

THE IN-HOUSE TRAINING COMPANY

Challenging client conversations

How to lead them to a successful outcome

Overview

At work, as in life, not everything works out the way you plan.

Sometimes, you need to break the bad news to a client.

A project's missed a milestone. There are unexpected costs. There's a technical or quality issue. The client wants you to do something that's out of scope. There's a personality clash. The client isn't honouring their side of the deal. There are problems getting payment.

The reasons can be many but the result's the same – a potentially challenging conversation with a client. Of course, if you're a good communicator, if you've worked on the right behaviours, mastered the tried-and-tested techniques for dealing with these situations, then these conversations needn't be so stressful after all. You can even turn them into positive business opportunities.

This programme will help you. It's a practical opportunity to work on your skills, acquire some new techniques, and practise putting them into practice in a safe environment before trying them out for real.

The main focus is on supporting you in the key skills:

- Influence and persuasion
- Consulting skills
- Empathy
- Negotiating positive outcomes

... and doing so in a lively and engaging way. Stretch, not stress!

Learning objectives

This programme will help participants:

- Recognise a potentially challenging conversation and appreciate why it needs to be handled carefully
- Master the key principles of 'challenging conversations'
- Engage in challenging conversations with more confidence and certainty
- Structure and conduct meetings to achieve everyone's goals faster
- Use proven techniques of influence, persuasion and negotiation

- Make points and arguments with more precision and impact
- Overcoming sticking points using a planned approach
- Deal with 'difficult people'
- Plan and prepare to achieve win-win results
- Analyse and develop the range of interpersonal and behavioural skills that are crucial for successful negotiation

Who should attend?

This powerful and practical programme is suitable for all client-facing staff, at all levels.

- Potential participants include managers and members of:
- Account management teams
- Commercial teams
- Project teams
- Sales and business development teams
- Service teams

Format

A very practical, interactive one-day session for a maximum group size of 12.

The programme can be delivered virtually or face-to-face, as you prefer or circumstances dictate.

A key feature of this workshop is the practical application and use of the learning points and content. This is achieved through planning sessions, discussions, short presentations and mini role-plays.

There's also a formal role-play to practise key skills. This is created on a bespoke basis, to match real-life situations that participants are likely to encounter in your sector, your organisation and with your specific clients.

The style is very facilitative and learner-centred, taking into account the needs and preferences of the group on the day whilst at the same time delivering the programme as agreed with the client in order to meet the specified learning objectives.

Special features

Much of the training we deliver is either tailored or completely bespoke. This workshop can therefore be delivered entirely as advertised, or it can be tailored to your particular requirements, or we can simply take it as a starting point for a conversation with you before we draft a completely bespoke programme for you – the choice is yours. As a rule, there is no additional charge for this service.

There's even an option to use actors as well – professional role-players who can help bring scenarios to life and deliver supportive one-to-one feedback to help everyone develop their skills to the utmost in an unpressured environment before applying them in real-life client conversations. Scenarios can be completely bespoke, designed around your organisation and the types of client conversation your people need to be able to deal with effectively.

Expert trainer

Graham specialises in providing high-quality consultancy, coaching and training in commercial and business skills, sales, sales management, customer service and personal productivity. He has a long career in sales and was a top-performing IT and solutions sales professional and sales manager. Before setting up his own consultancy, his last full-time role was as Managing Director of Sales Productivity and Development for a multi-national, helping develop a large European sales force. His work has taken him all over the world and involved him in working closely with hundreds of different organisations from all business sectors, his client list including such organisations as BT, Vodafone, AT&T, Orange, Pfizer, GSK, Boots, Unilever, American Express, Thomas Cook, Apple, Sony, Motorola, Cisco, MFI, Barclays Bank, LIFFE, Abbey National, Prison Service, Home Office, Law Society, BBC, Daimler-Chrysler, Citroen, Weetabix, Nikon, Shell and many, many others. In addition he has written over twenty books published in several different countries, including *Companies don't succeed – people do!*, *Sales Training Games*, *Telephone Tactics* and *Working Smarter*.

Known internationally as both a trainer and a popular motivational speaker, he believes that effective learning has to be interactive and challenging. All his learning events are built around practical exercises, role play and case studies. His training style focuses not on just explaining new ideas or developing new skills, but also on motivating people to use them and to develop themselves as individuals. This approach gets results, as the following comments from course participants show:

'Brilliant course, really interesting and very focused to my job role and day to day work.'

'Took away some very good ideas that I can use every day... good examples too.'

'Very confident in the subject, and amusing too. Made the course very interesting. A very clear sales model to use going forward.'

'Full of useful hints and tips which I will apply to my job.'

'Extremely well presented and structured'

'A very intensive course and a lot of concrete tools provided.'

'Very good... contained everything we do on a regular basis and problems we have come across... the exercises made it very interesting too.'

Workshop outline

1 Introduction and key principles

- Programme objectives and learning objectives
- Definitions and key principles for leading challenging conversations
- The importance of planning, preparation and using proven methods

2 Efficient meeting preparation

- How to structure, start and manage a challenging conversation
- Body language – reading and conveying
- Meeting techniques that increase your confidence and credibility

3 Core skills for resolving disagreements and differences

- The five modes of conflict and how to move to a partnership mode
- Dealing with 'difficult' people
- The challenging communication process – how it works
- How to turn problems into opportunities – using reframing and other skills

4 Essential steps for achieving a positive outcome

- Five key techniques for moving from conflict to agreement
- Using questioning and advanced listening skills to influence and persuade
- Trading concessions and giving ground – when and how.

5 Getting agreement

- Your sources of power in influencing and persuading others
- Proven techniques for overcoming client push-backs, objections and concerns
- Asking for decisions and commitment – identifying agreement signals
- Using proven techniques of influence

6 Personal action plan

- Learning summary
- Your personal contract to change how you manage challenging client conversations and to put the learning into practice at work

Any questions?

Please just give us a call on **01582 463463** – we're here to help!

Or visit www.theinhousetrainingcompany.com