

5 Keys to Having Difficult Conversations

Using Emotional Intelligence

1.

Know what you want (self-awareness)

- » Why are you having this conversation?
- » What is your ideal outcome?
- » What outcome are you willing to accept — what is your bottom line?

2.

Take a leadership position (make things better)

- » Do you need to address this issue now or can it wait?
- » Are you taking the time you need to prepare?
- » What is the positive/constructive outcome you seek?

3.

Watch for safety (empathy)

- » How are others feeling/likely to feel?
- » Are you prepared for silence or violence?
- » Are you ready to step out of the conversation, make it safe, and step back in?

4.

Master your stories (self-awareness/self-monitoring)

- » What do you see? What are the facts/evidence?
- » What is your story? What meaning are you attaching to the facts?
- » How are you feeling? How will you monitor your feelings?
- » Are you ready to notice your behaviour and to notice when you are in some form of silence or violence?

5.

State your path and encourage others to share their path with you (assertiveness and empathy)

- » **SHARE** your facts (as objectively as possible)
- » **TELL** your story (the meaning you attached with your feelings)
- » **ASK** for others' paths (how did they see it?)
- » **TALK** tentatively (what is/are possible outcomes – 'potentially?')
- » **ENCOURAGE** testing (invite them to challenge your perspective)