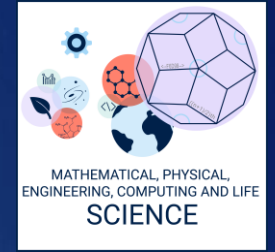




MPLS
Resolution Service



Difficult conversations and the importance of giving and receiving feedback

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Session Overview

- Difficult conversations in the workplace, and why it's important to have them
- Tools for you – before, during and after
- Surprise conversations
- Useful phrases and questions

Questions for reflection

- Is there a difficult conversation you know you want to have?
- Who are you concerned about having a difficult conversation with?
- What is stopping you from having a difficult conversation?

- What is a difficult conversation?
- Why is it important to have them?





What are the challenges?

- Tension and emotion
- Competing realities
- Different opinions
- Misinterpretation
- Confidence, skills, time
- Power dynamics

A bit about why

How we come to our conclusions...

- We make assumptions based on what we want to see
- Everyone has a lens through which they see the world



Things to remember...

➤ For a productive conversation, we must have positive intentions

➤ What is the end goal?



Tools for you



Before the conversation



During the conversation



After the conversation

Before the conversation



Self-reflection



Visualising



Preparing, scripting and/or rehearsing



Breathing practices

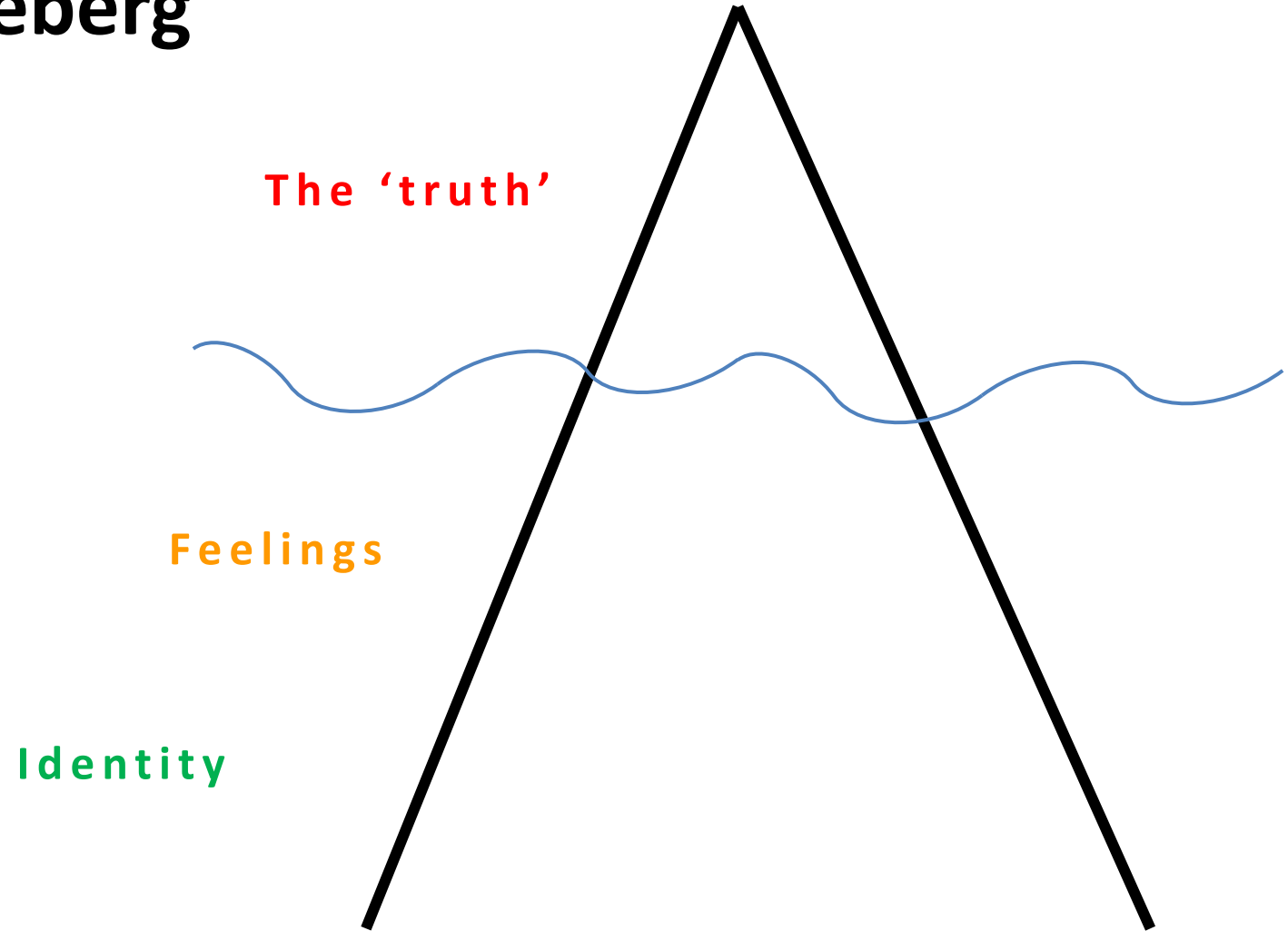


The 'shakedown'

During the conversation

- Being aware of 'the iceberg'
- Using empathy
- Listening with intent
- Reflecting and exploring
- Being a role model

Introducing the iceberg





Empathy

What does it mean to you?

Empathy

Noun

the ability to share someone else's feelings or experiences by imagining what it would be like to be in that person's situation

[Cambridge Dictionary]

A key component in a process of relationship building and issue exploration.

Active listening requires

- ▶ Slowing down and being present
- ▶ Allowing listening to become the focus
- ▶ No agenda
- ▶ Quieting your internal monologue
- ▶ More than nodding and reflecting back

Reflect and explore

Reflect

Use similar language.
Don't interrogate, give
space to go into more
detail

Summarise

Highlight key points to
check you're
understanding what's
important

Paraphrase

Choose your own words
so the speaker can hear
how someone else is
interpreting

These can help to open up the conversation, explore differences and similarities, and potentially an agreed way forward

When giving feedback

- Be specific and clear
- Own the statement – think about the language you use
- Be realistic with expectations
- Consider the timing
- Be accurate
- Describe, don't interpret

Being a role model

- Share your goal and ask for theirs
- Be open about trying to make things better, not worse
- Express gratitude
- Acknowledge your responsibility in this situation



Role Models

After the conversation

Confirm summary and outcomes

Personal actions for accountability

Reflect and come back

Say thank you

Check if you need more support

Surprise, surprise ...

Here is what I heard you say. Is that correct?

Help me understand more about your last comment

What do you need me to do?

What outcome are you looking for in this conversation?

What you shared is important, and I need time to process it

Useful phrases and questions

- ▶ Can you expand on that...? Help me understand...?
- ▶ What's that like for you?
- ▶ How did that affect/impact you?
- ▶ I notice/see/hear... (neutral observations)
- ▶ What does that mean for you?
- ▶ What happens if nothing changes? What is the best outcome?

MPLS Resolution Service and self-learning

HOW WE CAN HELP



[More about the process and some FAQs](#)

WHO WE ARE



[Meet the team and get in touch](#)

WEBINARS AND RESOURCES



[Find useful videos, books and more](#)

If you have any queries that have not been covered in these pages, please contact us on resolution@mpls.ox.ac.uk.

Resources:

- [MPLS Resolution Service](#), [MSD Mediation Service](#)
- Five ways to listen better TED Talk: [Julian Treasure: 5 ways to listen better | TED Talk](#)
- The gorilla test: [selective attention test \(youtube.com\)](#)
- Spot the change: [Gradual Change Test 1 \(youtube.com\)](#)
- [Steve Hindmarsh webinars](#):
 - Resolving Conflict at Work
 - Managing difficult conversations and strong emotions
 - Developing assertiveness in conversation

Tools that might help...

➤ Script/template to structure a conversation

➤ The COCO framework

My concerns, my objectives, their concerns, their objectives

➤ [The Johari window](#)

➤ [Rob Bolton's assertion messages](#)