on Conversations has a positive Team-building effect

Many of us work together for years and never take the time to reflect on the way we talk to or come across to each other, the impact our actions/behaviours have or what's behind the responses we get. All teams can benefit from taking time out now and again to work on their team-talk, to find ways to discuss difficult issues that get in the way and clarify how they can work better and more constructively together. As well as strengthening relationships, Conversational Coaching Clinics conducted in-house enhance shared understanding of conversational tools and increase the likelihood of people applying these productively in 'real-time' in your work group or leadership team.

Do you want to:

- Make your meetings more productive and deal with the real issues?
- Get your point across more persuasively and not misunderstood?
- Get people to talk up in meetings, think together and share ideas more openly?
- Challenge other's views respectfully in ways that don't deteriorate into argument?
- Replace dead-end debate and argument with more skillful discussion and dialogue?
- Keep discussions on track and channel differences of opinion constructively?
- Confront game-playing, defensiveness and other evasive tactics?
- Say what you need to say about issues and work through them?
- Have more connective conversations and really understand what others say?
- Create a conversational culture where people feel safe to raise hard issues?

This clinic can benefit anyone who wants to increase their personal mastery of discussion tools and work on ways to foster more productive conversations in all manner of meetings and interactions.

What others say about this clinic

Very valuable - should be mandatory for all workplaces. Robyn Corbett, Aloomba State School

Powerful, compelling, easy to participate – influenced me in ways I never thought possible! Dennis Wyatt, Qld Health

The next conversation I have with someone will be more than just words! Rod Morton, Centrelink

Absolutely brilliant! Gave me the confidence and conversational tools I needed. Amanda Bush, Mount Isa TAFE

Most productive and informative course I've ever attended Veronica Schulte, DSQ

Absolutely changes the way you relate to people... it has really brought our work unit together! Joelene Goodsell, CRC Reef

Conversational Coaching gave me more practical applications in a common sense way than any other training I've ever done. Penny Putney, Churches of Christ Care

By far the most relevant and practical training exercise I've been on. Ron Waters-Marsh, Queensland Police

Readings on Conversation...

Our information FactFiles offer insights into the kinds of materials included in the Learning Guides we provide with all our programs. FactFiles on the subject of conversation include: FF-1: *Constructive Conversations* FF-5: *The Business of Conversations* FF-6: *Skillful Discussion* All FactFiles are available for free download from The Change Forum website: <http://www.thechangeforum.com>



Positive Performance CONVERSATIONS

helping leaders tackle hard talks



A solutions approach
to delivering difficult feedback

Designed and delivered by
Bill Cropper

A practice-oriented clinic on making tough performance conversations easier...

Poor performance conversations raise too much defensiveness

Dealing with poor performance, as most leaders will tell you, is one of the most commonly avoided and widely feared species of difficult discussions. It's not identifying performance issues that's the obstacle. It's *raising defensiveness* - giving difficult feedback to people where their reaction is emotionally volatile, and the conversational course you chart, unpredictable.

Defensiveness is an unnerving side-effect of difficult discussions. Conventional performance conversations centre on 'constructive criticism' but *criticism is criticism*. The person on the other end won't see it as constructive no matter how much we tell them it is. Many managers deliver pre-formed judgements on people's performance deficiencies. We see this as positively assertive; they see it as controlling and coercive. They're unlikely to open up, and far more likely to get defensive, triggering strong emotions that get in the way of hearing what you have to say, and the hope of getting a positive outcome evaporates.

Positive performance conversations – constructive confrontation

Positive performance conversations work on a simple principle: *focus on future positive performance rather than past negatives*. Focusing less on what's wrong and more on what's expected creates a different emotional climate that enables you to give difficult feedback in constructive ways. It helps to keep their dignity intact and their defensiveness at bay so they hear what you have to say.

Bypassing performance deficiencies and defensive reactions by describing the negative behaviour in positive terms, allows people to respond more positively and focus on the solution-finding and commitment conversation - the goal of giving critical feedback in the first place. Conversations with low performers will probably never be painless, but a few easy adjustments like this can make them less painful and more profitable to all parties.

What's Positive Performance Conversations about?

A special extension to our *Difficult Discussions* clinic, this practical 2-day (or 1-day fast-track) program provides a step-by-step approach and carefully-crafted conversational formulas to help you feel more comfortable and competent to deliver difficult feedback and deal with low performers. You will learn about:

- SPECIFIC steps to make tough performance conversations easier
- Using non-judgmental, neutral language without diluting a difficult message
- Delivering difficult feedback that is more 'sayable' and 'hearable'
- Constructing performance conversations in more positive ways
- Turning performance conversations into mutual problem-solving sessions

Here's some topics we'll touch on during the day...

- 'De-vaguing' – being specific about the performance you envision
- Dissecting performance issues - giving clear, frank, fact-based feedback
- Putting negative performance issues across positively
- Saying what you need, why you need it and why they need it too
- 3ANTIX – starting a positive performance conversation
- SPECIFIC – a positive model for performance conversations
- Performance conversations as coaching dialogues
- Curiosity not criticism – finding out their story and telling yours
- Keeping discussion on track: focusing them on finding solutions
- Handling anxiety and other high-pitched emotions
- Anticipating objections – dealing with excuses, justifications and downplays

Do you want to...

- Feel more comfortable/competent about giving difficult feedback?
- Handle confrontations with poor performers more constructively?
- Deliver touchy messages in more constructive ways?
- Gain new skills/tools to manage performance discussions better?
- Say what you need to say in ways that will be heard and get action?

Readings on Conversations?

Our [CC E-News](#) e-zine **Issue 13** is focussed on the subject of performance conversations. It's filled with articles, tips, suggestions and tool extracts derived from the Guidebook to our conversations master class *Positive Performance Conversations*. [Download](#) a copy to review as preparation for this master class – or just to read and share with others. [Read more](#)

What people say...

"Very positive and useful PD, delivered with a good balance of input, practising and giving feedback." Roslyn Parkes, EQ

"I enjoy the way Bill facilitates and engages his audience – a relaxed format with well-organised structure and the Guidebook is brilliant." Kerry Russo, DET

Other Services...

The events outlined in this flyer are only part of what we do. We offer a wide range of other change consultancy, learning, coaching, team development and facilitation services and invite you to contact us (any time) to discuss your needs or issues, how we can help and arrange a quote. [Contact details follow...] Our current suite of leadership clinics and learning programs also includes: [Follow links to brochures.]

- Leading through [Conversations](#)
- Leading w. [Emotional Intelligence](#)
- Learning to [Lead](#)
- Learning to [Lead Change](#)
- Leading [Culture Change](#)
- Learning to be [Coaching Leader](#)
- Leading [Learning Schools](#)
- Fundamental [Facilitation](#)

Tel: 07-4068 7591 Mob: 0429-687 513
Email: billc@thechangeforum.com

Dealing with Difficult Discussions



A concentrated 2-day clinic on how to handle contentious conversations...



Designed and delivered by **Bill Cropper**

A step-by-step approach to convert destructive confrontation into constructive conversation

►► Difficult Discussions – managing the unavoidable...

Difficult discussions are a part of life... No matter how conversationally competent we are, we all have difficult moments when things just don't go 'right' no matter what efforts we make or conversational strategies we try.

Challenging, confronting or contentious conversations are something everyone has to learn how to handle. Often, it's the conversations we dread most that we handle the most clumsily. How do you shape up in managing those difficult conversational moments? Do you resort to blame, accusation, domination – or retreat into silence and hope it will all slide past?

Avoiding difficult discussions causes so much conflict and stress at work, it's a wonder we don't work harder on getting better at having them? Poorly handled or avoided, they detract from performance and erode relationships – trust goes, misunderstandings multiply, productivity plummets and teams turn toxic.

Sure, there's no set formulas or quick-fixes that work every-time, but there are tools that can help you conduct difficult conversations more confidently and constructively. You can do something about handling confrontation better, overcoming anxiety and managing your own responses to challenging situations more effectively... and that's what our clinic is all about.

►► What does our *Difficult Discussions* clinic do?

This 2-day coaching clinic equips you with a robust set of easy-to-use tools to navigate your way through those troublesome conversations more confidently. Practise a more methodical, controlled and step-by-step approach to convert destructive confrontation into constructive conversations. Discover new and different ways to handle a difficult discussion, learn how to approach them with more care, calm and confidence and get new insights into ways to deal with difficult people and tricky conversational moments. Topics we touch on include:

- ▣ Deciphering the dynamics of difficult discussions
- ▣ 3 E-conversations behind difficult discussions
- ▣ Blockers: Intentions, Blame and Assumptions
- ▣ Facing feelings - core of difficult discussions
- ▣ Tips for defusing difficult moments
- ▣ 5-stages in dealing with difficult discussions
- ▣ Replace blame/fault-finding with contribution
- ▣ 3ANTIX - starting a difficult discussion
- ▣ Dissecting differences and comparing stories
- ▣ Disentangling intent from impact
- ▣ Deal with defensive routines/strong emotions
- ▣ Re-scripting your difficult discussion

►► Who is this Clinic for?

Difficult discussions come in all shapes and sizes. What's a difficult conversation for you? Dealing with dysfunctional behaviour at work? Handling a disgruntled customer or colleague? Dealing with an emotional employee? Conducting a performance appraisal? Telling people their work isn't up to scratch or letting someone know how they're affecting you or other team members? If you said yes to any of these – then this could be a 'must-do' clinic for you!

Dealing with Difficult Discussions will benefit anyone who wants to increase their conversational mastery and learn specific tools and techniques for handling different kinds of difficult discussions more confidently and constructively – either at work, home or in the broader community: managers, team leaders, committee members, project leaders, customer relations officers, community groups, teachers, facilitators, trainers...

Do you need to:

- ▣ Grasp the dynamics behind difficult discussions and how to use this?
- ▣ Identify common handling mistakes we make and how to avoid them?
- ▣ Find out ways to start a difficult discussion and raise hard topics?
- ▣ Deal more confidently with difficult conversations?
- ▣ Reduce tension and take the heat out of difficult discussions?
- ▣ Practise ways to defuse difficult discussions or control the damage?
- ▣ Practise tools to defuse difficult situations and resolve differences?

What others say about this clinic

- *Well worth it... Very good value... A very high standard.* Ken Day, DLGP
- *Great structure and content, presented in everyday language with an easy-to-follow guidebook.* Bill Ohl, DET
- *"An excellent course of enormous benefit to anyone who supervises/manages staff."* Sandy Walsh, CQ TAFE
- *"Excellent... Tips on how to start a difficult discussion most beneficial... Fantastic presenting...easy to learn..."* Stephen Dendle, Sport & Recreation Qld
- *Brilliant! Feel much more capable of handling difficult discussions now.* Dana Farrell, BlueCare

Read up on Difficult Discussions?

Our free [FactFiles](#) include topical tips on aspects of conversations, leadership, change, emotional intelligence and teams and our seasonal [CCE-News](#) offer a variety of insights and tips regardless of its date. **Issue-2** considers difficult discussions; **Issue-11** looks at coping with caustic conversations – adopting a step-by-step approach can help take the heat out of those more challenging conversational encounters. [Read more](#)

In-House programs...

Integrate our learning programs into your leadership or organisational capacity-building strategies: conduct them in-house – in standard format or customised to suit the particular needs of your workplace or team. In-house clinics enhance shared understanding, strengthen relationships and increase the likelihood of people applying new ideas productively in 'real-time' back in your workgroup or management team.

Tel: 07-4068 7591 **Mob:** 0429-687 513

Email: billc@thechangeforum.com

▶▶ What about Cost – and how do I Register?

Course Fee (GST inc) covers lunch and refreshments and a comprehensive self-coaching Toolkit designed to assist your ongoing learning back at work. Fee discounts offered for early registration, schools and not-for-profit community organisations subject to payment in advance of attendance. Fees are not refundable but are transferable up to 14 days prior to an event. Substitute welcome. Max 20 places (minimums apply at the discretion of The Change Forum). **Timing:** 8.30am arrival – 4.30pm close unless otherwise advised. **Registration: Form** included below for return by Fax/Email or register **On-line** at www.thechangeforum.com/Registration.htm. Contacts below.

▶▶ Emotional Intelligence & Conversational Coaching...

In addition to the foundational program *Leading through Conversations*, we offer a number of conversational coaching master classes publicly and in-house on particular conversation themes including: *Dealing with Difficult Discussions* in both 2 and 1-day formats; *Positive Performance Conversations* a 1-day clinic to help leaders handle performance review situations more productively and *Handling Toxic Emotions* on caustic conversations at work. An essential complement to conversational coaching is our series of emotional intelligence programs for leaders and teams: *Leading with Emotional Intelligence*; *EI at Work* for general staff and *Teaching with EI* for classroom applications in schools.

▶▶ Teambuilding – the Art of Working Better Together...

Working Better Together is the generic label we use for our team-building approach. Many of us work together for years and never take the time to reflect on how we come across or talk to each other. All teams need to take time-out now and again to work on their team-talk, renew relationships, find ways to discuss difficult issues that get in the way and clarify how they can work better and more constructively together. We regularly design and run tailored team-building interventions for workteams that want to build a more positive team culture, harness commitment to a shared vision and create opportunities for growth and challenge. Download our *Working Better Together Prospectus* for lots of useful pointers to help plan your next team-building session at www.thechangeforum.com. Or contact us by email or phone or on-line enquiry form to request an outline of our approach or find out how a *Working Better Together* clinic can help you and your team.

▶▶ Thinking about – personalised Coaching?

As an adjunct to our leadership programs, we provide personalised coaching services for individuals and small groups at all levels. A typical coaching program consists of 5 x 2-3-hour coaching sessions every 4 weeks or so, with a blend of face-to-face and telephone coaching and email support. Download our *Coaching Prospectus* for some simple, straightforward answers to what “all this coaching stuff is about” to help you make up your mind whether our coaching approach might suit you.

▶▶ Facilitation & Presentation Services...

As an adjunct to our leadership learning programs we provide personalised leadership *coaching services* for individuals and small groups, forum facilitation, key-note presentations and fast-track learning sessions at conferences, planning forums, team meetings or other relevant events. Bill delivers informative, interactive, thought-provoking sessions on topical themes designed to address or complement particular issues, concerns, challenges and context. Bill’s style is relaxed, down-to-earth, amusing, affirming and engaging. He connects with people and puts them at ease, at the same time as raising their curiosity and gently confronting current thinking. More information **on-line** or contact Bill direct to discuss ways he can help.

▶▶ Our Change Services – Helping you with Change

Need a helping hand to handle change? Organisations often want help designing their own change processes but choices and options around change and working out where to start can sometimes overwhelm and confuse. We’ve been helping organisations and leaders with change projects large and small for many years and we’ve a fair idea how daunting it can sometimes seem. So we’ve put together a *Profile of our Change Services* which provides a snapshot of the sorts of things organisations typically ask us around workplace change and some of the critical change management areas you are likely to want to address. Download on-line or contact us direct to discuss ways we might be able to help.

Registration Fees ...

Other discounts may be offered by email	2-days	1-day
Standard:	\$825 pp	\$495 pp
14 Days+:	\$792 pp	\$473 pp
28 Days+:	\$748 pp	\$440 pp
Schools/NFP:	\$693 pp	\$420 pp

Note: Fees include GST. Contact us to check latest fee offers. EFT or credit card payments preferred. Places limited; early registration recommended.



About your Presenter:

Bill Cropper is Director of The Change Forum. He has a wealth of practical leadership learning, coaching and change experience. His work centres on helping leaders to build the conversational, emotional, relational and team-working capabilities they need to create vibrant, supportive work cultures and high-performing teams.

Bill’s keenly interested in the benefits of conversational coaching and emotional intelligence to create connective and compassionate workplaces, promote productive, open interchanges and facilitate personal growth and change mastery. For the past several years, he’s run hundreds of coaching clinics and forums that have benefited numerous managers, team leaders and other professionals from many wide-ranging backgrounds. Bill’s a preferred learning consultant and leadership coach for public sector agencies, providing facilitation, training and coaching services to senior executives, managers, work teams and community groups around leadership capacity-building. He has a down-to-earth, relaxed and outgoing style and works comfortably with people from all levels, occupations and backgrounds.

Tel: 07-4068 7591 **Mob:** 0429-687 513

Email: billc@thechangeforum.com

“I appreciated your laid-back/informal approach to delivery. I left feeling motivated and eager to put what I’d learnt into practice” Di Grech Bentley Park College

“Your friendly, laid back manner put us at ease right from the start.” Robyn Yared, Greater Brisbane Gifted Education Network

“I really enjoy your facilitation style Bill - a well balanced mix of theory, practical and humour in a relaxed, fun atmosphere that makes learning easier”.

M. Polkinghorne, Disability Services Qld

Other Services... Contact Us

We offer a wide range of leadership learning, change facilitation and team development services and invite you to contact us (any time) to discuss ways we may be able to assist and arrange a quote. For program brochures, learning resources and more information on our services, **contact Bill Cropper** at **The Change Forum** on:

MOB: 0429-687513

TEL: 07-4068 7591

FAX: 07-4068 7555

EMAIL: consult@thechangeforum.com

WEB: www.thechangeforum.com

Register ON-LINE at <http://www.thechangeforum.com/Registration.htm>

	Early 28+ Days	14+ Days	Standard	NFP & Schools
Fee Payable – 2-Day clinic:	\$748 pp	\$792 pp	\$825 pp	\$693 pp
1-Day clinic:	\$440 pp	\$473 pp	\$495 pp	\$420 pp

All Fees GST inc.; NFP = Non-Govt community-based organisations – discount places may be limited;
 Fees current at time of printing but subject to review at discretion of The Change Forum; Fees due on registration, payable within 14 days of Invoice and 14 days prior to attendance; Fee transferable up to 14 days prior but not refundable; Substitute welcome up to commencement; See website for [full terms & conditions](#); EFT & Credit Card payment preferred; Card processing fee applies; Purchase Orders not accepted as payment
 Fee covers course attendance, guidebook, lunch and refreshments only – travel, accommodation and sundries not included.

▶ **YES! Please Register me for [] place/s to attend**

Event Title:
 (Please mark clearly)

AT Location: **ON Days:** **Month:**

Comprehensive self-coaching Toolkit for the course attending included at no extra charge

Lunch and refreshments included; Venue details provided on confirmation of booking

Registration 8:15 am; Session Start 8.30 am; Approx 4.30pm finish
 (Timing may vary occasionally please confirm this with us prior to attendance)

▶ **Here are my/our Details...** (Please complete all fields wherever possible)

	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
Preferred Name:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Last Name:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Position Title:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Unit/Div/Dept:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Email:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tel BH:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mob:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Catering or other Needs:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Organisation:	<input type="text"/>		
Postal Address:	<input type="text"/>		
City:	<input type="text"/>	State: <input type="text"/>	PCode: <input type="text"/>

▶ **Please Send Invoice to:** **Email:**

Contact Name: <input type="text"/>	Tel: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Position: <input type="text"/>	Fax: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Unit/Div: <input type="text"/>	Mob: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

▶ **For Payment by Credit Card (+ Fee 1.3%):** **Email:**

Name on Card: <input type="text"/>	CSV: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Card Number: <input type="text"/>	Expiry: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Signature: <input type="text"/>	Tel: <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

▶ **EFT Payment (on Invoice) to:** TEAM Technologies Forum Pty Ltd Trading as The Change Forum ACN 074816470
 ABN 52074816470 National Australia Bank BSB: 084-472 Acc: 67227-7221

~ SAVE or PRINT & Complete this form then EMAIL or FAX back to secure your booking ~

▶ **More Information?** **TEL: 07-4068 7591** **Mob: 0429-687 591** or **Bill Cropper: 0429-687513**
EMAIL: register@thechangeforum.com **FAX: 07-4068 7555**