

Crucial Conversations
"When Casual Conversations Just Aren't Enough"

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Educational Objectives

- Identify the characteristics of High, Middle, and Low performers
- Outline the Crucial Conversations methodology for sharing tough or difficult messages
- Outline the steps of a corrective action session

The Continuum of Correction

- Mentoring
- Coaching
- Managing
- Disciplining

Benefits of an Effective Coaching & Corrective Action Program

- It's fair---communicates to others that you are consistent and you hold everyone accountable.
- It leads to breakthroughs in team performance.
- It allows the preceptor and student to "plan for improvement."
- It creates a basis for future action, if warranted.
- Students know and understand what is expected.
- It takes the "personality conflicts" out of the process.
- It assumes students are willing and able to change their behavior.
- Communicates to student: "I want to help."
- You want and need each team member to succeed.

Why is it so difficult to correct students?

- We want to be "liked," and we may view "discipline" as an unpleasant task with negative connotations
- We may be more concerned with being liked than being respected
- We want to avoid the "hassles" of counseling and discipline
- We believe it reflects poorly on us if we admit to having to deal with performance/conduct problems
- We may lack the knowledge of proper procedures, or we're uncomfortable with organization policies
- We have observed other preceptors "letting things slide"
- We do not want to be responsible for "messing up" a student's career
- We may not see the benefits of a fairly enforced correction program
- Some of the students we must address are friends, children of friends, future employees
- We lack documentation/specifics to effectively correct
- We are afraid of being accused of prejudice if student is a female, minority, or in a protected class
- "Halo effect": employee does some things very well, so (s)he doesn't really need to be addressed

What is "Coaching"

- A supportive/developmental approach primarily used with medium and high performers



What is "Corrective Action?"

- A management tool for low performers that uses increasing degrees of firmness to help correct and change behavior.
- Sets stage for "therapeutic extraction" if necessary.



High, Middle, Low Performers

	High	Middle	Low
Definition	Comes to work on time Good attitude Problem solves You relax when you know they are scheduled Good influence Use for peer interviews Five pillar ownership Brings solutions	Good attendance Loyal most of the time Influenced by high and low performers Want to do a good job Could just need more experience Helps manager be aware of problems	Points out problems in a negative way Positions leadership poorly Master of We/They Passive aggressive Thinks they will outlast the leader Says manager is the problem
Results	Exceeds goals	Achieves goals	Does not achieve goals
Professionalism	Adheres to unit policies concerning breaks, personal phone calls, leaving the work area, and other absences from work.	Usually adheres to unit policies concerning breaks, personal phone calls, leaving the work area, and other absences from work.	Does not communicate effectively about absences from work areas. Handles personal phone calls in a manner that interferes with work. Breaks last longer than allowed.

The Sturder Group

Teamwork	Demonstrates high commitment to making things better for the work unit and organization as a whole.	Committed to improving performance of the work unit and organization. May require coaching to fully execute.	Demonstrates little commitment to the work unit and the organization.
Knowledge & Competence	Eager to change for the good of the organization. Strives for continuous professional development.	Invested in own professional development. May require some coaching to fully execute.	Shows little interest in improving own performance or the performance of the organization. Develops professional skills only when asked.
Communication	Comes to work with a positive attitude.	Usually comes to work with a positive attitude. Occasionally gets caught up in the negative attitude of others.	Comes to work with a negative attitude. Has a negative influence on the work environment.
Safety Awareness	Demonstrates the behaviors of safety awareness in all aspects of work.	Demonstrates the behaviors of safety awareness in all aspects of work.	Performs work with little regard to the behaviors of safety awareness.

The Sturder Group

High, Middle and Low Performers

	Re-recruit and retain
	Support and coach for development
	Move up or out

The Studer Group Found...

- 34% of people will improve and sustain high performance
- 58% will do so *if* their behavior is properly reinforced
- 8% will flat out refuse to budge

So What, Now What....

- We need to spend 92% of our time with the 92% of employees who want to be on board
- No more than 8% of our time with the 8% who do not want to be on board

Crucial Conversation Scenario

You are meeting with a group of people, the student says something which contradicts something you just said.

You tell the student, "what you said was not appropriate".....

Crucial Conversations occur when there are.....

- Strong emotions
- Opposing opinions
- High stakes

.....Potentially resulting in silence or violence

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- Start with Heart
 - What do you really want for yourself?
 - What do you really want for others?
 - What do you really want for the relationship?

How would you behave if you really wanted these results?

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- Learn to Look
 - Content and Conditions
 - For when things become crucial
 - For safety problems
 - Silence (masking, avoiding, withdrawing)
 - Violence (controlling, labeling, attacking)
 - For your Style Under Stress

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- **Make It Safe**
 - Which condition of safety is at risk?
 - Mutual Purpose
 - Mutual Respect
 - Apologize When Appropriate
 - Contrast to Fix Misunderstanding
 - CRIB to Get to Mutual Purpose
 - Commit to seek Mutual Purpose
 - Recognize the purpose behind the strategy
 - Invent a Mutual Purpose
 - Brainstorm new strategies

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- **Master My Stories**
 - Retrace Your Path to Action
 - Act – notice your behavior
 - Feel – get in touch with your feelings
 - Tell Story – analyze your stories
 - See/Hear – get back to the facts
 - Tell the Rest of the Story

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- **STATE My Path**
 - Share your facts
 - Tell your story
 - Ask for others' paths
 - Talk tentatively
 - Encourage testing

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- Explore Others' Paths
 - Ask – express interest in others' views
 - Mirror – acknowledge others' emotions
 - Paraphrase – restate what you've heard
 - Prime – encourage others to contribute
- As others share.... Agree, Build, Compare

Crucial Conversations Methodology

- Move to Action
 - Command
 - Consult
 - Vote
 - Consensus
- Who does What by When
- Follow up
- Hold Accountable

Coaching the High Performer

- "Re-recruiting"
- Tell them *where* we are going
- Thank them *specifically* for their superb work
- *Specifically outline* why they are so important
- Ask if there is anything you can do for them

Source: Studer Group

Coaching the Middle Performer

- Describe good qualities
- Cover *developmental* opportunities
- *Reaffirm* good qualities
- *Specifically ask* for improvement

Source: Studer Group

Deal with Low Performers

- Not coaching-----CORRECTIVE ACTION is needed

Prepare for the Low Performer Meeting

- Clarify what exactly has the employee done wrong
- Keep open mind
- Review previous record
- Gather any pertinent evidence/facts
- Determine if you need another preceptor or regional staff to sit in
- Determine time and place—set the stage

Conducting the Low Performer Session

- **DO NOT** start meeting on positive note
- Goal of the meeting: very directly show student *their* fault
- Push for them to *recognize/verbalize* the problem
- Be direct & honest in a supportive & respectful manner
- Express your disappointment
- Deal directly with defensiveness, denial, externalization of blame, & excuse making
- Be critical of the conduct, not the person (preserve/promote self-esteem)

What to Expect from the Low Performer

- Excuses
 - Blaming others
 - Pointing finger at the leader
 - Unloading with some personal problem with manipulative aim of playing on your sympathies

Source: Studer Group

Dealing with Excuses

- First, when given a *valid* reason (rare):
 - Acknowledge the special circumstances
 - Ask for a plan to deal with similar incidents in future
 - Inform student that this is a "re-training" session

Dealing with Excuses, Cont.

- When given excuse intended to externalize blame (most of the time):
 - Focus on the “yes” or “no” before the but.”
- Example:*
- Preceptor: “are you meeting the standard for being prepared for patient care rounds?”
 - Low Performer: “no, but, Dr. Smith never asks me any questions.”
 - Preceptor: “Thank you for acknowledging that you did not meet the standard, how can you make sure this does not happen again?”

Use Force-Choice Questioning

- Would the pharmacy be more successful if you (inappropriate behavior) or (appropriate behavior)?
- Would you be meeting your responsibility better if you _____ or _____?
- Do the Standards of Performance indicate you should _____ or _____?
- In the future will you _____ or _____?
- Which will assure that you have a more favorable performance appraisal _____ or _____?
- Will it project a more positive image with your team if you _____ or _____?
- Should I document that you will follow the (policy, procedure, standard, etc.) or break it?

Conducting the Low Performer Session Cont.

- Step 1: Ask the student in his or her own words what happened.
- Step 2: Ask the student to state *what should have happened* (required performance behavior)
- Step 3: Ask student to state if he/she is *meeting their responsibility* (actual vs. required performance behavior)
- Step 4: Ask the student to talk through a *proposed plan* for improvement (subject to the preceptor's approval/modification)
- Step 5: Summarize the *student's comments* elicited in steps 1 through 3, & the plan for improvement.
- Close the meeting by stating that you will review the discussion with UT personnel.

Follow-Up

- Follow up and inspect to see if the improvement plan is being followed
- Determine if there have been further occurrences of inappropriate behavior
- Immediately address any further instances of low performance

Role Play Exercises

Coaching the Middle Performer

- Describe good qualities
- Cover *developmental* opportunities
- *Reaffirm* good qualities
- *Specifically ask* for improvement

Source: Studer Group


