



2013 Directory of Public Programs Extracts

Change
Conversations
Connectivity
Leadership
Culture

Bill Cropper

Director

Tel: +61-(0)7-4068 7591

Mob: +61-(0)429-687 591

Fax: +61-(0)7-4068 7555

Email: consult@thechangeforum.com

Web: www.thechangeforum.com





Conversations Count for Success...

Whether you're leading change, dealing with difficult discussions, building a better team, revitalising culture, energising classrooms, coping constructively with complaints or creating an exceptional customer service climate – the essential actions we all take happen almost entirely through conversations.

- Whatever work you do or position you hold, conversations are at the core of what we do. They're simply too important to ignore.
- They're the vehicle we use to generate and exchange ideas, sort out situations, and shape strategies and shared visions.
- Most actions we take happen through conversations. Take them away, and hardly anything would get done

Handling hard talks, conflict and confrontation is the toughest test of our emotional and conversational capabilities. How well leaders and teams face up to difficult discussions to resolve differences is the true yard-stick for healthy work cultures.

- Difficult conversations about poor performance or other troubling topics leave many of us feeling anxious, dumb-founded or distressed wondering 'what went wrong?'
- When conversations are off-colour, coordination breaks down, relationships and feelings suffer, mistakes and misunderstandings multiply and productivity plummets.

While many workplace dilemmas hark back to habits of talk that obstruct constructive conversation-making, lots of people still don't see the need to work on their conversational skills.

Knowing when and how to use different conversational approaches and tools is a vital but neglected element for personal mastery, inspirational leadership, vibrant teams and business success.

And that's where The Change Forum's conversational coaching clinics come in.

Our coaching clinics deal with real-life conversational challenges and practical tools practice in a safe, small group environment to help build your confidence to manage your future conversations in a more mindful and effective manner and make every one of them count.

Casual, crucial, caustic or contentious, conversations are the cement that holds teams together and connects us to others. In fact, they're a core business process!

Tools and techniques to make conversations more constructive and tough talks more trouble-free ...

- Leading through Conversations
- Talking with Teams
- Dealing with Difficult Discussions
- Positive Performance Conversations

Learning Solutions
for Leadership & Change



Leading through Conversations

What's this about?

The calibre of conversation counts for leadership success. They're a telling indicator of workplace culture and crucial for the effective functioning of any team. Through conversations, leaders connect, inspire, influence, energise, make decisions, problem-solve and move people to action.

This 'can't-miss' coaching clinic centres on 7 essential principles for more constructive conversation-making. It equips you with easy-to-learn tools to tone-up your conversational leadership capacity and boost your ability to conduct more powerful conversations.

You'll learn how to...

- Apply 7 Principles to master more constructive conversations
- Turn dead-end debates into skillful discussion and dialogue
- Become more aware and present in your conversations
- Raise the level of frank, open interchange between people
- Make meetings more meaningful & deal with the real issues
- Keep discussion on track & channel differences of opinion
- Create a more connective conversational culture

What we cover

- The conversational nature of leadership
- 7 Principles for Constructive Conversations
- Debate to Dialogue: different kinds of discussions
- Prac sessions on dialogue & skillful discussion
- Conversational assumption-making
- Levels of Listening & tips for listening 'up'
- Perceptual Positions & precision questions
- Connecting with others in 2nd position
- Getting people to engage in conversations
- Being persuasive – assert yourself positively
- Say what you need to say – cleanly & clearly
- Balancing your say with hearing what they have to say
- The 5-P Model of more Skillful Discussion

Is this right for you?

Participants at our conversational coaching clinics come from all sorts of backgrounds – public sector and council managers, team leaders, teachers, health and community-care. Although the clinic is aimed at leaders, it can benefit anyone who wants to increase their conversational mastery and work on ways to foster more constructive conversations in a range of different discussion arenas.



“A great couple of days. The interactive activities were unique and the hands-on approach of a conversational café very useful – as was having a bit of a laugh along the way. The guide is very easy to read and comprehensive. It's definitely helped me have the courage to approach conversations I previously scamped from. Bill obviously has a talent for bringing out the best in people and helping us learn better ways of going about things through his knowledge, experience, fabulous facilitation and sense of humour.” Tameeka Sainsbury – Pacific Pines SHS

Course Features...

- Learn the 7 constructive conversation principles and diagnose the calibre of your conversations
- Complete a Conversational Coaching Scorecard based on the 7 Principles
- Take-away a totally revised 150-page 2nd edition of our self-coaching guide with 27 tools.
- Set conversational improvement goals

Course Details...

Duration: 2 days

Fees: \$825 per person – discounts available

Locations & Dates: See our 2013 Course Calendar attached and on-line

A practical clinic on applying 7 key principles to master the art of constructive conversation-making...



Talking with Teams: Making team conversations really count

What's this about?

Better conversations mean better teamwork. They're at the core of constructive teams. They're the way we stay in touch, build bonds, exchange ideas, sort out plans, fix problems and take action. Communication, or the lack of it, is a constant complaint in most teams and at the bottom of better communication is the ability to have better conversations.

This dynamic 1-day fast-track adaptation of our 2-day *Leading through Conversations* clinic, covers 7 principles for improving your team-talk along with a useful set of foundation tools to replace dysfunctional debate with the art of more skillful discussion.

You'll learn how to...

- Make team-talks more meaningful & think together
- Help people talk up, share ideas & say what's on their mind
- Engage in skillful discussions that stay on-topic & on-track
- Challenge other's views without falling into the argument trap
- Get to the bottom of issues instead of frothing around on top
- Make it safe to be more open & raise hard issues

What we cover...

- Seeing you in conversations – what's your team-talk like?
- 7 Principles for Constructive Conversations
- Types of team-talk: staying in dialogue & out of argument
- Balancing your say with hearing what others have to say
- Asserting yourself positively – say things cleanly & clearly
- Level-headed questioning & the lost art of listening
- Conversational gears – perspectives, positions & assumptions
- Engaging others & making it safe for them to speak up
- 5-P model of skillful discussion & prac sessions on protocols

Is this right for you?

Whether you're a team leader or team member, knowing how to use different tools to have more constructive conversations is a vital yet overlooked area for better teamwork, better leadership and better performance. This clinic is suitable for both members and leaders. We find that leaders who come along with a contingent of their team representatives often gain a lot more from this clinic...



Teams that talk well together tend to stick together. Many of us work together for years on end yet never take time out to work on our team-talk. If your team never discusses openly how we come across to each other or the way we talk together, you're probably perpetuating errors and omissions in the way you see and relate to each other...

Course Features...

- Comes with a condensed version of our self-coaching guide to **Constructive Conversations with 25 tools.**
- **Conversational team-building exercises to do back at work with your whole team**
- **Complete a Conversational Coaching Scorecard to find out what your team-talk is like**
- **Set conversational coaching improvement goals for yourself and your team**

Course Details...

Duration: 1 day

Fees: \$495 per person – Discounts available

Locations & Dates: See our 2013 Course Calendar attached and on-line

A 1-day fast-track to get more engagement and clarity and improve the calibre of your team-talk...



Dealing with Difficult Discussions

What's this about?

Dealing with difficult discussions is rarely in anyone's job description yet the ability to cope with contentious conversations is something we all need to learn how to do better. Difficult discussions cause so much conflict and stress in workplaces. Poorly handled or avoided, they detract from performance and erode work relationships. Trust deteriorates, misunderstandings multiply, productivity plummets and teams turn toxic.

This popular 2-day clinic provides robust, easy-to-use tools and a 7-stage model to navigate your way through troublesome topics more confidently and practise a methodical, step-by-step approach to resolve differences and convert destructive confrontations into constructive conversations.

You'll learn how to...

- Work out what's going wrong in your difficult discussions
- Identify common handling mistakes & how to avoid them
- Raise tough topics without raising so much defensiveness
- Reduce tension & take the heat out of difficult moments
- Deal more confidently with difficult conversations

What we cover...

- Deciphering the dynamics of difficult discussions
- Common errors we make and how to avoid them
- 7-stages in dealing with difficult discussions
- Distinguishing purpose, outcome and commitment
- 3ANTIX – starting a difficult discussion well
- The 3 E-conversations behind difficult discussion
- Dissecting differences & comparing stories
- Leaping ladders – the invention of intention
- Disentangling intent from impact
- Keeping your BUT out of the conversation
- Facing up to feelings – core of difficult discussions
- Defusing difficult moments & defensive routines
- Moving forward – the commitment conversation

Is this right for you?

Difficult discussions come in all shapes and sizes. This clinic benefits 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 – managers, team leaders, committee members, project leaders, customer relations officers, community groups, teachers, facilitators, trainers...



“Dealing with Difficult Discussions is really beneficial in every aspect of your role and I strongly encourage others to attend. You will get a lot out of it. We have not stopped talking about this course since we've been. Thanks to you I'm progressing much better in the area of handling conflict I used to avoid at all costs. This course is fantastic to improve your skills in managing staff for positive outcomes. I've used the tools already and they really work!” Kelly Hodgman, Manager Electricity & Water Ombudsman Queensland

Course Features...

- Practise our simple 7-stage model for dealing with difficult discussions
- Work on re-scripting your own difficult discussion cases
- Use conversational formulas to beat blocks like blame & hostility
- Take-away our 100-page 2nd edition of our self-coaching guide with 20 tools and lots of tips
- Do our Difficult Discussions Scorecard based on our 7-stage model to set goals and develop a conversational improvement plan

Course Details...

Duration: 2 days

Fees: \$825 per person – Discounts available

Locations & Dates: See our 2013 Course Calendar attached and on-line

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



Positive Performance Conversations

What's this about?

Tackling poor performance, as most leaders will tell you, is one of the most commonly avoided and widely feared species of difficult discussion. Organisations are packed with performance management guidelines and hand-books, yet there's scant help on how to come to grips with the conversational side.

Positive performance conversations work on a simple principle: focus on future positive performance rather than past negatives. This 2-day clinic (1-day in selected regions) takes you on a step-by-step tour of carefully-crafted footings, frameworks and formulas to deal with difficult performers more competently and comfortably and make hard performance conversations easier

You'll learn how to...

- Tackle tough performance conversations in more positive ways
- Use 5 SPECIFIC steps to structure a performance conversation
- Start a poor performance conversation on a firm footing
- Deliver difficult feedback that is more 'sayable' and 'hearable'
- Use neutral language without diluting difficult messages
- Stick to the positive side of negative performance conversations
- Turn difficult performance conversations into mutual problem-solving and coaching sessions

What we cover...

- Eliminating – common errors in performance conversations
- Structuring – the 5 Footings and Frameworks to follow
- Starting – conversations on a firm but neutral footing
- Levelling – saying what you need and why they need it too
- 'De-vaguing' – being specific about the performance you want
- Dissecting – giving clear, frank, fact-based feedback
- Reframing – putting negative performance issues positively
- Anticipating – objections, excuses, justifications & downplays
- Handling – defensiveness, hostility & high-pitched emotions
- Keeping on track – focusing on finding solutions & taking action
- Coaching – getting commitment to goals and actions

Is this right for you?

This clinic is for leaders at any level who want to improve the way they handle performance conversations – especially with difficult or poor performers. It's particularly relevant for those who get anxious, irritated or defensive confronting poor performers or those who want to take a more constructive, solutions-focused approach. While the focus is mainly on difficult performers, many principles and tools in *Positive Performance Conversations* can also be used to coach, support and encourage good performers too.



"I wanted to improve my mind-set when discussing controversial matters. This was a valuable experience, especially with the materials provided to take away. It will get me closer to the place I need to be when handling performance conversations." Ian Gillespie, Queensland Health

Course Features...

- Apply our 5 Footings and Foundations model of to structure your performance conversations
- Complete a Scorecard on Positive Performance Conversations to see how you handle difficult ones
- Develop your own personal game-plan to deal with difficult performance conversations more positively
- Comes with a 100 page self-coaching guide with lots of useful tips and 25 tools to manage difficult performance conversations better

Course Details...

Duration: 2-days in major centres
(1-day fast-track in selected regions)

Fees: \$825 per person (Or if 1-day – \$495)
Discounts available

Locations & Dates: See our 2013 Course Calendar attached and on-line

Tools and tips to help leaders tackle tough talks and make poor performance conversations easier...