Challenging Conversations
Communication skills @ RACP

• Patient centred care
• Professional skills – team work
• Difficult problems
  • End of life care
  • Trainees in difficulty
• Education – supervisor development
Discussion

• What ‘tricky’ situations have you come across?

• How did you tackle the issue, if so how did you approach it?

• What makes a conversation ‘difficult’?
Supervisor Professional Development Program

Practical Skills for Supervisors
- Setting the culture for learning
- Feedback and performance
- Feedback in challenging situations

Teaching and Learning in Healthcare Settings
- Challenges facing educators in the health setting
- Strategies for teaching in a complex environment
- Confronting underlying and system issues

Work-based Learning and Assessment
- The importance of work-based assessments
- Set goals
- Learn and gather evidence
- Make evidence-based judgement
- Reflect and prepare

Supervisor Professional Development Program
- Face-to-face workshops
- Online resources
Training Support Pathway
Communication skills

• Generic Communication skills

• **Positive tone** - use open and closed questions; nonverbal communication.

• **Positive body language** - silence, nonverbal encouragement, neutral utterances

• **Focus on being open ended** - Avoid blame, judgement and criticism through reflection, echoing, open ended request and clarifying summary.

• **Active listening** - listen intently and reflect; seek first to understand before seeking to be understood
# SPIKES Model

A six-step protocol for addressing less positive issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Six Steps</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td>Set up the interview: Plan ahead for details such as being sure that you are in a private, comfortable setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>P</strong></td>
<td>Assess the trainee’s perception As described earlier, before you begin an explanation, ask the trainee open-ended questions to find out how he or she perceives the medical situation. In this way you can correct any misunderstanding the trainee has and tailor the news to the trainee’s understanding and expectations.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Obtain the trainee’s invitation Find out how much detailed information the trainee wants regarding diagnosis and prognosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K</strong></td>
<td>Give knowledge and information to the trainee Communicate in ways that help the trainee process the information. Provide information in small amounts, use short sentences, and check periodically for understanding.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Address the trainee’s emotions with empathic responses: Identify the trainee’s primary emotion and express that you recognize that what the trainee is feeling is a result of the information received.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td>Strategy and summary: Present options, being sure to align your information with what you ascertained (during the assessment of the trainee’s perceptions) to be the trainee’s knowledge, expectations, and hopes. Providing a clear strategy will lessen the trainee’s anxiety and uncertainty.</td>
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## The Pearls Healthcare Debriefing Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Sample Phrases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Setting the Scene</td>
<td>Create a safe context for learning</td>
<td>State the goal of debriefing; articulate the basic assumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Reactions</td>
<td>Explore feelings</td>
<td>Solicit initial reactions &amp; emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Description</td>
<td>Clarify facts</td>
<td>Develop shared understanding of case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Analysis</td>
<td>Explore variety of performance domains</td>
<td>See backside of card for more details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preview Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“At this point, I’d like to spend some time talking about [insert topic here] because [insert rationale here].”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mini Summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“That was great discussion. Are there any additional comments related to [insert performance gap here]?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Application/Summary</td>
<td>Identify take-aways</td>
<td>Learner centered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Instructor centered</td>
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</table>
Reflecting on learning - GROW

Where to next?

Wrap Up

Goal

Reality

Options

What else can I do?

Where am I going?

How am I going?
Conflict Resolution Model

Thomas Kilmann Conflict Resolution Model
What is a difficult conversation?

- **Task**- we don’t want to talk about
- Often involves **emotions**
- **Relational** - we worry about impact on relationships
Instead of avoiding difficult conversations, find the courage to start dealing with problems in a constructive way…
Challenging Conversation Framework

- Plan
- Prepare
- Pause
- Perform
Prepare

To prepare for your conversation you need to:

- establish the facts;
- reflect on what you know about the individual;
- get support;
- check your policies; and
- plan the meeting - make a script and practice it.
Pause

- Where you are coming from?
- A compassionate pause
- Take a deep breath:
  - Be mindful
  - Non judgemental/ curious
  - Connected
Becoming compassionate Attitude

Before
How do you get yourself in the right place for these conversations?

During
• Reach out with genuine concern
• Listen fully
• Speak from my heart
Performing the conversation
Skills

1. Make it safe to talk
2. Get straight to the point
3. Lead with facts, not opinions and feelings
4. Use active listening
5. Use “I” not ‘you’
6. Validate the other persons viewpoint
7. Don’t make assumptions
Performing the conversation Process

1. Open the conversation: “Do you have a few minutes to talk about…?”
   “I wanted to discuss…”

2. Describe the Situation, Behaviour and Impact: Yesterday, I observed …I feel that behaviour was…I feel may have impacted team morale”

3. Pause and reflect: “I’m interested to hear your views on the situation…”

4. Close the Conversation
Activity 1: The ‘Scolding’

1. Watch video

2. Thoughts?
   - What behaviours did you observe?
   - What was the impact?

3. Discussion in pairs
   - If you were Dr Tobin (physician) how would you address you concerns about Dr Smart’s performance? How would you approach the conversation?
The innocent bystander

• If you had witnessed this behaviour,
  • How would you feel?
  • How would Dr Tobin feel?
  • what would you do?

• Would you confront Dr Tobin or would you look the other way?

• What makes this situation difficult to approach?
Activity 2: The innocent bystander

Put yourself in Dr Burns’ shoes … you have decided to speak to Dr Tobin …

1. Plan your conversation with ‘Dr Tobin’.
2. Get into pairs - one as ‘Dr Tobin’ and the other ‘Dr Burns’.
3. Practice the conversation then switch over.
4. Don’t forget to pause
Group discussion

Thoughts on the role play…

- How did the task go?
- How did the emotional work go?
- How did the relational work go?
Let's see how the ‘real’ Dr Burns did...

- Watch Video
Summary of key messages
Plan

- How are you going to follow up?
Reflection

• How did this workshop work?

• What have you learned from this workshop?

• How will you apply these skills in the workplace?
End