DIFFICULT CONVERSATION BARRIERS FRAMEWORK

bluepoint

A difficult conversation is any conversation where the emotional outcome is unknown and uncertain. For example:

- Apologizing to a coworker about how you spoke to them
- Delivering tough news up or across the organization
- Firing or laying off someone
- Announcing budget cuts
- Speaking up in a meeting when you would prefer to remain quiet

All these conversations can create a negative emotional reaction, so we may desire to avoid them altogether. However, as leaders, these are the types of conversations that build trust, shape our values, and reveal our character.

Identify a difficult conversation with a team member, colleague or your manager you have been avoiding. Use the five steps below to identify your barriers to having this conversation. Once completed, you should have a better idea of what's holding you back, as well as a renewed commitment to taking action.

STEP ONE:
How would having this conversation advance the cause?

STEP TWO:
What's the worst thing that can happen?

STEP THREE:

Do you care enough about this person, the work and beneficial outcomes to do this?

STEP FOUR:

What's the best outcome you can imagine?

STEP FIVE:

What is the most potent next step you can take to engage in this conversation?