

## Crucial Conversations: 5 Critical Concepts to Help You Effectively Discuss What Really Matters Most

January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017

Question (Q)	Presenter Responses (R)
	<p>1. Where can I get resources on planning a strategic, crucial conversation that involves gaining stakeholder buy-in and getting stakeholders to meet deadlines?</p> <p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS</b> – Well of course the first thing I would do is take some courses from Bob the BA lol, but barring that, I would start with the book <i>Crucial Conversations</i> by Kerry Patterson. Additionally, this will require influence without authority skills. I would also look at the book <i>Influence Without Authority</i> by Bradford and Cohen. Then, you should reach out to someone internally at your organization to help analyze the stakeholders that are involved and impacted. You need to make sure you understand their WIIFM factor (what’s in it for me) to change. This is a critical piece to the puzzle. Once you understand how they tick, you can devise a strategy to having the conversation and changing the behavior.</p> <p>2. You spoke about utilizing a strategic approach when having a crucial conversation. Can you suggest some general guidelines on setting oneself up for success, in advance of a crucial conversation?</p> <p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS</b> – The steps in #1 definitely speak to some of the general guidelines you know you should set up to make it work. Also...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Understand the situation at hand. Understand it from your point of view and empathize from their point of view.</li> <li>B. Seek out the advice of someone who is not involved. Make sure that you understand it like someone else who is unbiased would.</li> <li>C. What will be your rules of engagement? Ground rules for this conversation should be chosen carefully.</li> <li>D. Location, location, location. Make sure you choose a neutral location that does not give either person a powerbase that will throw the other person off.</li> <li>E. Do you have your goals and objectives set? Remember, this is like a project.</li> <li>F. Do you know what your breaking points are? Where will you exit the conversation if it does not go as planned? When? What are triggers that are going to end it? Delay it?</li> <li>G. Understand what your next steps will be with the assumption that things go well. Keep the conversastion running smoothly and effortlessly.</li> </ul>

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<p>3. Do you have some tips you on how to influence your supervisor/manager to be more engaging rather than passive aggressively compliant?</p>	<p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS –</b> You need to figure out why they are passive aggressive. Have they been burned before? Are they not a risk taker? Are they afraid of subordinates becoming more successful than them? PACs (passive aggressive compliants) are exercising a form of control. If they do what is compliant and no more they can keep people at bay and not have to do too much. You somehow need to sell them on why they need to change this behavior to benefit more people. If they can see the benefits they will likely change their behavior at least once. Yes, at least once. You may have to rinse, lather and repeat for a while to keep this going. So, figure out why. Then create a case to sell them on the benefits. Then do the steps in previous questions.</p>
<p>4. What are some effective ways of dealing with “bad behavior” displayed by junior level colleagues?</p>	<p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS -</b> This can be for so many different reasons. This could come from generational differences. That is an entire book and class in its own right. So, what I will say about this, is a junior colleague must be shown why the behavior is not right for the environment and what the expectation is. However, take for example that they believe their behavior is correct simply because it is a different way of getting it done. However, what must be analyzed is it detrimental to anyone? Is it really better? So regardless of age, issue, approach, bad behavior is about right and wrong from many angles. Morals, personal ethics, situational ethics, corporate ethics (and all three of those could be in conflict), procedures, policy, compliance, regulation, reputation, business value and the list is pretty long. Figure out what is wrong, what the behavior should be, and follow previous steps talked about. If the “junior” does not want to see it that way, why? Do they have a compelling argument for change? Are you open to it? Is the timing wrong? Could it happen in the future? Or... is the junior not a fit? Of course, many of these things apply to all levels right? If you are not the manager or director, please make sure you clue them into the situation.</p>
<p>5. What are some actual strategies to use during the crucial conversation? Better yet, do you/could you provide a session where you will discuss this in more detail?</p>	<p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS –</b> There are many strategies that can be employed. Think of them as “plays” like in football etc. I have a four and eight hour workshops that I have never run as a virtual class before. I do it onsite for organizations. If there is enough interest, I would be happy to do so. If you are interested, please email at <a href="mailto:Bob@bobtheba.com">Bob@bobtheba.com</a> and let me know. The more people that sign up the cheaper I will make it!</p>
<p>6. As a remote employee, without face to face meetings, can a phone call still be an effective vehicle for crucial conversations? What are some tips for managing this kind of conversation, when I can’t respond to visual cues over the phone?</p>	<p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS –</b> It can be but you are right in that it will be harder because of the communication barriers. So, very important to set guidelines and rules for phone conversations. It is important to have a strong script you need to follow. This is different than your agenda which you should also have. You need the agenda for both to follow. Your script is the possibilities of questions and answers that may happen and you need to</p>

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	<p>respond to. It really helps for phone conversations since you can't see the person. Make sure you tell the story. This is where storytelling is really important. You must paint the picture with your voice so they see it in their head clearly. You must explain in detail things you don't have to when you see people in person. Additionally, you must ask/create stopping points in the conversation to make sure you are both on the same page. "How does that make you feel" "Did that make sense?" "Am I being clear?" "What other information can I give you?" Develop a list of questions that make sense to ask at certain points of the conversation.</p> <p>7. Any tips for developing story teller skills? How can I be an engaging story teller?</p> <p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS</b> – Attend my storytelling webinar with the IIBA on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>! In the interim, I would have conversations with your friends and family and try telling stories. Ask them to tell you what you said well and what you did not. Ask them to tell you what you told them that was important and interesting and what was not. It will help you get into patterns that you will recognize what "data" makes sense to include and what levels not to.</p> <p>8. How do you have a crucial conversation with a colleague or stakeholder that has a very close relationship with your boss? What are some ways to get what is needed out of the conversation, in a way that will not alienate you from your boss?</p> <p><b>BOB THE BA SAYS</b> –If you fear that the conversation with the colleague or stakeholder will backfire and they will go to your boss, you may have to consider that you need a crucial conversation with the boss too. The other thing that can happen is that person may go to the boss for advice prior to a conversation once they know you want the conversation. Not knowing all the things that might be happening it is hard to give specific advice. My likely course of action is to go to the boss first. I might explain that I want to talk to the colleague and have a crucial conversation. Ask the boss their advice on how to approach it. All of this depends on the difficulty and topic of the crucial conversation you need to have. Is this the first time you have to have the crucial conversation? The second? The more severe the issue the more I would talk to the boss. Hierarchy can matter.</p> <p>Thanks for the great questions! I look forward to future events and/or serving you for your training and consulting needs.  All the best!  Be extraordinary!  Bob the BA ☺</p>