

### Handling difficult conversations

It's difficult because you have to put yourself in an uncomfortable position. You have to challenge and potentially provoke negativity.

Why would we do this? If you want to walk on water.....you have to get out of the boat!

- Discerning God's call
- Transcending fear
- Risking faith
- Managing failure
- Trusting God

### Tips for preparing

- get a 'board of directors'
- practice with someone you trust, or the mirror
- make notes to remind you of the key points

### Choose the right time and place for the discussion

- when everyone is fed and not tired or needing to be somewhere else
- somewhere quiet and private

### Having the conversation

Subjective Language - To Avoid	Objective language – To Use
You were rude during our meeting	You spoke at the same time someone else was speaking
You are always so aggressive	You raised your voice above a conversational level when speaking to the other person
You are a terrific team player	You always meet deadlines and volunteer to help teammates. You share information about what's going on in your areas and always keep everyone up to speed.
You were disinterested in what the others had to say	You yawned, rolled your eyes and looked out of the window while the others were talking

## Handling challenging Reactions

Reaction	How to Handle
Anger Frustration Disappointment Defensiveness Blaming Others	Use empathetic listening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- paraphrase to defuse emotion (you may need to do this more than once)</li> <li>- Listen to the other person's perspective</li> <li>- Confirm your understanding</li> </ul> Share your point of view, support with specific examples Acknowledge your contribution to the situation Ask the other person to acknowledge their contribution to the situation
Tears/Despair	Acknowledge emotion Take a 5-10 minute break
Silence	Acknowledge silence and ask for input Take a break and reconvene later in the day

## Empathetic Listening

What to do	How to do it	Don't
Paraphrase feeling to defuse emotion	Acknowledge emotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You sound (tense, frustrated, hurt, disappointed etc.)</li> <li>- This is hard for you to hear</li> </ul>	Don't use 'I' statements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I understand how you feel</li> </ul>
Listen to the other person's perspective	Ask open questions and listen with an open mind <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tell me how you see...</li> <li>- Say more about...</li> </ul>	Don't switch the focus to yourself by sharing a similar experience or offering advice
Check for understanding	Paraphrase from the other person's point of view <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Your perspective on this is.....</li> </ul>	Don't discuss solutions until you have confirmed your understanding of the emotions and his/her perspective