**Crucial conversations are interactions that happen to everyone.**

**They are day-to-day conversations that affect your life.**

Some of the most common instances are critiquing a colleague’s work, talking to a team member who isn’t keeping commitments, talking to a coworker who refuses to listen or behaves in some other inappropriate way. If the person becomes rude or belligerent and a crucial conversation must take place – remember that:



In a crucial conversation **opinions vary**, the **stakes are high**, and **emotions run strong**.

**Most of these conversations involve the way people behave or perform.**

To enhance your success -

* Don’t let your own apprehension stand in the way
* Prepare rather than confront without a plan
* The goal is to achieve a positive outcome for both parties
* Set a clear goal for what you want to focus on during the conversation
* Consider the other person’s background and how they best receive comments
* Pick the best time and location
* Arrive relaxed and begin with positive thoughts and appreciate the opportunity to talk
* Communicate your hopes for the conversation, be specific and focus on your goal
* Try not to get sidetracked with other topics or emotional responses
* Discuss your feelings and why the situation is important to you and how it is impacting you and others
* Listen to the other party’s perspective
* Take a stance of curiosity rather than becoming defensive
* Keep in mind possible solutions and try to be flexible in finding ways to fix the problem
* If there is some agreement make sure there is a shared understanding

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGcI6RWCohk>)



During the crucial conversation, when confronted with an opposing, negative or incomprehensible comment - Respond with one of the following:

* That’s interesting, **tell** me more.
* That’s interesting, why would you **say** that?
* That’s interesting, why would you **do** that?
* That’s interesting, why would you **ask** that?

Monitor the dynamic of the team discussion and do all you can to make people safe. In the absence of safety, people may turn to silence or violence – neither will resolve the differences between people.

Silence may present itself through masking, avoiding or withdrawing.

Violence may present itself through controlling, labelling or attacking.