Negotiation Results: Overcoming Communication Roadblocks

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Successful Negotiators
Successful Negotiators
Unsuccessful Negotiators
Negotiation = Difficult Conversation
What is the Cost of “Difficult Conversations”? 

CPP Inc. 2008 Study on Workplace Conflict  (n = 5000)  

Annual Cost: $360B in paid hrs, 385M working days, 2.8hrs/wk)

- 80% experience conflict with other departments and teams
- 65% said too many cooks in the kitchen and there’s confusion about who is doing what
- 40% said communication with organizational leadership is ineffective
- 25% said just trying to avoid conflict kills morale and causes illness and absence from work
Goals for the Session

1. Story: Talented Resource Negotiators

2. Learn three “Guard Rails” for negotiations

3. Better Negotiator
UN Resident Coordinator: Top Field Level Leader
Role-play 1: Negotiate with Tribal Leader
Role-play 2: Negotiate with Angry Peer
Role-play 3: Negotiate Stakeholder Meeting
Role-play 4: Negotiate Hostile Press Interview
Pass Rate

25%

78%
Three Guardrails: To Keep You on Track
Guardrail #1: Avoid Positional Escalation

• We take positions
• Positions cause opposite positions
• Which cause the conversation to escalate
The Human Brain is designed to defend against positions it perceives are a threat to survival
Guardrail #1: Positional Escalation Patterns

Escalatory “Fight” Pattern

Avoidance “Flight” Pattern

“Freeze” Pattern
Guardrail #1: Avoid Defensiveness
Guardrail #2 | Practice Intelligent Confusion

Move from judgment and frustration to “intelligent confusion” and curiosity

Ask open-ended questions…
What % of communication content on average is:

20-25 % Kept/Integrated

75-80 % Lost
“Help Me Understand!”
The other party doesn’t see how the downstream impact of their actions affects THEM.

Mantra: When ___ happens it leads to ___ and ___ and ___ it affects the (process-team-outcome-YOU)
Circle of Impact

- Vendor Impact
- Vendor Behavior
- Process Impact
- Agency Impact
- Public Impact
Three Guard Rails

1. Avoid Defensiveness
2. Practice Intelligent Confusion
   • Help Me Understand
3. Convey Downstream Impact
Negotiation = Difficult Conversation
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