



Courageous Conversations

Holding employees accountable is a supervisor function that many managers dread. Sometimes supervisors make excuses to not hold them accountable. They are going through a tough time. They are good with the clients. The situation will fix itself. They are looking for another job. They are about to retire. They might get mad. These are all excuses. When we don't hold employees accountable it can impact the supervisor's credibility, the team's effectiveness and eventually impact services.

Consequences of NOT having Courageous Conversations

1. Tasks incomplete, affecting others' work.
2. Individuals are unaware of their need to change.
3. Employee morale is disrupted.
4. Timelines are negatively affected/projects derailed.
5. Persistent unwanted behavior.
6. You lose trust and credibility as an effective leader.
7. Services are impacted.

The fear of confrontation is a reality. Some employees will get emotional when we hold them accountable. It takes courage to confront someone about their behavior or performance. The ability to deliver courageous conversations is a skill all supervisors need.

Courageous conversations (Stallings) takes a POSITIVE approach to difficult conversations. POSITIVE is an acronym for a process to deliver courageous conversations.

P – PERSONALITY AND PERCEPTION

What behavior types, communication style, conflict style are the supervisor and the employee? How does each side view the situation?

O – OBJECTIVITY AND OWNERSHIP

Take a bird's eye view figuring out what was the root cause of the issue?

S – SUCCESS STRATEGY

What is the ultimate desired outcome? How will you get there?

I – IMAGINE

Plan, prepare and practice the conversation. Create a script and review it with another supervisor.

T- TALK AND TRANSACT THE BUSINESS

Set up the meeting. Consider location, time, and emotional state. Have the conversation and be receptive.

I – IMPLEMENT WITH INTEGRITY

Agree to a plan and outcome. Give clear and specific expectations and timelines.

V – VERIFY

Schedule “check ins” to track progress and ensure success.

E – EDUCATE AND EVOLVE

Be a role model and mentor.

By using the POSITIVE approach, supervisors can better prepare supervisors for courageous conversations and lessen the dread of holding employees accountable.