Mastering Difficult Conversations: Top 10 Tips

Heather Peters
NL Practice Lead
Senior Consultant & Coach



Knightsbridge RobertsonSurrette

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Understanding You



© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Tip #1

Recognize Your Own Triggers:

Where & how do you feel it?

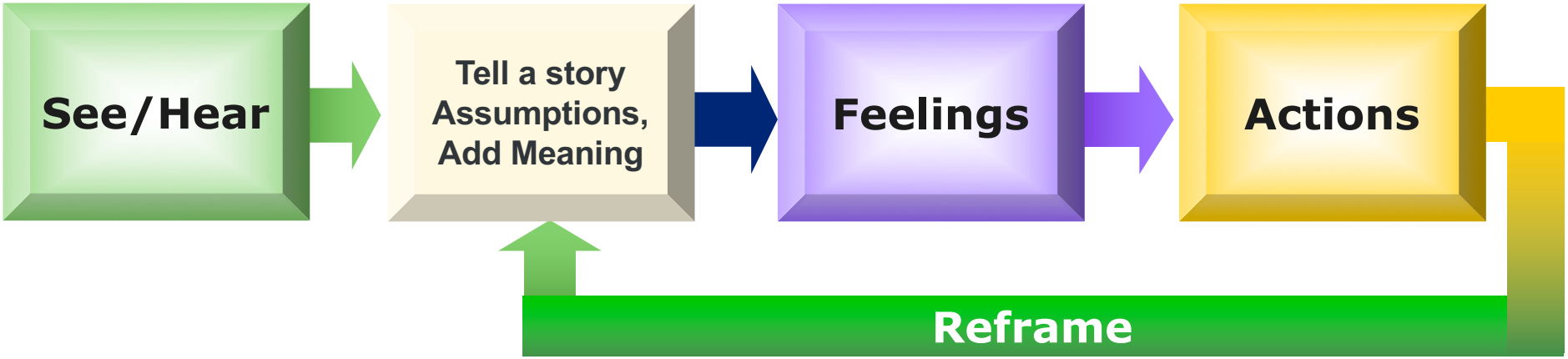
How Old?



© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Mastering your own conversation… with yourself!

"You Cannot NOT Communicate"



Notice, Be Self Aware and Challenge Your Reality!

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Tip #2

Be Aware When You Are Making Up Stories.

When in doubt, check them out!

Skill of Listening

W.A.I.T

"Why Am I Talking?"

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Tip #3

Practice Active Listening.

How can you limit distractions?

Be present!

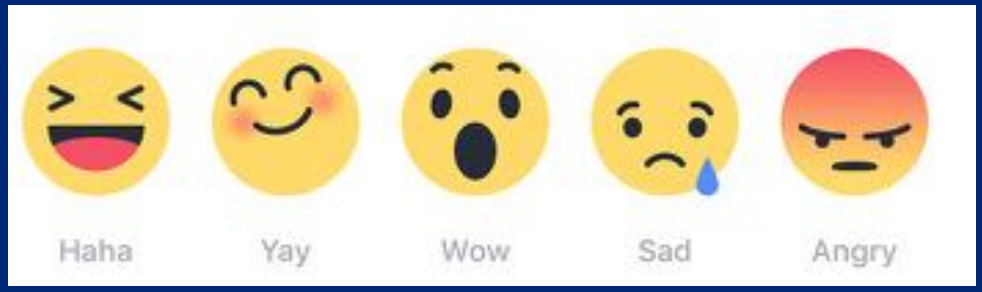
Listening

=

Learning

Tip #4

Acknowledge Emotions, Inquire About Reactions and Focus on Facts.



Be flexible – it may not be what you expected.

Tip #5

Acknowledge Verbally Your Own Contribution to the Situation or Relationship.

Tip #6

Use Open Ended Questions.
Avoid Closed & Leading Questions.



Staying Curious...

- **Closed Questions**

  "Did you do it?"

- **Leading Questions**

  "Considering the Mayor is keen on option A, which one do you think we should go with?"

- **Fact/Data Gathering Questions**

  "What is the name of that?"

- **Open-Ended Questions**

  Powerful, short, simple, curious



© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

“Powerful” Questions...

- ***What, How, When***
- **Lead to greater insight**
- **Ideally, no more than 5 words**
- **Examples of Powerful questions:**
  - What does it need to be?
  - What do you think?
  - What does that mean?
  - What makes sense?
  - How does that work?
  - How will we know if that is successful?
  - What are the possibilities?
  - What are we/you willing to do?
  - What will you do? What do I need to do?
  - What else?



© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.


“The single biggest problem in communications is the illusion that it has taken place.”
— George Bernard Shaw

Tip #7

Paraphrase or Ask: What is Your Understanding?

Remember: your intention is not always communicated as intended.

Challenge Your Intention/Motive

Stop and ask yourself these questions:

- What do I really want for myself?
- What do I really want for others?
- What do I really want for the relationship?
- How would I behave if I really want these results?

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Tip #8

Be Prepared to Give Feedback.

Factual + Timely + Succinctly

The Feedback Sandwich



Positive Feedback

Constructive Feedback

Positive Feedback

A New Recipe for
Feedback

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

What is Feedback?

1. State the purpose of the discussion & intent
2. Describe specifically what you observed (facts)
3. Describe your reaction to what you observed
    - why important and invoke dialogue
4. Offer helpful ideas when appropriate
5. Summarize and show your support

Feedback Formula

When you…
The impact is / was…
What did you intend?
I would suggest…

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Tip #9

Be Patient…
It May Take More Than One Conversation.

Tip #10

Be Curious,
Not Judgemental!



Getting Results

- Prioritize and schedule the time – don't be distracted!
- Don't be 'married' to your result.
- Acknowledge any success.
- Clearly state and confirm next steps.
- Take time to evaluate what you learned
- Don't assume success or failure… ask!

Knightsbridge RobertsonSurrette
human capital solutions

© 2016 Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette. All rights reserved.

Heather Peters
An insightful leadership coach, solutions-driven consultant and energetic and engaging facilitator with over 20 years experience in leadership, entrepreneurial and strategic HR roles in the insurance, IT, healthcare and financial industries, Heather has helped hundreds of leaders and professionals engage teams and maximize performance in Canada and beyond. Heather is currently working with Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette as a Senior Consultant & Coach and leading their HR, Leadership & Career Solutions Practice in Newfoundland & Labrador. Heather is passionate about learning and has completed her Master of Employment Relations (MER) from Memorial University, a Bachelor of Commerce (B. Comm.) from the University of Ottawa, is an Associate Certified Coach (ACC) with the International Coach Federation, and is a Certified HR Professional with IPMA (IPMA-CP).

About Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette
At Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette (KBRS), we *help our clients seamlessly recruit, develop, engage, retain, transition to create competitive advantages, improve performance and achieve business objectives.*

Established in 1975, our Firm has remained competitive through our commitment to delivering integrated and innovative solutions to human capital challenges. The Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette team of over 65 professionals operate from offices in Halifax, Moncton, St. John's and Toronto.

We are a part of Canada's leading integrated human capital company and the global leader in talent mobility – Lee Hecht Harrison Knightsbridge with over 300 offices in 60 countries worldwide.

We are proud to be the official HR Advisory Partner of MNL.
MNL members are entitled to a free 15-minute conversation with an HR consultant to assess needs and suggest a possible course of action.

KBRS.ca | 1.844.287.0154 | HRAdvisory@kbrs.ca



Heather Peters
NL Practice Lead
Knightsbridge Robertson Surrette
709.722.6996
hpeters@kbrs.ca

Knightsbridge RobertsonSurrette
human capital solutions