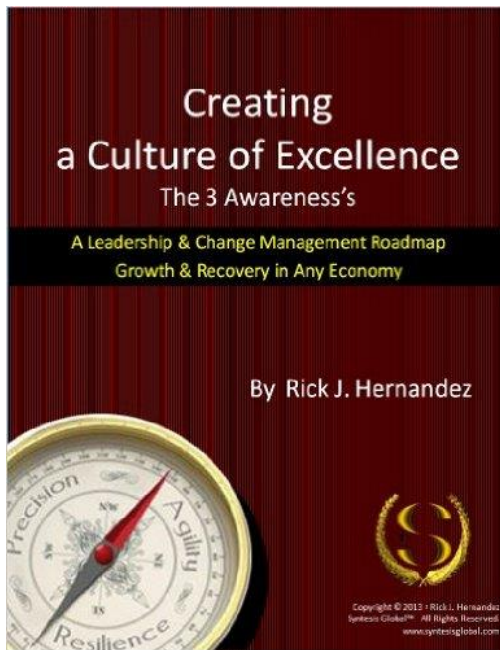


# Conducting Difficult Conversations

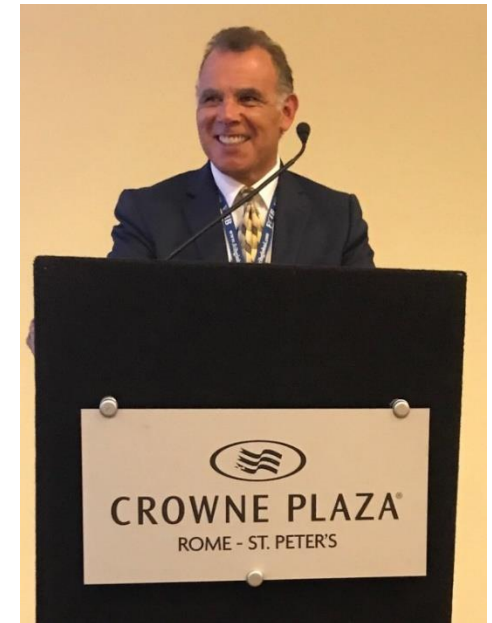
*"Inspiring Executive Excellence Beyond the Pace of Change"*



<https://amzn.to/2xTtwhY>



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# Syntesis Global™ LLC

## About Us

- Specialized Management Consulting firm: Executive & Management Coaching, Leadership & Team Optimization (Change/Integration-M/A), Outplacement (Career Transition), Global Human Resources Solutions
- Industries served: Aerospace, Financial Energy, Technology, Utilities, R&D, Pharma/Biotech, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Food & Beverage Industries
- Customization, audience-specific design: Culture Climate Surveys & Assessment
- Global expertise working with top Fortune 50/100/500 organizations within the public and private sectors
- Seasoned consultants with international expertise
- Thousands of participants served annually





# Webinar Outcomes



1. Managing Difficult Conversations
2. Identifying the “*Real*” Problem
3. Delivering Your Resolution Message
4. Next Steps After Conflict
5. Knowing Your Audience

# Thought for the day...



# Shift in Perception

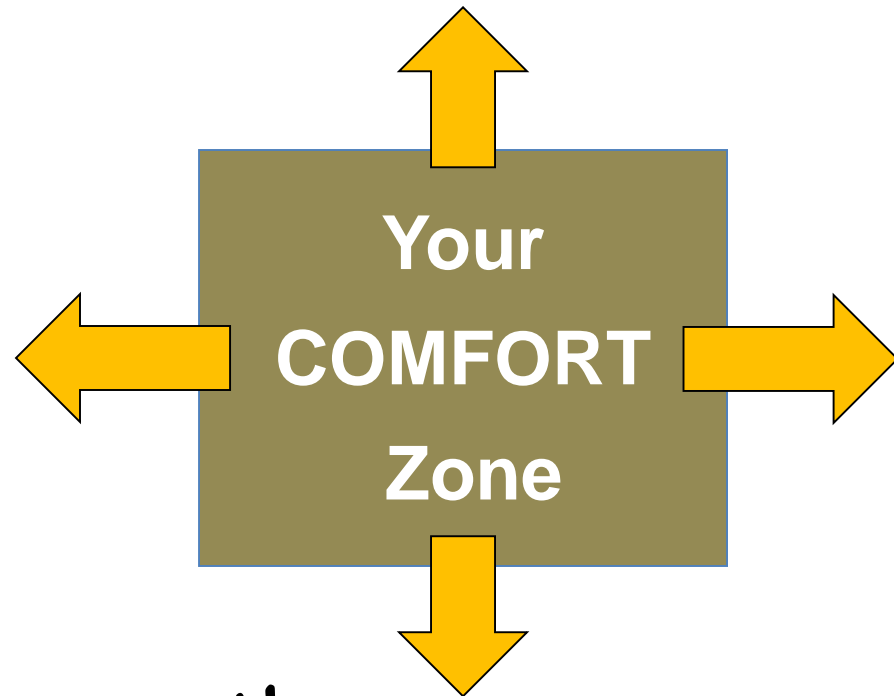
What are the Implications of effective Leadership specific to the following?

- Change Optimization
- Communication Effectiveness
- Future Growth & Direction
- Process, Systems & Business





# “Think Around the Corner”

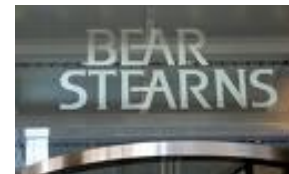


Don't MSU!

# The Impact of Change

R&D Trade Agreements Taxation Corporate Governance Automation

Lean Risk



Profitability



Stockholder Equity SERVICE

Quarterly reporting

Middle East

Dividends



Leadership

National Security

Cash Optimization China

Financial Controls



OSHA

Global

Politics

DEBT

Technology & Science

Automation

Quality

Healthcare

Pace of Change

Risk Management

Threat of terrorism

Globalization



Compliance

Bail-Outs

Foreign Debt



Bio Fuels

COSTS

Competition



Innovation

Gov't Intervention & Controls

City Ordinances

Pressure on short term performance



Credit Debt

Covenants

LABOR

Integration

Gov't Grants

Union Negotiations

FUNDING

FOREIGN POLICY

Regulations

A.I.

IOT



Investor Activism

Renewable Energy

Corporate Scandals

Brexit

Policies

Growth

EPA

M&A Activity

Recession

CHRYSLER



# A New Normal – A New Economy

- The Paradigm of Global Business & Competition has Changed
- **Future Growth Requires Innovation & Leadership Communication to ensure Success**
- Power of Strategic Vision is Key
- Unleashing the Power of People
- Multi-Generational Gaps / Millennial Development
- Foreign Markets / Growth
- Global Logistics & Supply/Chain (Off-Shoring)
- Quantum Technological Advances (A.I./IOT/Crypto)
- The Pace of Change
- **Succession Planning**







**New Aspects of Influence:**  
*Conscious Leadership®*

# The 3 Pillars to “*Conscious Leadership*”®

## PRECISION

Thought Leadership

### Self-Awareness

Change Optimization

### Cultural Best Practices

Int’l Growth Objectives

Leadership Vision

Trust – Positive Intent

### Your Business Story

*“Being on Purpose”™*

## AGILITY

People Leadership

Build & Sustain Teams

Quality & Service  
Imperative

*Nuance*  
*“Buy-In”*

Interpersonal  
Relationships

Diversity

Technology/Innovation

Positive Adaptability

Your Brand: Networking

## RESILIENCE

Results Leadership

### Business Drivers

Financial Controls &  
Reporting

Accountability  
(Metrics)

Closing the Gaps  
(Ambiguity)

Follow-up

Process Integrity

Re-Calibration



# Conducting Difficult Conversations

Conflict Resolution...

begins with a **strategic dialogue** that serves the *“Big Picture,”* and business objectives when managing change, or **difference of opinion.**



# Key Message

Having the ability to **successfully engage** in difficult conversations with peers, employees, bosses and staff, is an important skill to successfully **manage relationships** and results. Particularly, when strategically **managing growth, direction, approach, change or conflict.**



# Types of Difficult Conversations

- Disagreeing when the *stakes* are high
- Dealing with performance, rude or disrespectful behaviour
- Saying “No”
- Delivering difficult news





# When Do We Need to Engage?

To determine if you need to have a difficult conversation ask yourself;

*“What is at stake here?”*

- Does it serve the *“Big Picture?”*
- Strategically - **Does it improve** the following: Relationships, quality Financials, business plan, reliability, cost-management, customer, operations, process, exposure, compliance/regulatory, growth goals?
- **What does it protect?** Values? Integrity? Ethics?

What happens if you don't have the conversation?



# Ineffective Ways to Manage Difficult Conversations

- Avoidance
- Confrontation
- Compromise



# Framework for Difficult Conversations

## Five Steps:

1. Prepare to conduct a dialogue
2. Prepare and Deliver an ABC Message
3. Stop Talking and Start Listening
4. Remain Cool & Calm
5. Respond not Defend



# 1. Prepare to Dialogue

## Identify the “*Real*” Issue

- **Assume Positive Intent**
- What are the facts?
- What is the other person **doing or saying** that is causing a problem?
- What is the effect/result of their action/inaction on you or others?

*Remember...your beliefs, assumptions and judgments about the situation are not facts!*



# Prepare: Clarify Your Goal

What are you hoping to achieve in having this difficult conversation?

- Is it doable?
- Is it within your control?
- Is it productive?
- Does it serve your business, process/systems and operational objectives? Or, OPINION?





# Prepare: Plan Ahead

Follow the Scout Motto: **Be Prepared**

- Anticipate their reaction so you don't get hooked
- Know your back-up plan if you do not get cooperation or the conversation goes sour



## 2. Prepare: Your ABC Message

- **A**ccurate
- **B**rief
- **C**lear



# Accurate

- **Definition:** Stick to the **facts** (What are the effects/Impact?)
- Use **“I”** statements (I think, I feel, I believe) vs. **“YOU.”**
- Share the **impact** of their actions **without assuming** their intentions (beliefs, assumptions & judgements are *“not”* facts)
- Avoid **“hot”** and judgmental language



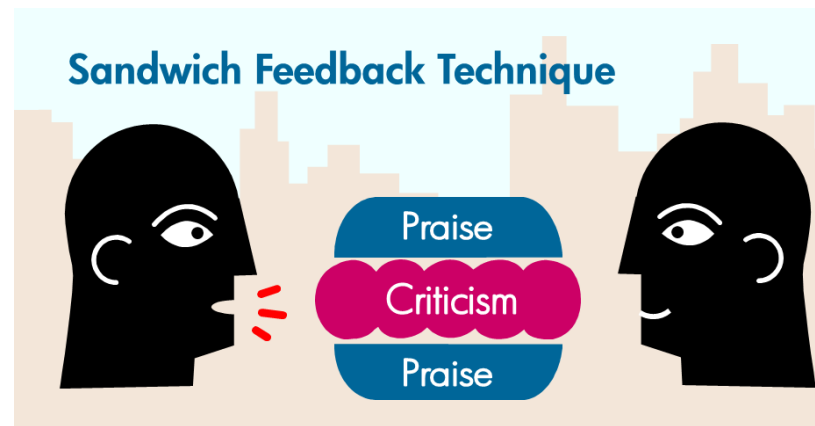
# Brief

- Decide what is most **important** “*in the present,*” and *leave it at that-* no dredging up ancient history
- Avoid lengthy explanations
- Less is more



# Clear

- Get straight to the heart of the matter
- **No hints or innuendo** - give diplomacy a rest
- Avoid blaming others
- Avoid the feedback “*sandwich*” (The Sandwich Effect)





# Delivering Your ABC Message

## Deliver your ABC Message

- Be Calm
- Be Confident
- Be Neutral



**FACTS:** This is about giving people the “**straight goods**” in a respectful and non-judgmental way – it serves the bigger picture. (Honesty, Integrity & Empathy)

# 3. Stop Talking – Start Listening

- Turn the conversation over to the other person and then...  
***Embrace Silence***
- The moments following the delivery of your message are the most difficult. Be prepared for the discomfort.
- Give the other person the space to respond



# Listen Up

- Listening is more than *not talking*. It is about **being neutral, curious and present**
- Listen with thoughtful attention to understand what the **other person is thinking and feeling**. What are their concerns?

***Resist the temptation to...interrupt***



Achieving  
**Personal Excellence**

Excellence Is Not A Skill, It's An Attitude.



# Acknowledge the Other

Even if you don't agree with what the other person is saying, you can acknowledge:

- Their perspective by **conveying your understanding** of what you hear.
- Their feelings by showing **empathy**.

*Acknowledgement is about Respect... "I hear you..."*



# Why Bother?

- **Resolution:** Communication, Collaboration & Performance
- **Business,** Process/Systems and Cultural Alignment
- Everyone wants to be heard and understood
- **NOTE:** The key to having them “*hear*” your message is having the confidence to listen to them speak without interruption

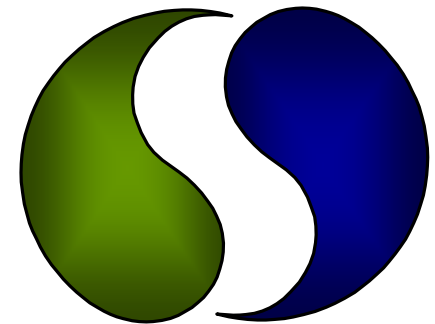




# 4. Stay Cool

- Be prepared for a strong emotional reaction or “*push back*”  
**YOUR RESPONSE: “*I hear you...*”**
- Give them the space to have their reaction
- Have your **plan** to stay calm, cool and confident

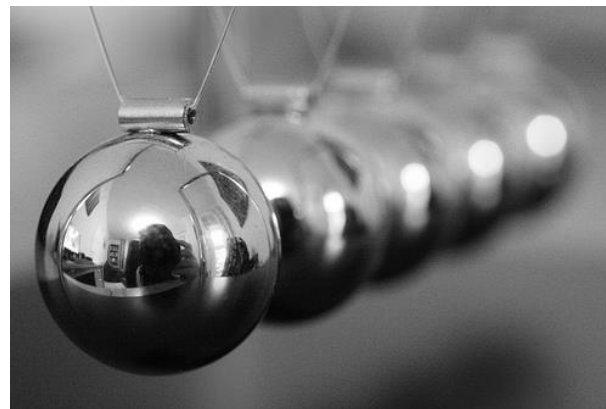
**Remember it is not personal**



# 5. Respond – Not Defend

- Pause before responding (**Breathe...**)
- Resist the temptation to respond in kind, back down, or become defensive (Do not get sucked in / **No Ego**)
- **What are you asking for?**

**Be Calm. Be Concise. Be Confident.**



# Wrap It Up...

- Re-state your message (agree to disagree)
- Clarify misinformation/misunderstandings
- Reiterate expectations, boundaries and accountability
- Resolution: Clarify what you have agreed to (Goals, steps, commitments, follow-up, metrics (agreements & commitments))
- **Mentor:** Coach and turn it into a learning experience



**Be Calm. Be Concise. Be Confident.**



# Going Forward...

- Deal with issues as they arise
- Prepare for all of your difficult conversations
- If someone comes to you - listen, question, acknowledge and take time to plan...



# Communication Sources

*“Audience”*

Body

Voice

Words

- Gestures: How you look when saying it
- Eye contact, expressions, proximity
- 55% of the message (nonverbal cues)
- Tone: The way you say it
- Volume, pitch, speed
- 38% of the message
- Word choice
- What you say; phrasing, filler words
- 7% of the message



# Framework for Difficult Conversations

Self-Awareness

- **Time-Line** (Integrity & Positive Intent)
- **Metric** (Agreements & Commitments)
- **Ownership** ("No Surprises Rule")
  
- **Facts** (Impact / Process / Deficit)
- **Understanding** (Listen & Learn)
- **Empowerment** (Collaboration & Support)
  
- **Clarity** (Business & Operational Impact)
- **Expectations** (Audience)
- **Accountability** (Clear Direction)
  
- **Positive Intent** (Respect, Integrity, Trust)
- **Define Impact** (Business, Systems, People)
- **Neutral Language** (Opportunity)





# Stepping into Your New Future

**One day,  
you realize  
that there are  
some people  
you'll never  
see again.  
At least,  
not in the  
same way.**



# A Different Level of Thinking

*“It’s not about doing different things...  
It’s about doing things differently.”*

*- Syntesis Global*



# Conclusion

- ⊙ Communication Success is a Choice
- ⊙ Self-Awareness (know your audience)
- ⊙ You are accountable to what you know
  
- ⊙ **Principles to Remember:**
  - Clarity of Intent
  - Create Positive Momentum (words matter)
  - *“Believing is Seeing” (trust)*
  - Breathe...



# 2019 Leadership Webinar Series

- February 28<sup>th</sup> Conducting Difficult Conversations
- **April 25<sup>th</sup> – Building Credibility**
- June 13 – Conducting Effective Meetings
- August 22<sup>nd</sup> – Develop Your Team
- October 24<sup>th</sup> – Manage Upward: Sell Your Ideas & Build Your Business Case

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Influence Webinars**





# Thank You!

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