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## Language Guide for Communicating through Conflict

Adapted from: Mitchell, B., & Gamlem, C. (2017).  
*The conflict resolution phrase book*. Wayne, NJ: Career Press.

### Pause/Slow the Conversation

- Wait a second.
- Thank you for saying something, I need a minute to think and get back to you.
- I can tell this is very important. I want to give you my full attention; can we meet at \_\_\_?
- Can we stop for a second to process what you just said?
- Can you please give me a moment to consider what I just heard you say?
- Just a second, I'm not following you. Can you say that again?

### Initiate Conversation

- I need to talk through and issue with you.
- Help me understand.
- Something has been brought to my attention I'd like to discuss.
- Thanks for asking, that gives me a chance to share something that's been on my mind and maybe get your thoughts on it.
- A good place to start would be to help me understand exactly how you see the situation.
- Thank you for letting me know about \_\_\_\_\_. I appreciate you telling me directly.
- I want you to know I'm listening. Please tell me your thoughts on \_\_\_\_\_.
- I've been waiting for the right time to bring this up. Is now okay with you?

### Ask (Identify the Issue)

- Is there something I'm missing here?
- Can you clarify for me?
- Tell me what happened.
- I'd like to know how you feel about it
- You said I don't have all the facts; can you fill me in?
- Can you give me some examples?
- What specifically did you see or observe?
- How did this start?
- I am really curious about where this is coming from.
- I need a little more information.

### Listen

- Is there more? Anything else I should know?
- Please fill me in on the details.
- What's that like for you?
- Has this happened before?
- I want to make sure I understood you.
- How so?
- I hear what you're saying about \_\_\_\_\_.

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### Listen (Continued)

- Let me repeat what you said so I'm clear.
- So your main concern is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Why do you think that happened?
- How has this affected you or others?
- Could you please expand on that last statement?
- In other words \_\_\_\_\_. Is that right?
- I am curious about the part where you said \_\_\_\_\_, can you tell me more?
- Is there something driving that position?

### Speak: (Give Feedback, Apologize, Set Boundaries)

- I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Yes, I understand what you're saying. I apologize for \_\_\_\_\_. I won't do it again.
- Today I noticed \_\_\_\_\_. When that happened I felt \_\_\_\_\_.
- I understand this is important. I will \_\_\_\_\_, I won't \_\_\_\_\_. How about \_\_\_\_\_ instead?

### Clarify

- What is your understanding of my perspective?
- If I understand correctly, you would like me to \_\_\_\_\_? Is that right?
- That's not exactly what I meant, let me rephrase.
- I'm not sure I agree, let's explore that more.
- We may be missing each other on this. Let's hit rewind and try again.

### Evaluate Options

- Thanks for being so open, I think we can solve this if we talk it out.
- Can you share what you think may help solve this problem?
- Tell me more about how that might work.
- What are some possible options for us to consider?
- How can we achieve \_\_\_\_\_, where your concern about \_\_\_\_\_ can be addressed and my concern regarding \_\_\_\_\_ is taken into consideration?
- That idea has real merit, let's talk through how it might work.
- What are some ideas to solve this problem fairly?
- We may have different ideas about a solution to this issue, so let's explore them more.

### Other Ideas

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