

How to Navigate and Conduct Meaningful, Equity-Based Conversations

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Your Trainers



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The real challenge for organizations is not figuring out “What can we do?” but rather “Are we willing to do it?”

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Outcomes

By the end of the presentation, we will have a shared understanding of:

- The importance of BELONGING
- How our internal biases affect our conversations
- Specific strategies and techniques to conduct authentic conversations where the experiences of each speaker is welcomed

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Agenda

- What we KNOW about equitable, inclusive communication
- What we NEED to know about equitable, inclusive communication
- What we CAN DO to ensure equitable and inclusive conversations

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Norms

- Participate by sharing your own opinions and experiences.
- Be open to the ideas and concepts presented.
- Be willing to experiment with ideas and techniques presented.
- Use common agreed upon terms to ensure shared understanding and respect.

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What we KNOW

About meaningful, equity-based communication

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Family – Professional Relationships

- Powerless
- Dismissed
- Devalued
- Fearful
- Confused

Result: A breakdown in trust

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Work – Group Relationships

Exclusion

- Formal and Informal conversations
- Emails
- Promotions
- Decision Making

Resulting in a lack of belonging

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Importance of Belonging

To fulfill a fundamental human need for **belongingness**, people need to have **frequent and positive interactions in order to feel accepted in a stable group** (Chung et al., 2020).

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Creating Meaningful, Equity-based Conversations to Promote **Belonging**

Meaningful		Equity Based
Honest/Truthful		Commonality
On Topic		Respect
Purposeful		Perspective
Reciprocal		Selfless
Intentional		Potential
Present		Inclusive

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Benefits of meaningful, equity-based conversations




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The Power of the Group


*We all want to feel a sense of belonging. This isn't a character flaw. It's fundamental to the human experience. **Our finest achievements are possible when people come together to work for a common cause.** School spirit, the rightful pride we feel in our community, our heritage, our religion, and our families, all come from the value we place on belonging to a group." – Rosalind Wiseman*

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Chat


Think about a member district or colleague that you are having difficulty connecting with. What are one or two barriers that you feel are getting in the way?

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If we keep doing what we're doing, we're going to keep getting what we're getting.

Stephen Covey

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**What we
NEED to
know and
what we can
DO about it**



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**Strategy #1:
THINK
BEFORE YOU
SPEAK**

- Intent
- Body Language
- Word Choice
- Tone
- Culture of the Listener
- Culture of the organization

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Key Questions

- What could be the impact on what I am about to say?
- Is this comment necessary?
- Is this promoting a growth mindset?
- Is it productive?

**Technique:
Pause, Breathe and
Consider**

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Strategy #2: CHANGE THE EXPECTED TO THE UNEXPECTED



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Biases



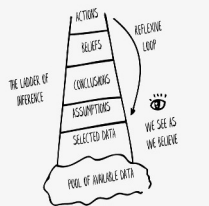
Definition: Cause to feel or show inclination or prejudice for or against someone or something.

- Happen without thinking
- May be Communicated indirectly
- Subconscious actions and thoughts
- Spontaneous and not planned

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Ladder of Inference



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Technique #1:
Slow down your thinking and BE CURIOUS

Technique #2
Ask open ended questions

Technique #3
See the person, not the stereotype

Empathy

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When you show deep empathy toward others, their defensive energy goes down, and positive energy replaces it. That's when you can get more creative in solving problems.

Stephen Covey

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Strategy #3:
PRACTICE
MEANINGFUL
COMMUNICATION



This will help develop equity in your conversations

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Technique #1:
Set Expectations by Establishing and Modeling Norms

Technique #2
Set Specific Times for Conversations

Technique #3
Examine your own behavior

Empathy

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Technique #4:
Use Visuals

Technique #5
Use Accepting Sentence Starters

- I can only imagine
- Wow that must be difficult
- Geez, I had no idea
- That's a tough situation
- That must be frustrating

Empathy

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When you really listen to another person from their point of view, and reflect back to them that understanding, it's like giving them emotional oxygen.

Stephen Covey

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Barriers to Listening

- Inattention
- Hidden Assumptions
- Hearing What We Expect to Hear
- Halo Effect
- Non-Verbal Communication

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Bridges to Listening

- Acknowledge
- Validate
- Empathize
- Clarify
- Summarize

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Use Active Listening Skills

Non-Verbal Listening Skills	Verbal Listening Skills
◆ Bracket	◆ Reflect and Paraphrase
◆ Body Language	◆ Open-Ended Questions

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Activity



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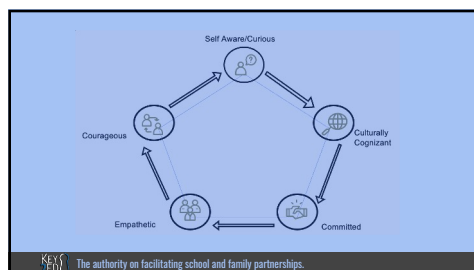
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**Strategy #4:
Moving from
Traditional to
Equitable
System
Changes**

Traditional Approaches	Equitable Approaches
Goal: I'll fix the issue (of <i>you</i> not feeling included) in this conversation	Goal: Let's work collaboratively to create an equitable systemic change
Roles: Individual (under-represented) persons as beneficiaries	Roles: Utilize under-represented persons as leaders and contributors
Strategy: Make individual changes for that discussion or that person	Strategy: Build strong relationships and create capacity for systems change
Outcome: Individual change for isolated conversations or people	Outcome: Broad changes in process celebrating uniqueness and addressing issues throughout the community

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CHAT

Turn to your neighbor and describe a colleague, who demonstrates many or all the inclusive leadership characteristics (*sure you can name yourself*) What experiences led you to think that?

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Visualize...



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