1. Participate in a Critical Friends discussion: be prepared to report back.
2. Create a **ONE MINUTE or shorter** elevator pitch for your unit, connected to its purpose and mission.
3. Remember that there are books available to support your development—use your funds!

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**Difficult Conversations**

- What situations give you heartburn?
- Do the people involved have anything in common?
- What is it? Can you articulate it?

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**Long-Term Relationships**

- Manage yourself
- Develop your skills

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**Homework**

Deliver an elevator pitch for your unit.

**remember: one minute!**
Scenario 1: The other person is totally off base, confused, neurotic, stupid and/or just generally wrong.

Scenario 2: The other person might have a point; you could be mistaken or have misunderstood.

Whichever it is, you are in an unpleasant situation.

The only conduct you control is your own.

Reality: The only control you have is your own.

Outcome?

Tell the person off?

Never deal with him or her again?

Solve a problem?

GOAL:

Layer professional skills over your personality and reactions.
GOAL: Layer professional skills over your personality and reactions.

1. Know your conflict comfort and style
2. Gain specific skills
3. Practice, so they're accessible when needed

Develop your skills
- Learn a little social psychology
- Listen well, ask good questions
- Align with others
- Develop good personal scripts

A Little Social Psychology
- Egocentrism bias
- Reciprocity norms
- Sinister attribution error

Likability MATTERS

Never attribute malice to that which incompetence will explain.

Knoll Corollary
Never attribute to incompetence that which temporary inattention or miscommunication will explain.
Build Rapport, Likability

- Listen
- Listen
- Listen
- Ask questions

Exercise

- "Uh huh" (nodding)
- "Tell me more about that."
- "Help me understand more about..."

Persuasion Negotiation

Negotiators who ask more questions get better results.

- How good are your questions?
- How well do you listen?

Emotions

People process information differently in different moods.

Emotion is a self-fulfilling prophecy.
**Go-to Questions**

- “Can you show me?”
- “Can you help me understand?”
- “Is this right?”
- “Just to be clear, you’re suggesting…”

1. As a mark of a person who learns and cares about learning
2. To avoid cognitive errors (sinister attribution bias)
3. To prevent problems, defuse aggression spirals

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**Aligning with Others**

- Improves audience attention, retention
- Changes your alignment
- Reduces conflict, aggression spirals
- Takes constant practice!

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**Collect YESes**

- Agree wherever you can
- Agree without conceding
- Acknowledge the person
- Acknowledge the person’s competence and authority
- Don’t contradict, agree and build

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**Words you have prepared, in advance, and practiced, for predictable situations.**
**Personal Scripts**

**Prescriptive**

1. Speaking regularly about values & mission
2. Building it into a habit to ask questions about others, their interests
3. For anticipated events: You know it’s coming (feedback, evaluation, difficult conversations)

**Reactive**

1. Buying time to think
2. Calling a pause in a topic or discussion that is getting off the rails, too heated
3. Turning the tables to the other/s: asking for solutions
4. Noting positives
5. Agreeing to disagree

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**Some Useful Scripts**

1. I need some time to reflect. Perhaps I could get back to you in about 20 minutes?
2. I recall there is something about that in the policy manual. Let me review that and get back to you.
3. I’m so rushed right now, I couldn’t do this justice. I’ll carve out some dedicated time Wednesday afternoon.
4. This will affect others as well as just you. As soon as I have had a chance to speak with each, I will decide.

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**Constructing Personal Scripts—Difficult Conversations**

1. Soft opening: set tone
2. Leave time and conversational opening for response
3. Leave room for a misunderstanding
4. Use low-key language
5. Stay factual
6. Use “I” not “you” messages
7. Ask questions, ask questions, ask questions! (listen to answers)

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**Tone is Essential**

- Polite
- Quiet
- Respectful

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**Assertion, not aggression.**

**More Useful Scripts**

- “I am interested in your success. It is my duty to share a candid evaluation with you so you can assess and adjust going forward.”
- “Let’s agree to disagree for now and both go have a good think about this. Let’s try again tomorrow.”
- “I’m not comfortable discussing that.”
- “I hear what you’re saying and I respect how strongly you feel.”
Scripts for Receiving Complaints

“What actions do you seek from me?”

“I need to find out how others view this matter. I will do that and get back to you.”

“You need to do what you need to do.”

Concepts, Phrases to Excise

“You have to understand…” or “You need to…”

“I regret that you’re unhappy with my decision.”

“You’ll just have to trust me on this.”

“You’ll just have to trust me on this.”

You need to do what you need to do.

“You have to understand…” or “You need to…”

“I regret that you’re unhappy with my decision.”

“You’ll just have to trust me on this.”

Two Hard, Leveraging Changes

Spend the first two minutes of every interaction just making sure you have understood the other party’s perspective.

No arguing back!

Replace “but” with “and” in your vocabulary and phrasing.

You can win the battle and still lose the war.
Change the script by changing your lines.

1. Read Crucial Conversations or Crucial Accountability.
2. Watch the video Sarah will post and consider how you would handle the situation it depicts, going forward.
3. Find and have handy for the next session your definition of leadership you wrote in the first session.

Questions or concerns?

Key takeaways?