

Map to be Fool Proof on Difficult Conversations

• Move forward

Your goal may be to acquire support or to collaborate with an improved plan of action. You may need skills or strategies and importantly some change to move forward - so commit to these key steps from here...

• be Authentic

Be yourself as “porky pies” may only sink you deeper into despair.

• your Perspective

Tell your story! It is the facts and their impact that have led to this discussion. Help others understand why this is important to you. Don't assume that the other person will see the problem/issue the same way you do. (You could often assume the opposite!)

• Timing

It is important to choose an appropriate time to have the conversation. If the person you want to talk to is busy, distracted or stressed, they will not be in the right frame of mind for this discussion. A positive outcome is unlikely. However, ensure you don't use an inability to find an appropriate time to avoid having the conversation.

• Outcome

Understand what you need to get out of the conversation. Divulge something? Ask for help? You cannot expect to reach a destination if you don't know where you are going. Consider offering three possible solutions yourself.

• don't Blame

Don't look to place blame. Accept any responsibility - be courageous, look forward and seek solutions.

• Emotion

Stay aware of your own emotions and the effect they have on the conversation. Own your part of a mess. What was your contribution to the situation that brought you here? Don't manipulate with emotion. Pause to take time out if you're becoming out of control.

• Facts

Use facts! Facts tend to be the least controversial and the most persuasive. They are also most likely to be the least insulting and understandable!

• be Present

Be involved and attentive during the conversation. Place yourself in the other persons “shoes” to consider what this conversation might be like for them? Do not allow distractions and interruptions or even rely on them.