

Debugging Difficult Conversations worksheet

When you can anticipate that you're going to head into a Difficult Conversation it's useful to take the time to step back and think through productive mindsets and preparation.

This will give you the best chance of having a successful Difficult Conversation.

The Difficult Conversation To help you think about your Difficult Conversation holistically, fill in the blanks:

What What is the conversation going to be about? Describe it as neutrally as you can.	Who Who will be taking part in this conversation? Invite the right people who need to be there.	When When is the best time to have this conversation? Probably not 4:30pm on a Friday.	Where Where is the best place to have this conversation? Somewhere private is preferable.
<p>I am running late on this task I was working on</p> <p>The ticket said 2 days, it's been 4 days already and I'm not going to be finished anytime soon</p> <p>I don't know how long this ticket will take</p> <p>I'm not getting any support I need from my senior</p>	<p>Myself</p> <p>My PM</p> <p>My senior</p>	<p>As soon as possible</p> <p>Daily standup?</p> <p>Weekly stand down?</p>	<p>Mention it in the daily standup but don't go into detail. It should be somewhat private</p> <p>1-2-1 call?</p> <p>Private meeting room?</p>

Debugging Difficult Conversations worksheet

Mindset The first step in dealing with a Difficult Conversations is making sure you have the right mindset to approach it.

Why is it in my own best interests for me to have this Difficult Conversation?	Why is it in the best interests of the other person/people to have this Difficult Conversation?	Why is it in the best interests of my team to have this Difficult Conversation?	What will happen if I don't have this Difficult Conversation?
<p>I finish the annoying ticket!</p> <p>I look proactive</p> <p>I stop feeling uncomfortable every time I have to lie that everything is on track</p> <p>I build trust with my project manager</p> <p>I get to work on something more interesting</p> <p>The more people who know, the more people who can help</p>	<p>My Project Manager is making assumptions about the project that are incorrect, I can help them with that</p> <p>They would rather know about the problem now, with plenty of time, so they can prepare for it</p> <p>If they know they can prioritise helping me</p>	<p>My team is waiting on me to finish this ticket, they can't work on their items without me</p> <p>It helps build trust in the team that we can be open and honest with each other. Next time they're behind, they can share it too!</p> <p>With that trust, we can help each other more. I want to work in a team where we spend time helping each other out</p>	<p>The ticket still won't get done! I need help with this no matter what</p> <p>People will find out whether I tell them or not</p> <p>If I don't tell them, I can't control the message. People will assume the worst</p> <p>I'll lose the trust of my PM, my senior and my team</p> <p>I'll be creating a culture where we hide our mistakes. I don't want to work in that culture</p>

Debugging Difficult Conversations worksheet

Preparation Once you have the right mindset, you can move onto preparing for the Difficult Conversation.

<p>What data/evidence can I gather to backup my claims?</p>	<p>Are there any outside opinions to ensure I have the right viewpoint?</p>	<p>Any possible objections that could be raised and how can I overcome them?</p>	<p>What are possible ways this Conversation could go awry? What are my backup plans?</p>
<p>The ticket said 2 days, it's been 4 days already and I'm not going to be finished anytime soon</p> <p>I've asked Geoff, my senior, to help me 3 times in that last 4 days - he says he's too busy</p> <p>I've googled the answer and searched stack overflow. There are lots of people having the same problem but no one has an answer</p> <p>I've run out of ideas</p> <p>I know that Jessica, in the Ops team, mentioned a similar issue in the stand down last week. If she could help me, that'd be good</p>	<p>I spoke to Jessica. She said that Geoff was the same with her when he was her senior</p> <p>Mike said Geoff was great with him</p> <p>Maybe he's just too busy and it's nothing to do with me</p>	<p>"I didn't try hard enough". I don't think my PM will say that but if they do then I can point out all the research I've done</p> <p>"I should have said this sooner". That's right, I've no way to overcome that objection other than being honest and apologising</p>	<p>I might not get the help I need. I don't think this will happen but if it does, then I need to escalate above my PM</p>