

Chapter Seven

Fostering Communication

Think Win-Win with Crucial Conversations

Every day, school leaders face situations that make it necessary for them to have crucial conversations with staff members. A crucial conversation is a “a discussion between two or more people where 1) stakes are high, 2) opinions vary, and 3) emotions run strong.

Here is a check list of some strategies that are helpful with these conversations include:

Strategies	Your Notes
Scripting notes and listing key points you want to include before the conversation	
Establishing a respectful and private time and place for the discussion	
Approaching the conversation with an assumption of positive intent-assuming that the person you are speaking with is well-meaning and did not intentionally cause the issue	
Establishing a calm, respectful, and direct approach with your body language, tone of voice and choice of words	
Making very good use of your listening skills	
Basing your conversation on evidence and facts-not opinion and especially not hearsay from others	
Ensuring all parties leave the meeting clear on the purpose and next steps	
Making commitments of support, guidance and follow-up	

