



OhioHealth
BELIEVE IN WE™

Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) Curriculum

Crucial Conversations

Crucial Conversations

In Moore SY, Cameron-Lewis RG, Ferris FD (eds). Leadership Development Initiative Curriculum, 2014. © The Leadership Development Initiative.

ISBN: 978-0-9884318-0-5

Originally Presented by [Carl Johan Furst](#) & [Eileen Piersa](#)

Permission to reproduce this Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) Curriculum module is granted for non-commercial educational purposes only, provided that the above attribution statement, copyright and ISBN are displayed.

Commercial entities presenting not-for-profit educational programs based on the LDI Curriculum must not use the LDI materials with products, images or logos from the commercial entity.

Commercial entities presenting for-profit educational programs using any part of the LDI Curriculum, must only do so with written permission from Frank D. Ferris, Director, LDI, OhioHealth.

The Leadership Development Initiative gratefully acknowledges the support of:

- International Palliative Care Initiative, Open Society Foundations, New York, NY
- National Cancer Institute Center for Global Health, Bethesda, MD
- The Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, London, United Kingdom
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, Alexandria, VA
- Pettus Family Foundation

The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and editors, and does not necessarily represent the official views of any of the funders.

Acknowledgment and appreciation are extended to faculty and staff of the OhioHealth and the Institute for Palliative Medicine at San Diego Hospice (which housed the International Programs and the Leadership Development Initiative from 2009 to 2012). Special thanks to the Mentors, Consultants and the LDI Team who contributed so much to the LDI Curriculum.

Contact the LDI Team

E-mail: Frank.Ferris@OhioHealth.com

Frank D. Ferris, MD

The Leadership Development Initiative

Kobacker House

800 McConnell Dr

Columbus, OH, USA 43214-3463

Phone: +1 (614) 533-6299

Fax: +1 (614) 533-6200

Overview

Exemplary leaders often need skills that create alignment and agreement in high-stakes, emotional or risky endeavors. Learning to have the 'crucial conversation' and encouraging others to do the same fosters the highest quality decisions and achievements for a team or organization. For best efficiency, a team needs open dialogue and mutual respect. A crucial conversation is one where:

- Opinions are different
- Stakes are high
- Emotions are strong

There are three parts to having the conversation. The first is "me": my intention, observations, and my story. Second is "you": your observations and your story. Third is "us": understanding, action plan and follow-up.

A demonstration of a crucial conversation is presented and role-playing case studies take place in small groups. Observation and feedback to the conversation participants is offered.

In the book *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*, Patterson describes steps to having crucial conversations. The goal of the conversation is to resolve the differences, and ideally, to arrive at a consensus solution. In brief, the steps he describes are:

- State intentions.
- Describe facts and observations.
- Share the interpretation of the observations (this interpretation is a story, not 'truth').
- All others share their facts and stories.
- Build safety to express different or opposing views. Listen and seek to understand all perspectives.
- Listen for shared goals, interests and values.
- Share/agree on an action plan: who will do what by when, and write it down.
- Arrange the follow-up meeting to hold each other accountable.

After a role-play, a debrief time for feedback will help speakers share what went well and identify ideas that could be used for improvement. A worksheet is included to guide the process and capture feedback and steps for improvement.

Objectives

After this presentation, participants will:

1. Describe components of a crucial conversation.
2. Engage in common crucial conversations with partners.
3. Move through the steps needed to resolve challenging conversations.

Important Teaching Points

- Take time to become very clear about the situation (observations, your interpretation).
- Listen well.
- If the matter is crucial, practice key components of the conversation prior to actually engaging in the conversation.
- Aim for progress toward resolution, not perfection.

Resources / References

1. Patterson Kerry, Grenny Joseph McMillan, Ron & Switzler Al. (2005). *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
2. *Crucial Conversations*. www.vitalsmarts.com: A proprietary company that offers a great website and further information.