



REAL TALK[®]

Creating REAL Conversations for Results[®]

REAL conversations can only take place in an environment of respect where there is a willingness to understand as well as to be understood. The universal principles and skills taught in this course will ensure conversational success.

Introduction:

What Keeps You Up at Night?

The course begins by introducing **The Effectiveness Model**. This model graphically illustrates the interrelationship between results, respect, and relationships.



Participants have the opportunity to identify their conversations that tend to be less than effective—or even destructive—so they can learn what to do in order to improve those conversations. Once they have become clear about the source of the problem, then they can begin to work to apply new concepts and skills to improve their success.

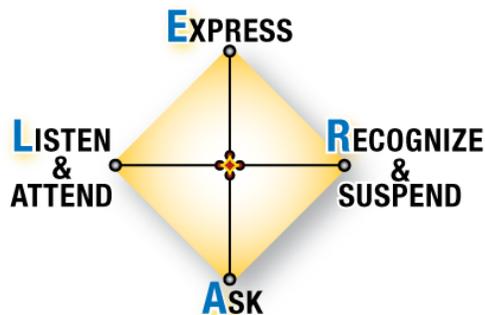
The Awareness Principle

Most of us are unaware when our conversations are about to go over the figurative cliff. This first principle provides participants with a simple methodology that they can apply right now to help them identify where their conversation is and where it is headed. Being able to recognize and manage conversational dynamics will ensure success. Participants learn to be both participants and observers in a conversation.

The Knowledge Principle

In this section participants learn the skills and the basic framework for holding any difficult conversation.

We define *Dialogue* and introduce the REAL model for all effective communication. Participants complete a self-assessment to gauge their communications needs and opportunities for improvement. Finally, we explore the *Fight or Flight* behaviors that people employ to engage in detrimental self-preservation.



The Preparation Principle

As preparation for holding difficult conversations, participants learn to prepare by clarifying the assumptions they hold about the other person's behavior and the situation they need to discuss and by identifying their intent or purpose for holding the conversation. They also learn how to effectively focus the attention of their listener at the beginning of the conversation. Then we dive deeper into the model for holding any difficult conversation.



Next, the course addresses *Undiscussables*—those thoughts and interpretations that people think and feel, but don't share. Through discussion, experiential exercise, and role-playing, participants learn how to share their Undiscussables in ways that are both productive and respectful.



The Reflection Principle

Each individual has a unique “interaction style” which governs the way they interact with or deliver their message to others. Because there are inherent differences from one person's style to that of another, there is always the risk that Person A might offend or annoy Person B, whose style is different from his. Course participants learn to recognize the interaction styles of others and learn to match others' styles, increasing personal engagement, understanding, and effectiveness.

The Perception Skill

Because the nature of our own thinking contributes to the effectiveness of our conversations, we focus in this section on understanding the *Process of Perception*, or the thinking process. Participants learn how their own perceptions influence the way they think and deal with others.

In order to enjoy effective dialogue, it is important to **Recognize and Suspend** one's own thinking. In this section, participants learn to begin to recognize their own thought processes and learn to suspend those thoughts so they can truly hear what others are saying. The material in this section also provides fascinating insight into how perceptions create emotional reactions and how people can defuse their own “hot” or negative feelings.

The Expression Skill

This section focuses on creating respect in the way we speak to others. **Expressing** is the skill of sharing one's opinion or perspective clearly and respectfully; communication that follows these principles fosters collaboration and short-circuits defensiveness.

Participants learn to shift their expression mindset from “me” to “we” as a means of increasing collaboration, cooperation, and contribution.



They learn to manage the music of their message—the tone they use to deliver it. We explore words which are more appealing and thus more empowering. Then they learn to bolster their thinking with data—verifiable facts—in order to create a message that is powerful and compelling. Finally, participants learn to balance expressing with asking by first sharing their own perspectives and then inviting others to confirm or clarify their statements.

The Discovery Skill

In this section we discuss ways to **Ask** questions that invite additional communication and collaboration in a comfortable, safe, and respectful way. We introduce skills for asking questions that defuse defensiveness and improve understanding.

Participants will learn to recognize four asking skills: *Questioning*, *Requesting*, *Reflecting*, *Guessing*, and *Summarizing*. Experiential exercises allow students to practice using these powerful skills appropriately and effectively.

The content in this section also explores specific ways to use questions that gain more information while creating safety and respect between individuals.

The Connection Skill

This principle focuses on **Listening and Attending** to encourage active listening. In this section we address the concept of the internal voice, or the so-called *headspeak* that constantly editorializes, judges, evaluates, or advises. Several rounds of scripted role-play teach



participants to recognize and manage their own internal voices.

Participants learn how to listen in a way that is focused, non-judgmental, specific, and empathetic.

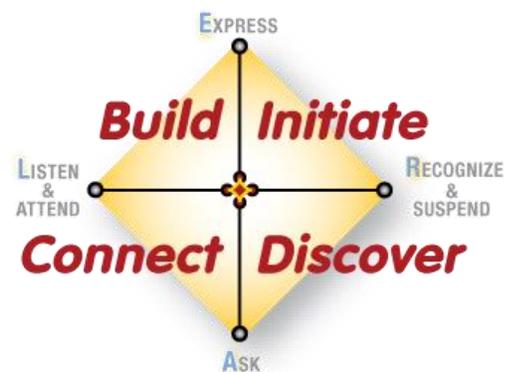
We then introduce the **EASE Model**, which provides a framework for defusing negative or “hot” emotion while increasing understanding and connection. This model was developed based on current research into brain function and helps explain why people sometimes react emotionally. Participants learn how to apply the EASE Model in order to restore rationality and resolve conflict.



Progression

The final section of the course adapts the Dialogue Model introduced earlier in the course to a practical problem-solving application by considering the fields in the model—**Initiate**, **Discover**, **Connect**, and **Build**. Participants practice using the model to create shared problem-solving. As a summary to the course, participants have an opportunity to practice all of the Dialogue skills as they work to solve a business challenge in a mutually beneficial way.

Participants conclude the session by creating personal action plans that will enhance their communication effectiveness.



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effectively teaches how to spot communication behaviors and tendencies that sabotage attempts to establish dialogue, and, more importantly, demonstrates precisely what can be done about them! Participants learn to increase their ability to use all the skills of effective conversation to increase personal and professional results. An individual’s ability to hold the tough conversations is the key to getting results.

This course is designed specifically to help people get results.

