

FACILITATION NOTES FOR LEARNING CIRCLE H:

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS (1 hour, 30 minutes)

Session Purpose:

Help participants better deal with difficult conversations. Engage participants in practice of core skills and strategies that relate to helping them negotiate, communicate, and problem solve more effectively in the face of difficult conversations or situations.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain how managing one’s “hot buttons” helps when dealing with difficult conversations.
- Describe how to proactively clarify and recommend a course of action for addressing problems within their organizational and community context.
- Discuss the value of third party dispute resolution.
- Relate strategies for maintaining relationships during difficult conversations.

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
	<p><u>Room Set-Up:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Set the room with:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Chairs fanned in rows or a large circle depending on the size of the group and the room ⇒ Overhead projector and projection screen ⇒ Tables set with copies of LC packet and markers ▪ <u>Posted Newspaper:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Working Agreements, Parking Lot, Hot Resources, etc. from Home Team 	
15 min. total	LEARNING CIRCLE SET-UP	Overhead: Outcomes
5 min.	1. Welcome participants and briefly overview the learning circle – purpose, learning objectives, major conversations, and flow.	
10 min.	2. Facilitate introductions – name, assignment, one thing they’ve learned about dealing with difficult conversations.	
30 min. total	MANAGING ‘HOT BUTTONS’	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
5 min.	1. Discussion about what Team/organizational processes are currently operating in their service assignments. Stress organizational culture, protocol for CR, following the chain of command, honoring the way things get resolved in their organizations. Invite participants to share at their tables – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What has been negotiated between them and their supervisors re: dealing with difficult conversations. ▪ Successes and challenges they've had ▪ What they understand about how difficult situations and conversations should take place in light of their organizational culture, community culture, existing protocol, etc. 	
5 min.	2. Direct & indirect methods. Briefly discuss how depending on the cultural values, priorities, and customs, methods involving more direct or indirect approaches to dealing with difficult conversations.	
10 min.	3. Invite participants to review the guidance in their packet on “maintaining relationships.” While conflicts are not necessarily resolved to everyone’s liking every time, it is possible and important to approach difficult conversations in a manner that maintains the relationship.	TR: Maintaining Relationships
10 min.	4. RISC Model. Walk participants through RISC Model. Form pairs and have pairs practice using the model. Discuss the model and contexts and settings where the model might be as useful.	TR: RISC Feedback Model
5 min.	5. Negotiation. Share with participants the information on negotiation. <i>Note: If time permits and/or interest is strong, participants may appreciate practicing their negotiation skills in place of the RISC practice.</i>	
5 min.	6. Mediation and third party dispute resolution. Share that on pages 22-23 of their packets, there is also information about third party dispute resolution. Ask participants to share their experiences with this type of resolution help. Explain that depending on the circumstances, third party may be the best choice for help to resolve a conflict.	RM: Third Party Dispute Resolution materials
5 min. total	LEARNING CIRCLE CLOSE OUT	
	1. Review of ideas that especially stuck out for folks.	

Time	Steps	Resources/ Materials
5 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Highlight of resources in packet that didn't get covered. 3. Share local resources that folks have found helpful in helping them build their knowledge and skills in resolving conflicts, communicating more effectively, and dealing with difficult conversations. 4. Tagging of next steps using the reflection sheet found at the end of their packet. 	
1 min. total	Session Wrap and Transition to Next Topic	
1 min.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Close this session by wrapping up the conversation, thanking participants, and providing participants a bridge to the next session. 	