

The Power of Dialogue

Using Conversation to Get Stronger

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What is Dialogue?

Dialogue is the art of thinking together. There are no winners or losers. In that sense it is the opposite of debate. In other words: A dialogue is a conversation with a center, not with sides...dialogue is about exploring the nature of choice...and increasing the number of solutions...

William Isaacs

Challenges You Shared:

- How to get traction in a defensive/resistant culture?
- How to avoid getting lost in rabbit holes?
- How to plan for and hold difficult conversations?
- How to apply the principles in different environments – retail, health care, IT, sales?

What is the benefit of everyone using dialogue?

- Increased understanding
- Stronger relationships
- Shorter cycle times
- Increased growth
- Greater curiosity
- More discoveries

How can we enable this move?

- Modeling the language
- Encouraging others
- Imagining a preferred future, “what would it look like if...?” “how would things be different if...?”
- Providing feedback
- Caring for others and communicating directly
- Radical Candor, Kim Scott
- Outward Mindset, The Arbinger Institute
- Everyday Coaching, Bianco-Mathis and Nabors

Using Dialogue to Create Everyday Coaching

People using coaching intention and language to support, encourage and challenge themselves and others, for the purpose of unlocking potential, expanding choice, improving performance, strengthening communication, building relationships and creating value.

Seven Dialogue Skills to Master

- Focus
- Listen
- Question
- Reveal
- Challenge
- Negotiate
- Commit

Focus

- How do you already use this skill?
- Clarify beliefs, feelings and intentions
- Reflect on being
- *“What results do I want?”*
- *“What do I think about this situation?”*
- *“What is my reward for thinking this way?”*
- *“How willing am I to change my mind?”*

Listen

- How do you already use this skill?
- Empathize
- Use silence
- Utilize whole heart and mind
- Notice alignment (or lack thereof) between verbal and non-verbal elements
- *“It sounds like...”*

Question

- How do you already use this skill?
- Reflect
- Get more information
- Ask for feedback
- *“Help me understand...”*
- *“Tell me more about...”*
- *“What result did you anticipate when you...”*

Reveal

- How do you already use this skill?
- Share your reasoning
- Be direct with care
- Offer ideas
- *“I don’t want to sound like I’m not a team player. I do want to share my concern about changing vendors this close to the conference. Although the pricing is low, by using a vendor who doesn’t know us, I think we risk getting the quality of services we need and the attendees’ experience at the event. What do you think?”*

Challenge

- How do you already use this skill?
- Use questions to encourage perspective taking
- *“How might someone else see this?”*
- *“What other choices are available to us?”*
- *“How else can you achieve the result you said is important to you?”*
- *“How does thinking this way help?”*
- *Tool: Pros and Cons Matrix*

Negotiate

- How do you already use this skill?
- Connect the dots
- Clarify criteria and contributions
- Link Ideas
- *“What would happen if...”*
- *“What are the common elements in the ideas we’ve already reviewed...?”*

Commit

- How do you already practice this skill?
- Action plans
- Clarify agreements
- Include measures
- *“What will that look like...”*
- *“Walk me through the new approach...”*
- *“Who owns this action...”*
- *Tool: Clear Agreements*

Using Dialogue Creates 'Change for Good'

- I have choices
- I can create
- I can discover
- I can act
- I can learn
- I can choose again
- I can grow

Making it Real

- Select one of the most-used building blocks and note the language you use currently. How might you build on this strength?
- Select one of the least-used building blocks and consider how you can begin to practice in this area. What language might you begin to incorporate? With what expected results?
- Track your progress over the next 30 days. Once you are comfortable with one building block, add another. Note the impact the new language has on your conversations and the results you experience.

Questions?

