

Managing Challenging Conversations: Thoughtful Dialogue, Positive Change

Core skills developed



Decision making & judgement



Productivity & personal effectiveness



Leading self & others



Collaboration & teamwork



Effective communication



Adaptability & learning agility



Relationship & stakeholder management



Analytical thinking & problem solving



Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Benefits

In today's shifting workplace, leaders face constant transition, economic pressure and evolving expectations that make the ability to address challenging issues essential for maintaining alignment. Navigating these moments with clarity helps teams remain focused and resilient during periods of change, while avoidance can quietly stall collective progress.

This course develops the composure and intent required to handle complex discussions with confidence and professional poise. It focuses on assessing when to engage, identifying the factors shaping a situation and structuring conversations so interactions remain purposeful and well-directed. The approach emphasises managing personal responses under pressure and guiding dialogue towards constructive outcomes that respect all parties involved.

The result is greater confidence addressing sensitive issues, sustained momentum through challenge and the preservation of long-term working relationships.



Course participants will demonstrate greater professional credibility, stronger confidence in judgement, and increased personal authority in challenging conversations where composure and clarity matter.



Stakeholders will experience higher levels of trust, more constructive engagement, and steadier collaboration when sensitive or contentious issues are addressed.



Your organisation will benefit from a more resilient workplace culture, improved operational efficiency and the protection of professional trust as challenging conversations are resolved with clarity and care.

Modules

Choosing the conversation with intent

1

- Identifying the specific drivers of a challenging conversation and the risks of avoiding it
- Deciding whether to initiate or delay an interaction using practical judgment prompts

Competency: Make sound decisions about whether, when and how to engage so time and professional trust remain protected

Diagnosing the hidden dynamics

2

- Exploring the social and professional layers beneath the surface before engaging
- Examining behaviours and assumptions to clarify the root causes of potential interpersonal tension

Competency: Diagnose the underlying factors of complex conversations so they can begin with objectivity and focus

Designing the conversation structure

3

- Clarifying professional boundaries and desired outcomes to establish direction and intent
- Mapping the flow of the discussion using a logical conversation sequence

Competency: Design purposeful interactions using clear, structured frameworks so dialogue remains productive and focused

Establishing credibility and trust from the start

4

- Opening the discussion to encourage openness and invite collaborative dialogue
- Regulating internal responses to project composure and leadership presence from the start

Competency: Open interactions with professional poise to set a constructive tone early, establishing trust and direction

Sustaining momentum under pressure

5

- Managing personal and interpersonal energy while maintaining focus on the goal
- Using active listening techniques to keep exchanges constructive and forward-moving

Competency: Maintain productive dialogue when emotions run high to avoid conversations escalating or stalling

Redirecting the dialogue towards progress

6

- Responding effectively when discussions become circular or meet unexpected resistance
- Reframing the core issues to remove obstacles and regain professional traction

Competency: Realign stalled interactions to ensure steady movement towards resolution

Securing commitment and accountability

7

- Moving exchanges towards concrete outcomes and mutual agreement
- Finalising next steps and responsibilities while strengthening the working relationship

Competency: Convert complex discussions into actionable agreements and shared professional understanding

Integrating skills into leadership practice

8

- Practising full-length professional scenarios with structured feedback
- Translating insights on personal performance into clear development priorities and leadership actions

Competency: Apply communication techniques consistently to enhance long-term effectiveness and judgement

Outcomes

- ★ Prepare for challenging interactions using diagnostic tools and structured frameworks to ensure conversations have clear purpose, defined boundaries and professional focus.
- ★ Facilitate discussions with composure and agility to sustain constructive dialogue and professional rapport when navigating resistance or complex emotions.
- ★ Secure meaningful results by converting exchanges into clear agreements and accountable actions that strengthen long-term working relationships.