

Crucial Accountability (formerly Crucial Confrontations)

Crucial Tidbits

- “Crucial conversations” are when the parties have conflicting viewpoints and help keep things from escalating. “Accountability conversations” need to happen when there’s a gap between expectation and performance.
- It doesn’t matter where you are relative to each other on the chain of command. Anyone can start an accountability conversation.
- When working as teams - and welcoming new members - talk about how the group deals with feedback and difficult conversations. This helps create a safe culture and healthy habits.
- Always ask to have an accountability conversation *in person* and *in private*. Be candid and “disarmingly caring.”
- Your emotional lizard hindbrain can hijack a conversation. Get it under control before you ask to start.
- People who feel unsafe go to Silence or Violence – same for you as well as the other person.
- Unpack your story by retracing the path of your assumptions. Ask yourself: “Why would someone do this if they were Reasonable, Rational and Well-meaning (decent)?”
- People tell themselves stories to process information. We make assumptions because we are uncomfortable with gaps in information.
- People really hate unresolved situations. If there is any unresolved part of an issue, the story we tell ourselves will be negative.
- “Check-in” to make it clear that you know you don’t have all the facts of the situation.
- Don’t fall into the “great leader” trappings of motivation. Rousing speeches only work in movies.
- Practicing having accountability conversations is really helpful and surprisingly difficult.

Key Phrases

End with a question

- Can you help me understand why ___ happened?
- How do you see it?
- Can you tell me about....?
- Can we talk about why this is happening?
- What do you take away from this situation?
- What else do I need to know?
- Is there something keeping you from doing ___?
- Are there other circumstances....?
- Is there an unresolved issue with?

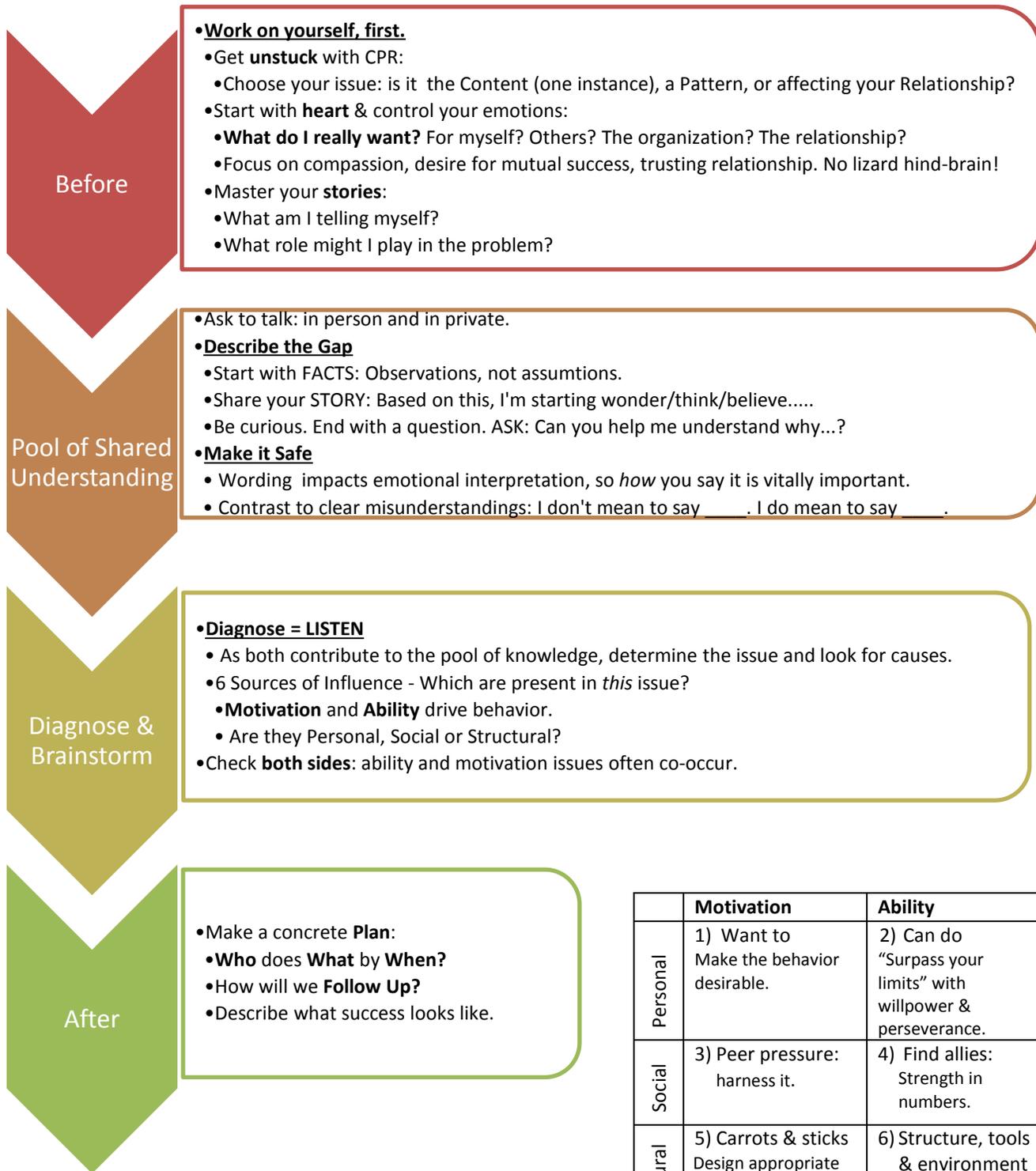
Diagnose & Check both sides

- What I’m hearing is.....
- If we do ___, are you willing/able to do ___?
- Can I explore some natural consequences of ___ with you?
- You may not know that ___ is affected by your actions....
- What do you think would help?

Intentions and misunderstandings

- Transparency: Let me be clear about why...
- Response: No, I don’t always do X..... I don’t Y, I do want to Z.
- Contrast:
 - I don’t intend to ___, I do want to ___.
 - I’m not criticizing your ability to ___, I’m trying to help ___.

Crucial Accountability Model



	Motivation	Ability
Personal	1) Want to Make the behavior desirable.	2) Can do "Surpass your limits" with willpower & perseverance.
Social	3) Peer pressure: harness it.	4) Find allies: Strength in numbers.
Structural	5) Carrots & sticks Design appropriate rewards; demand accountability	6) Structure, tools & environment Change the environment.