

# Supporting Providers to have Courageous Conversations in Early Childhood Education



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# Agenda

1

Identify the key elements that make conversations challenging and outline strategies to address them

2

Demonstrate techniques for maintaining composure and empathy under stress during difficult conversations

3

Apply active listening skills to ensure all parties feel heard and valued in challenging discussions

4

Develop frameworks for initiating and navigating conversations involving conflict or sensitive topics

5

Create actionable follow-up plans to ensure resolutions are implemented and relationships are strengthened

# Understanding Challenging Conversations

## What is Effective Discussion?

**Effective discussion** goes beyond simple conversation. It involves **listening actively**, **speaking clearly**, and **contributing constructively**.

Such discussions are guided by a **purpose**, whether it's **problem-solving**, **information-sharing**, or **evaluating texts**.

# Principles of Interaction

Interaction is a two-way process. Key principles include:

Active Listening

Giving Feedback

Asking Questions

Expressing Ideas

Effective interaction promotes understanding and deepens the relationship between participants. It's not just about speaking but also understanding the perspectives of others.

# Active Listening Skills

Active listening is the foundation of effective discussion.

It involves:

- Giving full attention to the speaker,
- Refraining from interrupting,
- Understanding the message's essence.

# Asking Questions

Questions can guide a discussion and prompt deeper thinking.

Effective questioning techniques involve open-ended questions that encourage expansive answers.

Questions should be clear, relevant, and provoke thought, leading to rich interactions and discoveries.



# Maintaining Composure and Empathy

## Techniques:

- Staying calm under stress
- Taking deep breaths
- Pausing before responding
- Maintaining a neutral tone

## Empathy:

- Understand the other person's perspective
- Show that you care about their feelings

# Expressing Ideas Confidently

Articulation is crucial in group settings.

Be concise, clear, and relevant.

Confidence in expression helps in making your point understood.

To speak confidently:

- Organise your thoughts before speaking
- Avoid unnecessary words
- Ensure your message aligns with the discussion.



# Creating Actionable Follow-Up Plans

## Giving Feedback

### Feedback is essential for growth.

- Delivered with respect
- Focusing on the idea rather than the person
- Refine ideas and ensure clarity in discussions

# Effective Communication Frameworks

## Situation – Behaviour- Impact

# 1

### Situation

- Describe the specific situation where the behaviour was observed.
- Be precise about when and where it happened.

# 2

### Behaviour:

- Describe the specific behaviour you observed without making judgments or assumptions.
- Focus on actions, not character.

# 3

### Impact:

- Explain the impact of the behaviour on the team, the work, or the individuals involved.
- Discuss how it made you or others feel, and the consequences it had.

# Effective Communication Frameworks

## Describe-Express-Specify-Consequences

1

**Describe:** Describe the situation or behaviour objectively and clearly. Avoid blaming or labelling.

2

**Express:** Express your feelings about the situation or behaviour. Use "I" statements to convey your emotions.

3

**Specify:** Specify what you would like to happen or change. Be clear and direct about your expectations.

4

**Consequences:** Explain the positive outcomes if the behaviour changes, or the negative outcomes if it doesn't. Discuss the impact on the team or work environment.



# SMART *Goals*

SPECIFIC

TIMELY

MEASURABLE

RELEVANT

ATTAINABLE

# Further Reading

Signposting

Childcare Choices (UK) for information on funding options: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

GOV.UK - Early Education and Childcare for up-to-date government guidelines: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

Coram Family and Childcare Trust for insights on childcare and family support: [www.familyandchildcaretrust.org](http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org)



**Thank you**

