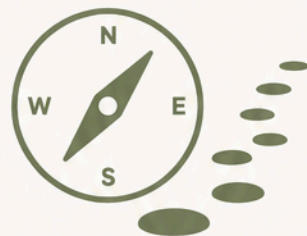


DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

8 QUESTIONS EVERY LEADER SHOULD ASK BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER.

Difficult conversations are part of great leadership.

Asking the right questions helps you lead with clarity, courage and care.



BUILDS TRUST —
and psychological safety



CREATES CLARITY —
and shared understanding



IMPROVES OUTCOMES —
and strengthens relationships



SHOWS CARE —
while holding people
accountable



DEVELOPS YOU —
as a confident
conversational leader

BEFORE



1 WHAT IS MY INTENT?

- Get clear on the purpose and the outcome you want to achieve.
- Am I seeking to understand, address, or change something?

ASK YOURSELF:

Am I clear on the outcome I want and how this conversation supports it?



2 WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

- Consider the wider impact of the issue or behaviour.
- Who is affected, and what's not working as a result?

ASK YOURSELF:

What impact is this having on others, the team or our goals?



3 WHAT'S THE STORY?

- Explore what might be behind the behaviour or situation.
- What pressures, challenges or barriers could be at play?

ASK YOURSELF:

What might be behind their behaviour or perspective that I need to understand?

DURING



4 HOW WILL I SHOW CARE?

- Balance challenge with empathy and respect.
- How can I be honest while staying respectful?

ASK YOURSELF:

How can I show care about the person while addressing the issue?



5 AM I READY TO LISTEN?

- Approach with curiosity, not assumptions.
- Can I listen without interrupting or becoming defensive?

ASK YOURSELF:

Can I listen to understand, not just to respond or fix?



6 WHAT NEEDS TO BE SAID?

- Think about the key messages you need to communicate.
- What tone and language will help this land well?

ASK YOURSELF:

What key messages do I need to communicate clearly and calmly?

AFTER



7 WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS?

- Collaborate on solutions and agree next steps.
- What support or resources are needed?

ASK YOURSELF:

Which of these options would genuinely work for both of us, not just one?



8 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Agree actions, follow up and keep the conversation alive.
- When and how will we review progress?

ASK YOURSELF:

How will I know this conversation actually changed something?



REFLECT

- Which question do I find most challenging?
- Where do I need to grow as a leader?
- What support or perspective do I need?



TRY TOMORROW

- Prepare your intent
- Listen with curiosity
- Ask with courage
- Agree one clear next step

*Lead with courage.
Grow trust.
Create change.*



SAVE IT —
Download and
keep for reference



SHARE IT —
Share with your
team and peers

ELEV8
WORKPLACE CULTURE



USE IT —
Use it. Practise it.
Lead better.



EXPLORE MORE —
More EDUC8 in 8
resources and tools at
elev8yourculture.co.uk