



2025 Chief Public Defender Leadership Training

April 17, 2025 / Chapel Hill, NC

*Co-sponsored by the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government
& Office of Indigent Defense Services*

Thursday, April 17

8:30-8:50 am	Check-in
8:50-9:00 am	Welcome Phil Dixon, Director, Public Defense Education Teaching Associate Professor UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
9:00-9:30 am	Leadership Challenges for Public Defenders (30 mins.) Shea Denning, Judicial College Director Professor of Public Law and Government UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
9:30-10:30 am	Leading and Coaching a Multi-Generational Workforce, pt. 1 (1 hr.) Eleanor Cornish Green, Adjunct Instructor Center for Public Leadership and Governance UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
10:30-10:45 am	Break
10:45-11:45 am	Leading and Coaching a Multi-Generational Workforce, pt. 2 (1 hr.) Eleanor Cornish Green, Adjunct Instructor Center for Public Leadership and Governance UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
11:45 am-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30-1:30 pm	Navigating Difficult Conversations, pt. 1 (1 hr.) Kimalee Dickerson, Assistant Professor of Public Leadership UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
1:30-1:45 pm	Break
1:45-2:45 pm	Navigating Difficult Conversations, pt. 2 (1 hr.) Kimalee Dickerson, Assistant Professor of Public Leadership UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC



2:45-3:45 pm	Changing Organizational Culture and Routines, pt. 1 (1 hr.) Elliot Stoller, Assistant Professor of Leadership and Governance UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
3:45-4:00 pm	Break
4:00-4:45 pm	Changing Organizational Culture and Routines, pt. 2 (45 min.) Elliot Stoller, Assistant Professor of Leadership and Governance UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
4:45-5:15 pm	Putting It into Practice (30 mins.) Shea Denning, Judicial College Director Professor of Public Law and Government UNC School of Government, Chapel Hill, NC
5:15 pm	Adjourn

TOTAL CLE HOURS: 6.75 hours of credit (general)



Chief Public Defender
Leadership Training

April 2025


1

Welcome
and Framing



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Community Norms



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Chapel Hill Rule

- What is said here stays here.
- What is learned here leaves here.



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Other Community Norms

 Give everyone an opportunity to speak.

 Listen.

 Assume positive intent.

 Ask questions.

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Leading Inside and Outside the Courtroom

6

Different Roles, Different Skills



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Leadership is the art of motivating others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.

JAMES KOUZES AND BARRY POSNER

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Leadership Challenges for Chief Public Defenders



Supervising attorneys
and staff



Creating a positive
organizational culture




Engaging external
stakeholders

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Putting it into Practice




11

Find a Partner



An issue you are dealing
with



Something we have talked
about that could help



How you might apply it

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Reflections



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Plus/Delta

WHAT WORKED WELL?



WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?



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Thank you.

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Leading and Coaching a Multi-Generational Workforce



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1

Session Goals

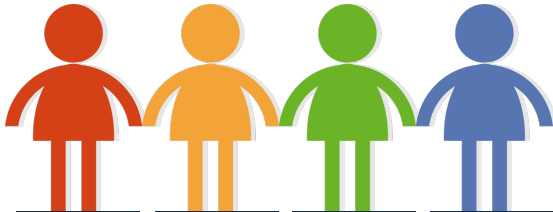


- Examine the challenges involved in managing a multi-generational workforce.
- Identify the common needs for all generations.
- Learn how to recognize when you are in the Drama Triangle and how to stay out of it.
- Review the mindset and skills needed for successfully coaching others.

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Generations in the Workplace




Generation	Years
Baby Boomers	1946-1964
Generation X	1965-1980
Millennials	1981-1996
Generation Z	1997-2012


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Small Group Discussion



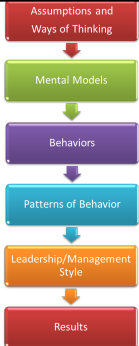
- What are the key leadership challenges working with this generation?
- What are the positives of working with this generation?
- Discuss at your table and be prepared to report out.



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LEARNING MODEL





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Generation	Communication Preferences	Work Ethic and Values	Messages/Rewards that Motivate
Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	In-person Talk on the phone	"Work to Live" Crusading Causes Desire quality Personal fulfillment	You are valued. You are needed. Title Recognition/Promotions Having their expertise valued Money
Generation X (1965-1980)	Direct Immediate	Work-life balance Work well independently Want structure and direction Skeptical Self-Reliant	Do it your way. Forget the Rules Freedom is the best reward. Flexible Schedules Skills training- ability to grow
Millennials (Generation Y) (1981-1996)	Email Voicemail Text Social Media	Work-life balance Freedom and Flexibility Goal-oriented Entrepreneurial Tolerant	Continued learning opportunities. Positive work culture Immediate feedback - mentoring Meaningful work
Centennials (Generation Z) 1997- Present	Social Media Text	Security and Stability Hyper-productive Hardworking "Old souls in young bodies"	Money Social Rewards Constant Feedback Responsibility and meaningful work

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Common Needs For All Generations


- **Safety and Security**
 - Opportunities for growth and to achieve results
 - A safe space to work (physical and psychological)
- **Approval and Acceptance**
 - Opportunities to be included and find camaraderie
 - Being accepted as a member of the team
- **Attention and Recognition**
 - Recognition and appreciation for work efforts
 - Understanding of personal situations (empathy)
- **Power and Autonomy**
 - Freedom to make decisions and have control over how work is done.

How are you meeting these needs?

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What are you thinking? It Starts with Mindset




“Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change.”

-- Wayne Dyer

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Leadership Tips for Managing All Generations

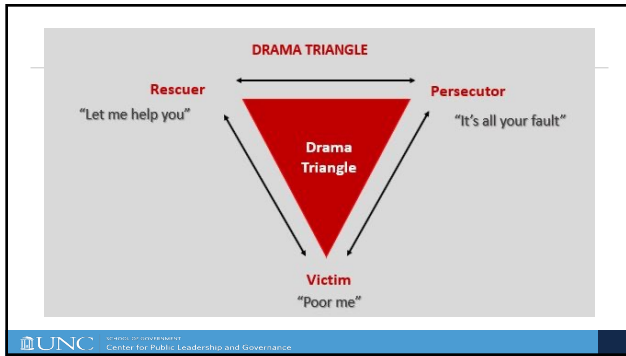


1. Stay out of the Drama Triangle
2. Develop a Coaching Mindset

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The Drama Triangle - Persecutor




I'm right, you're wrong!

- Criticizes others without understanding the reasons behind other's actions.
- Assumes a negative intent when one is not present.
- Usually gives judgmental and non-specific criticism.
- Often uses sarcasm to make a point.

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The Drama Triangle -Victim




I'm blameless. It's not my fault!

- Role assumed when a person discounts his/her ability and relies on someone else to "take care of them".
- Allows criticism that may not be warranted, affirms low self-esteem.
- Believes others are responsible for their situation and places responsibility for success or failure on someone else rather than solving own problems when they have ability to solve problems.

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The Drama Triangle - Rescuer



- Discounts another's ability to handle their own problems and takes responsibility for doing for another when that person has ability to solve own problems.
- Affirms own ego need to help others and believe it is my duty to solve problems for others.
- Keeps others dependent on you.
- Assumes higher, righteous purpose for actions. (I can do it better than you.)

I can solve problems better than you can.

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The Drama Triangle Act 1

PROD. ROLL SCENE TAKE

DIRECTOR:

CAMERA:


DATE: Day Night Int Ext Mos Filter Sync

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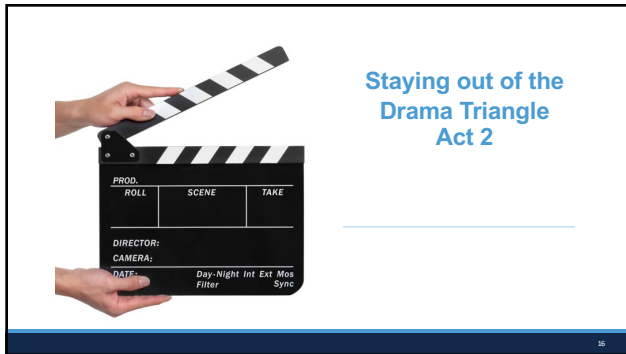
Drama Triangle Realities

- Supervisors, parents, spouses often are expected to take on the roles in the Drama Triangle.
- The roles we tend to play in the Triangle may also be based on our own experiences. (Mental Models)
- Supervisors', teachers', parents' and spouses' expectations of another are usually met. (Self-fulfilling Prophecy/Pygmalion effect)
- Every victim plays a part in his/her own victimization
- Every rescue/victim transaction becomes a persecutor/victim transaction (Self-Justification, Self-Deception)



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Emotional Triggers – What are Yours?

<p><u>Persecutor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Too many questions (Why?) – Mistakes/Errors – Tight Deadlines <p><u>Rescuer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Another person's tears, sad face – Buffering employees from an angry manager – Dealing with one's kids 	<p><u>Victim</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Being late – Being around certain people (persecutor, rescuer) – Making mistakes
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What are your triggers?



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Manager/Boss

Spends more time speaking and giving directions.

Makes quick assumptions.

Takes the quickest route to deal with the surface symptoms.

Gives plan to the employees and tells them to follow it.

Managing is all about telling, directing, authority, immediate needs, and a specific outcome.

VS

Coach/Leader


Spends more time listening and asking questions

Invests time in observing

Uncovers issues to get to the root of a problem

Supports employees in developing their plans


Coaching involves exploring, facilitating, partnership, long-term improvement, and many possible outcomes.



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Skills and Mindset Needed for Coaching



- Assess the situation**
 - Are you in the Drama Triangle? (What's going on with me?)
 - Check Assumptions
 - What is truly needed - coaching or something else?
- Be Curious – Suspend Judgment**
 - Listen intently without distraction
 - Ask open-ended questions to understand the other's perspective
 - Allow space to explain or explore
- Allow the Other Person to Develop Solutions**
 - Support the other's ideas whenever possible.

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Active Listening Skills

Door Openers - Passive verbal and non-verbal responses to encourage others to share.

Open-ended Questions – requires a response rather than yes/no and asks the other person to think more in depth.


Active Listening – empathetic paraphrasing or reflecting the other person's message. Includes clarifying and probing to develop greater understanding.

Why Am I Talking?



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“Coaching is emotional intelligence in practice.”

--- Sir John Whitmore

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Drama Triangle Worksheets



Refer to the Drama Triangle Worksheets


1. Identify the Drama Triangle role the speaker is taking.
2. What exactly will you say or do in response?

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Drama Triangle Worksheets



With a **different** partner at your table:

1. Choose one of the scenarios.
2. Try out your response and role play out the conversation using coaching skills.


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Switch Partners and Practice

- What challenges to you have with your team?
- Is your challenge based on a bias or assumption? Yours or theirs?
- What can I do to overcome these challenges?
- If no challenge exists, what am I doing to meet the needs of my team so that they feel like they belong, and differences are appreciated?



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Generation Years	Communication Preferences	Work Ethic and Values	Messages/Rewards that Motivate
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The Drama Triangle

(based on work of Stephen B. Karpman)

Foundations of the Drama Triangle

- People carry out roles that have become necessary to affirm how they feel about themselves and others.
- When the feelings toward self and others are based on discounts, that person must assume a consistent view to make the outcomes of his/her relationship predictable.

The Roles in the Drama Triangle

Persecutor

- Criticizes others without understanding the reasons behind others' actions
- Assumes a negative intent when one is not present
- Usually gives judgmental and non-specific criticism
- Often uses sarcasm to make a point
- Examples of Persecutor Behavior:
 - A manager does not ask staff for their input because “they never have anything useful to say.”
 - Personalizing criticism: i.e., using terms like “bad attitude”, “unprofessional”, “paranoid”, “stupid”.
 - Over-generalizing criticism: i.e., “you never” or “you always”.

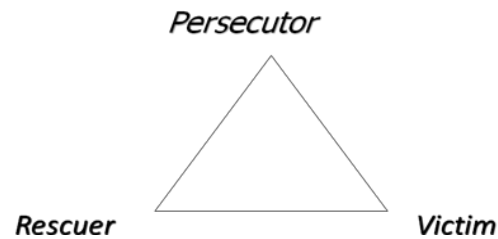
Victim

- Role assumed when a person discounts his/her ability and relies on someone else to “take care of them”
- Allows criticism that may not be warranted; affirms low self-esteem.
- Places responsibility for success or failure on someone else rather than solving own problems when they have ability to solve problems
- Examples of Victim Behavior:
 - Failing to confront another person whose behavior is creating problems.
 - Blindly blaming oneself when things do not work out as expected.
 - Discounting one's own ability to succeed.

Rescuer

- Role assumed when one discounts another's ability to handle their own problems or takes responsibility for doing for another when that person has ability to solve own problems
- Affirms own ego need to help others
- Keeps others dependent to meet own needs
- Assumes higher, righteous purpose for actions
- Examples of Rescuer Behavior:
 - Giving suggestions without inquiring about other's ideas.
 - Negotiating compromises between Persecutors and Victims.

Implications of the Drama Triangle



- A. The Drama Triangle acts like a magnet; when one person enters the Triangle, others tend to join in dysfunctional behavior. For example, if a colleague complains about all the work she has to do (Victim behavior), we tend to agree by comparing how busy we are (Victim behavior) or giving her suggestions on how to deal with her workload.
- B. In top-down authority structures, supervisors and managers are often expected to take on dysfunctional roles: particularly Persecutor and Rescuer.
- C. People work most effectively together when they take responsibility for their own behavior and problems.
- D. Our expectations of others are usually met. Playing the Drama Triangle is self-sealing and self-fulfilling.
- E. Every Victim plays a part in his/her own victimization.
- F. Every Rescuer/Victim transaction ultimately turns into a Persecutor/Victim transaction.
- G. Playing the Triangle can have the following effects:
 - Causes miscommunication
 - Deters effective problem solving
 - Impedes commitment and performance
 - Lessens accountability
 - Creates organizational defensive routines
 - Discourages responsibility-taking
- H. You must see yourself in the Triangle in order to stay out of it! Recognize what governing values you are operating from and make the choice to step out of the Triangle.
- I. Recognize that problems usually stem from multiple people playing roles in the Triangle.

Being Helpful and Stop Rescuing!

TIPS FOR SUPERVISORS

Being helpful is the process of influencing others in a fashion that leads them to use their own ability, skill, or knowledge to solve their problems. Help also may be defined as providing an individual with needed resources when the individual is unable to achieve these needed resources because of insurmountable limitations.

The fundamental principle in helping is making it possible for the person in need, whether he or she be client, friend, child, student, employee, co-worker or patient, to achieve what is necessary to solve their problem in a way that does not diminish them. For those in the role of providing help, the following conditions seem consistent with avoiding the Rescuer role described in the Drama Triangle:

1. The supervisor must be confident in his or her ability and aware of his or her own emotional triggers and areas of sensitivity. Being in a helping position to enhance one's self esteem or sense of worth makes a person vulnerable to the rescuer, persecutor, or victim role. Effective helpers feel competent in their skills and are motivated to foster competence in others.
2. Expect the best from your employees. This does not mean that you must have unrealistic expectations about how well things are going to go, but it does mean that you expect your employees to have the ability, *should they choose*, to deal with their own problems. Research studies have proven that the self-fulfilling prophecy is true--we often get what we expect, good or bad.
3. The supervisor must be congruent. There must be consistency in what one says and does. This means that the supervisor must act in accordance with his or her espoused beliefs, values and principles. Being congruent is essential if you are to be credible and develop authentic, non-role relationships.
4. Clarification of consequences and imposition of consequences warranted by the employee's behavior are essential to reinforce the belief that the employee must be responsible for his or her behavior. The consequences should be known beforehand and be reasonable for the situation.
5. Accept no excuses for failure; rather, focus on evaluating what happened and discuss with the employee what could be done differently to achieve success. Accepting excuses for failure, no matter how well articulated or persuasive the excuse may be, discounts the employee's ability to act more responsibly.
6. Do not do things you feel pressured to do for employees that they can do for themselves. (For example, you do something for the employee because you feel if you don't take action the employee will fail, or it won't be done to your standard.) Ask yourself if you have done all you can to enable the employee to take appropriate action.

7. When an employee fails to carry out their responsibilities you should confront the failure without feeling they have let you down. Only the employee is responsible for the actual behavior and is the victim of their own doing. You should not contribute to the victim role by angry recriminations (Persecution) or feeling sorry for the employee.
8. Support any effort on the employee's part to be more responsible and effective. Appreciate the difficulty of change and the scary feelings often associated with change. For some, simple achievements such as taking full responsibility for a task or project represent a major effort to overcome self-doubt.
9. Verbally and emotionally support any effort on the employee's part to take responsible action if the employee has the necessary skill, knowledge, and understanding to take the action in the first place.

Given the suggestions above, the following actions are considered helpful if done in the proper context:

1. Sharing relevant information.
2. Helping the employee develop alternative actions to solve a problem.
3. Helping the employee explore the consequences of possible actions.
4. Supporting responsible employee choices even though the choices might not be choices you would make.
5. Open sharing of thoughts and feelings regarding the employee. This includes giving the employee honest feedback regarding his or her behavior.
6. Giving the employee encouragement and support to try new behaviors.
7. Modeling responsible behavior, positive expectations, and honesty.

Actions that diminish the strength of employees:

1. Doing things for the employee they can do for themselves.
2. Doing things for the employee because the employee does not know how to do something. Instead, train the employee or provide other resources to help the employee learn how to do it by themselves.
3. Being critical of a person's failure rather than helping them analyze the failure and identify ways to be more successful the next time.
4. Giving advice or telling the employee what to do (as opposed to sharing information and helping the employee to define alternative courses of action).
5. Giving the employee instructions to do something they do not have the skills, experience, or knowledge to accomplish or failing to help the employee evaluate their preparedness to take an action or complete a task.
6. Solving a problem for the employee that they should solve themselves because it is easier or quicker to do it that way. (Unless time is critical, or it is an emergency.)

Coaching Skills

Door Openers are passive verbal and nonverbal responses that encourage the other person to continue sharing their thinking. Examples include:

- "Share some more of your thinking"
- "Can you clarify what you mean by that?"
- "Tell me more"
- "And what else"
- "Uh-huh" (while maintaining eye contact)

Open-Ended Questions are active verbal responses that, when used appropriately, enable the other person to think in greater depth about the problem and evaluate the solution. Examples include:

- "What is the problem?" "What is on your mind?"
- "What are you trying to accomplish?" "What do you want?"
- "What ideas do you have for solving the problem that addresses the goals and causes that you have identified?"
- "Which solution(s) do you think would work best?"
- "How will you go about implementing the solution?"
- "What is the real challenge here for you?"
- "If you are saying "yes" to this, what are you saying "no" to?"
- "How can I help?"
- "If someone else asked you the same question you are currently asking me, how would you advise them?"

Active Listening is an empathetic paraphrasing or reflecting of the other person's message. An active listening response summarizes and reflects the feeling **and** the behavior that the person is describing now. The following represent some active listening responses:

- "You seem concerned because you perceive that your staff does not make helpful suggestions."
- "So, you're frustrated with all the paperwork you're required to complete."
- "What I'm hearing you say is that when your boss makes decisions without your input, you get frustrated because he undermines your relationship with staff."
- Being empathic: "You seem to be feeling . . ." "Wow, I can really see that you are upset about this", "It seems from your point of view...", "Correct me if I'm wrong..."
- It sounds like that is a difficult choice for you. If I understand correctly, you see both the benefits of telework and requiring in-person work and recognize that either choice will cause some people to be unhappy.


Staying out of the Drama Triangle

Directions: *Identify the Drama Triangle role the speaker is taking for each statement below. **Write out exactly what you would say** in response to the statement to stay out of the Drama Triangle.*

1. Your staff member says to you, "I am so tired of writing reports; that's all I ever do. What a bore this job is!"
2. After giving one of your staff members some corrective performance feedback, the employee says to you, "You sure have an old -fashioned way of dealing with people and I think it puts people down!"
3. In the past, your Generation X employee was one of your most dependable and hard working staff members. Recently, his performance has been unsatisfactory. You set up a meeting to discuss his performance and he begins the meeting by saying, "These Gen Z employees aren't interested in working hard. I could do a better job if you could just hire better staff."
4. Ann reports directly to you and she supervises Fred. Ann says, "Next week I will be conducting Fred's performance review. He has been here for two years, and his performance has only gotten worse. He misses more and more work. What should I tell him?"

Navigating Difficult Conversations

Kimalee Dickerson, PhD, JD
Chief Public Defender Leadership Training,
April 2025





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1

Agenda

- What makes some conversations so difficult?
- Strategies for More Constructive Conversations
 1. Preparing for the Conversation
 2. Managing Emotions
 3. Closing with an Action Plan
- Small Group Practice






2

Workbook, p. 1

Think about a time that you had a disagreement or conversation with someone that did not go well.

Reflect. Then discuss.

- What was the conversation about?
- Who was involved?
- What were you thinking or feeling?
- Why was the conversation so challenging?



3

Workbook, p. 1

Discuss a time that you had a disagreement or conversation with someone that did not go well.



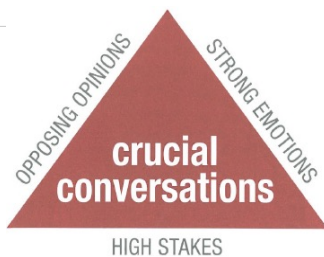
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What makes some conversations so challenging?

5

Three ingredients



Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High, 2002.

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Stages and Strategies for Conversations

- Preparing for the Conversation
- Having the Conversation
 - Active Listening, Use Open-ended Questions
 - Avoiding the Drama Triangle
 - Managing Emotions
- Closing with an Action Plan
- Follow up, if appropriate

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Why Prepare?

Difficult conversations typically are more effective when you've taken time to prepare.

Preparing helps you:

- Feel less stressed
- Communicate more clearly
- Anticipate and better manage emotions
- Be ready for potential responses



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How to Prepare for a Conversation (Workbook p. 2)

Getting ready for the conversation involves asking yourself questions.

- Why do I think this is important to talk about?
- What is my goal or intent for this conversation?
- What information do I have?
- What information am I missing?
 - Am I open to the possibility I'm missing something?
- What are the potential consequences of having this conversation? What are the potential consequences of not having this conversation?

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Initiate the Conversation (Workbook p. 3)

Discuss the meeting purpose and logistics.

- Avoid hidden agendas – Share what you want to talk about and why
 - “The reason I wanted to talk with you today is...”
- Extend a request to meet – When and where?
 - “When would be a good time for us to meet? I believe we will need 30 min.”
- Agree on how you are going to talk and what you will talk about; invite questions and concerns about the process
 - “I’d like to hear from you to understand your perspective better, share what I’ve noticed, and talk about how we move forward. Does that work for you?”

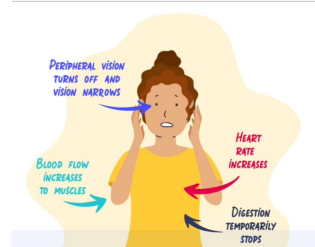
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Managing Your Emotions



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Entering the Panic Zone: Fight, Flight, Freeze







Three Steps to Get Out

1. Detect: Identify when you're in the panic zone
1. Pause: Slow down the panic zone response
2. Redirect: Decide on a route out of the panic zone

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1. Detect: Notice when you're in the panic zone

 <p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart beating fast • Feel hot/flushed or cold/numb • Shallow breathing, tense muscles • Stomach upset 	 <p>Emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxious, nervous • Frustrated, annoyed, angry, disrespected • Embarrassed, ashamed, guilty
 <p>Thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative about yourself or others (I'm an idiot) • Doomsday predictions (I'll never get the promotion) 	 <p>Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight – attack, yell • Flee – get away, avoid • Freeze: go quick, check out

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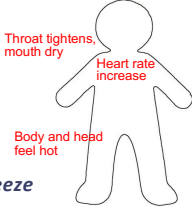
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Identifying My Panic Zone, Workbook p. 4

Think about a time you were in the panic zone, especially involving a difficult conversation.

* it shouldn't be too raw or upsetting

What does a typical fight, flight, or freeze response look and feel like for you?



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2. Pause: Slow down the panic response



Take deep breaths. In through your nose and out through your mouth.

Ground yourself. Focus on your senses and bring yourself back to the present moment. For example, silently name five things you can see, touch, or hear.

Practice mindfulness. Focus on present moment; notice thoughts and feelings without judgment.

Use positive self-talk. Use phrases that remind you you're in control, like "You can do this."

Which of these techniques do you already use or want to try?

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3. Redirect: Find a route out of the panic zone



Take responsibility for what you did or said to contribute to the conversation entering the panic zone.

- "I recognize that I said/did..."
- "I'm sorry for..."



Express care by empathizing.

- "It seems like you're really upset. What's on your mind?"
- "I can tell this is important to you."



Take a break. Pausing allows for recovery from a FFF response.

- "I need a break for now. Let's pause and talk later."

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Recap: Getting Out of the Panic Zone (Self and Others)



1. **Detect:** Identify when you're in the panic zone
2. **Pause:** Take deep breaths, focus on senses, notice thoughts & feelings without judgment, positive self-talk to slow down
3. **Redirect:** take responsibility, express care, take a break to get out of the panic zone

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Closing the Conversation: Creating an Action Plan (p. 5)



Paraphrase what you heard from the other person and check for agreement.



Clarify expectations. If there is an expectation that something will change, be clear and specific.

What will change? Get specific: Who does what by when?
How will I/you/we know it has changed?
Do they have the resources to make the change?
Is this a reasonable expectation that both agree on?



Create a follow-up plan.

Set a date to check-in
Discuss consequences (what happens if change is not seen)

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Closing the Conversation: Creating an Action Plan

Paraphrase what you heard from the other person and check for agreement.

Sample language: I want to make sure we are on the same page. I am hearing that you were not aware of the expectation to provide medical records at least three days before a trial date. Additionally, you were balancing a heavy workload with no clear prioritization. Does that match your understanding of what we talked about?

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Closing the Conversation: Creating an Action Plan

Clarify expectations. If there is an expectation that something will change, be clear and specific.

Sample language: From now on, you agree to have medical record information to the attorneys three days in advance. If your workload prevents you from meeting that timeline, you will check in with the lead investigator who will help you prioritize tasks. Does that work for you?

What will change? Get specific: Who does what by when?
How will I/you/we know it has changed?
Do they have the resources to make the change?
Is this a reasonable expectation that both agree on?

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Closing the Conversation: Creating an Action Plan

Create a follow-up plan.

Sample language: We will sit down in a month to discuss any feedback from the attorneys and lead investigator. If you are not able to regularly meet deadlines, there will be a written warning in your personnel file.

Set a date to check-in
Discuss consequences (what happens if change is not seen)

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Practice Applying Communication Skills in Small Groups

- 3 cases/scenarios to practice communication challenges.
- 3 roles for each case. Everyone is CPD or APD at least once.
 - Chief Public Defender
 - Assistant Public Defender
 - Observers
 - See information for both roles
 - Take notes & give feedback
- Small group coach will keep the group on track and on time and help lead short reflection conversations.

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Agenda and Timing for Each Case

Coach passes out case information to each participant, assigns roles, and allows everyone time to read the case.	5 minutes
Coach asks Assistant Public Defender to leave room while Chief stays and tells the group what they would do to prepare for the meeting with APD (use preparing for meeting questions as a guide).	2-3 minutes
Coach asks Chief to leave room while Assistant Public Defender stays and tells the group what they would do to prepare (use preparing questions).	2-3 minutes
Chief returns to room. Chief and APD role play. Close by developing an action plan for the next step (use action planning steps).	5-7 minutes
Chief and APD offer reflections. Then Observers offer reflections (see debrief questions next page)	3-5 minutes
Coach leads debrief (see debrief questions on next page).	3-5 minutes
Total time for each case	25 minutes

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Reminders!



TAKE A BREAK



BE BACK IN THE MAIN ROOM ON TIME

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Thank you!

Email: dickerson@sog.unc.edu

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Changing Organizational Culture and Routines

2025 Chief Public Defender Leadership Training

Elliot Stoller, Assistant Professor of Leadership and Governance
April 17, 2025

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"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."

— Peter Drucker (or Jack Welch or Steve Jobs)

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2

Current Organizational Culture

Future Desired Organizational Culture

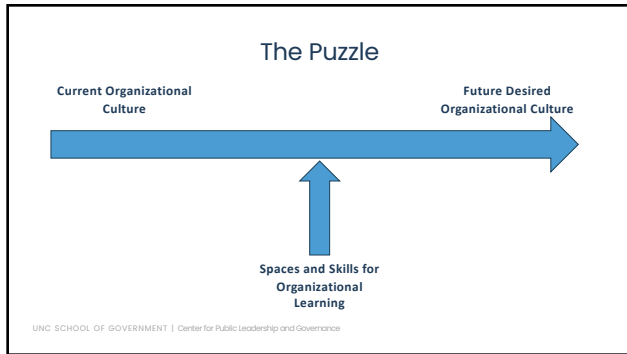
The Puzzle

?



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3



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Spaces and Skills for Organizational Learning

INTENTIONAL ABOUT DEVELOPING THE MUSCLE, SKILLS, AND SPACES FOR FOLKS TO ACCESS NEW INFORMATION, CRITICALLY REFLECT, AND UPDATE THEIR BELIEFS

- Improving existing processes – What works? What doesn't?
- Identifying, questioning, and updating underlying assumptions and goals

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Guidelines for Working Together

Be Curious

Don't Hold Back

Share the Air

Be Present & Limit Distractions

Las Vegas Rules

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Navy Seals – After-Action Reviews

ROUTINES AND SPACES DEVOTED TO ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING = LEARNING FORUMS

- Routinized after every mission
- Flexible Hierarchy: Rank and title checked at the door
- Open Communication:
 - What were the goals?
 - Information gathering/sharing. What happened, why?
 - Lessons learned: What went well? What didn't? How are we going to adjust?
- Identify, question, and change underlying assumptions, inferences, and patterns of behavior

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The Catch-22

To learn new norms and behaviors on an organizational level, it helps to have a learning forum



To create a successful learning forum, teams need to learn new norms and behaviors



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5 Tools for Organizational Learning

TO SUPPORT CHANGING CULTURE

1. Separate Information Gathering from Problem Solving
2. Minimize Defensiveness by Building Team Psychological Safety
3. Modeling New Norms
4. Systems of Accountability
5. Routinized Time/Spaces/Meetings Devoted to Organizational Learning

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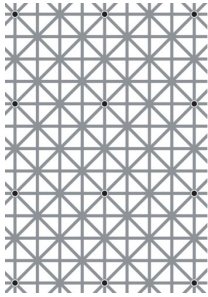
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1. Separate Information Gathering from Problem Solving

How many dots are there?

Why can't you see them all simultaneously?

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Activity 10 minutes

Perspective Taking – Folks You Lead

Challenges they face?
What information do you need from them to lead effectively?
What useful information might they have that you don't?

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2. Minimize Defensiveness by Building Team Psychological Safety

- Celebrate others communicating bad news
- Share story about time you received critical feedback
- Equal-ish time speaking (cause and effect)
- Use formal authority to give license to folks to do things differently
- Attribution for mistakes and failures done well

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3. Modeling New Norms

1-ON-1

- Create time and bandwidth to engage with folks 1-on-1
- Ask for specific feedback from others guided by genuine curiosity
 - Conveys respect: I value your thoughts and perspectives; I could be missing something
 - Useful. Not necessarily *True*

GROUP SPACES

- Create spaces (meetings) where folks can observe each other share information and problem solve
- Identify, coach, and elevate folks who can model new behaviors and norms for others to observe in these spaces
- Honor strengths of existing culture

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Activity – Asking for Feedback (15 mins)

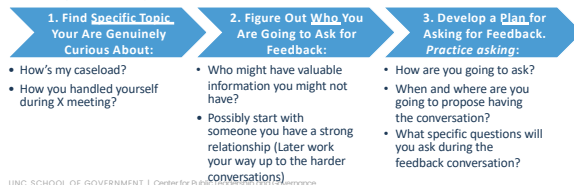
A) 2 mins: Reflect on each stage

B) 3 mins: Share your responses with a partner

C) 2 mins: Partner provides feedback

D) Repeat B and C with partner. Switch roles

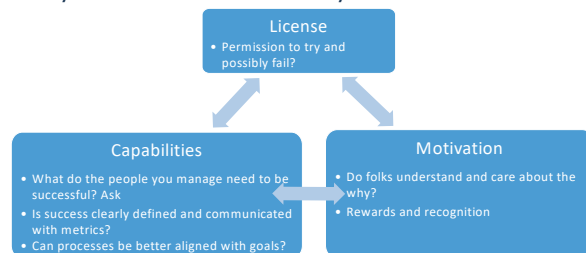
GENUINE CURIOSITY: WHAT AM I MISSING? WHAT DID I DO WELL? WHAT COULD I HAVE DONE BETTER?



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4. Systems of Accountability



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5. Routinized Time/Spaces/Meetings Devoted to Organizational Learning

JUST DO IT



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Activity: Navy Seals – After-Action Reviews

YOUR TURN (15 MINS) – AVOIDING PUBLIC DEFENDER BURNOUT

Start with the Goals

- What are we trying to accomplish? How do we define success?

Information Gathering:

- What have we done already? How have folks experienced it?
- What unique information might you have that others don't?
- What's working? What's not?

Problem Solving:

- How do we continue our successes? How do we address our failures?

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My Leadership Action Plan (5 min.)

- See handout with instructions

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Thank You

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My Leadership Action Plan

One thing I have learned about myself as a result of this session is:

One specific skill I want to develop to increase my ability to change organizational culture is:

One specific action I will take to develop skills and spaces for organizational learning is:

I will ask for feedback and support from the following people:

I will measure my progress in the next 30 days by:

