

Ultimate

**GUIDE TO
~~DIFFICULT~~
SUCCESSFUL
CONVERSATIONS**

**TAKING THE PAIN
OUT OF HAVING
DIFFICULT
CONVERSATIONS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3** INTRODUCTION
- 5** MINDSET
- 6** FOUR STEP PROCESS
- 8** B.I.I.F. MODEL
- 11** B.I.I.F. TEMPLATE
- 12** CONSIDERATIONS
- 14** NEXT STEPS

INTRODUCTION

Do you need to have a difficult conversation or have you had one recently that went really bad and now you're walking on eggshells around the workplace.

We do not like having difficult conversations and we try to avoid them.

3 of the most common factors why people avoid difficult conversations:

1. Fear of the outcome
2. Loss of the employee
3. No confidence in delivering the conversation (No process to follow)

All these things add up to us delivering a really poor performance when it comes to delivering this conversation and I'm saying performance because that is how you need to think. Prepare, rehearse and deliver.

I'm going to show you in this eBook, a three step process in which we can use to get the best possible outcome.

I will tell you a secret..... Difficult conversations do not have to last 20 minutes! In fact, they can be delivered in 2 minutes.

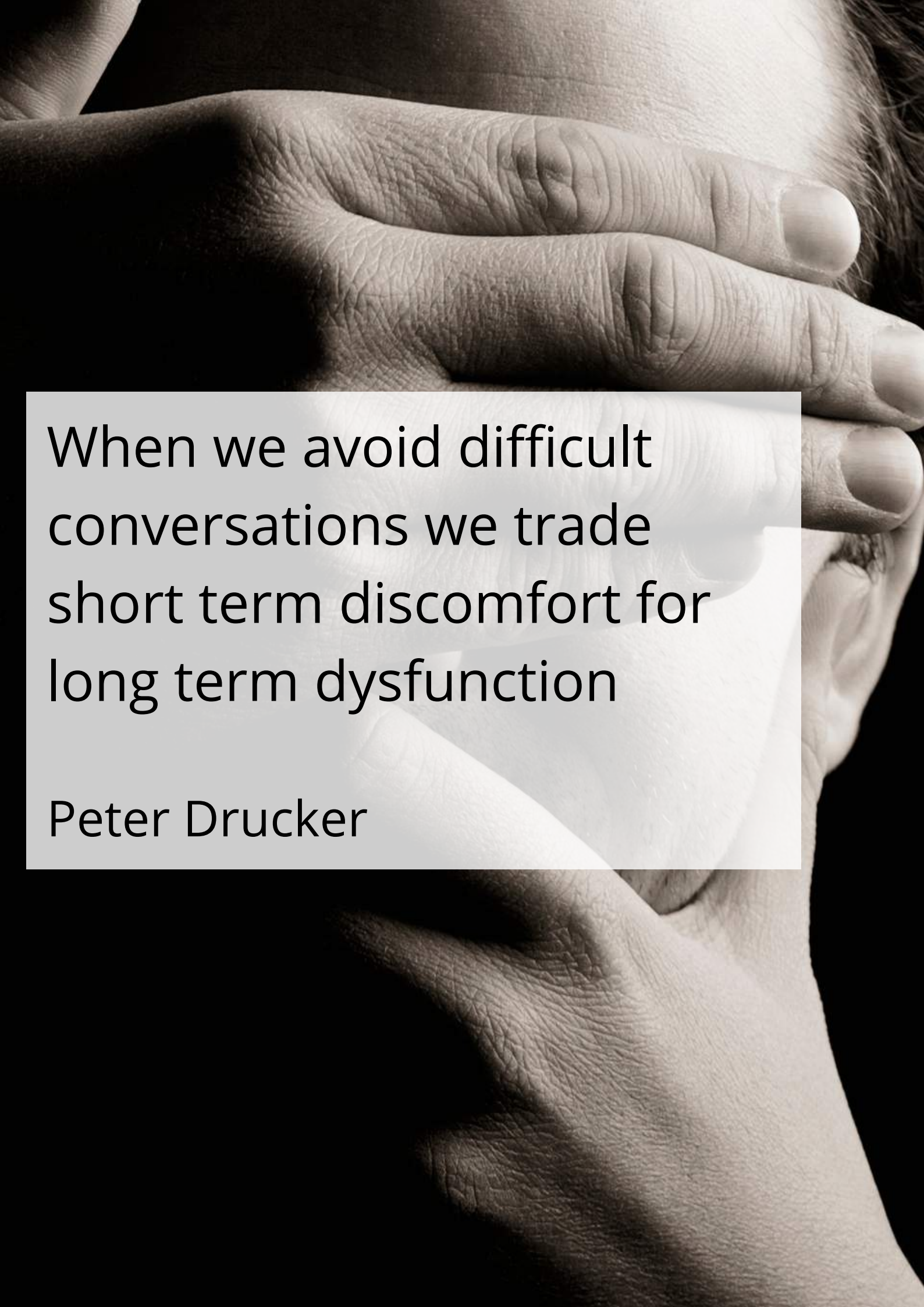
Your employees already know you don't like having difficult conversations. Stop overthinking and start doing. Your employees will thank you in the long run!

The purpose for a conversation is to provide feedback to your employee to let them know they are not meeting expectations and keeping them in their lane. Most employees don't get enough feedback and only get feedback when they are in trouble and in line for a first official warning with Human resources.

We need to be incorporating feedback to your employees on a regular basis, the aim would be to normalise it as business as usual.

Clint Rahe





When we avoid difficult
conversations we trade
short term discomfort for
long term dysfunction

Peter Drucker

MINDSET



Mindset is not some pink and fluffy word, difficult conversations do not need to be difficult. As soon as you start using the word difficult, then we are going to start attracting opportunities for it to be difficult.

As we start to talk ourselves into a difficult conversation our stress and anxiety levels rise. Before we know it, the flight and fight response has been triggered by the limbic system and we have the cortisol hormone (responsible for stress) running around our body. This impacts the prefrontal cortex, which is the executive function of the brain that helps with decision making and problem solving.

The impact is our decision-making process and problem solving abilities will be clouded at the moment we need to have a clear mind.



Change the language

- Rather than saying difficult, we can change the word to challenging conversation or, a conversation. This will invite your mind to start looking for way to rise to the challenge or overcome the hurdle.



Prepare the conversation – (Accessing the prefrontal cortex)

- Gather the facts – Make sure you have all the facts IMPORTANT – you must own the conversation! I noticed or I found.
- Script - Write your conversation down word for word
- Anticipate – Emotional responses and rail roading techniques.
- Practice – 7 times



Incorporate breathing

- Breathing has many benefits such as lowering heart rate and blood pressure, reduce stress hormones in the blood, increase physical energy and increased feelings of calm and wellbeing.
- Box breathing is a quick and easy technique to incorporate.

It consists of

- Breath in – 4 seconds
- Hold – 4 seconds
- Breath out – 4 seconds
- Hold – 4 seconds

As a result, you are going to be able to think clearer and deliver better result. And the best thing about the conversation, **it does not need to be 20 minutes. It can be 2 minutes** because what we're trying to do is nip everything in the bud and solve issues at the lowest possible level.



THE 4 STEP PROCESS

Having a process will ensure you have a clear methodical and logical approach to the conversation. It will also help you stay on track in case you get derailed during the delivery of the conversation.

Identify – Recognise the need for the conversation. Early intervention is best, we are trying to deal with issues at the lowest possible level.

Prepare – Do your homework and gather the evidence to support the need for a conversation.

- Facts – Make sure you have all the facts IMPORTANT – you must own the conversation! I noticed or I found
- Script - Write your conversation down word for word using the BIIF Model.
- Anticipate – Emotional responses and rail roading techniques
- Practice – 7 times

Deliver – Time has come to deliver the conversation there are a few considerations to ensure your conversation is a success.

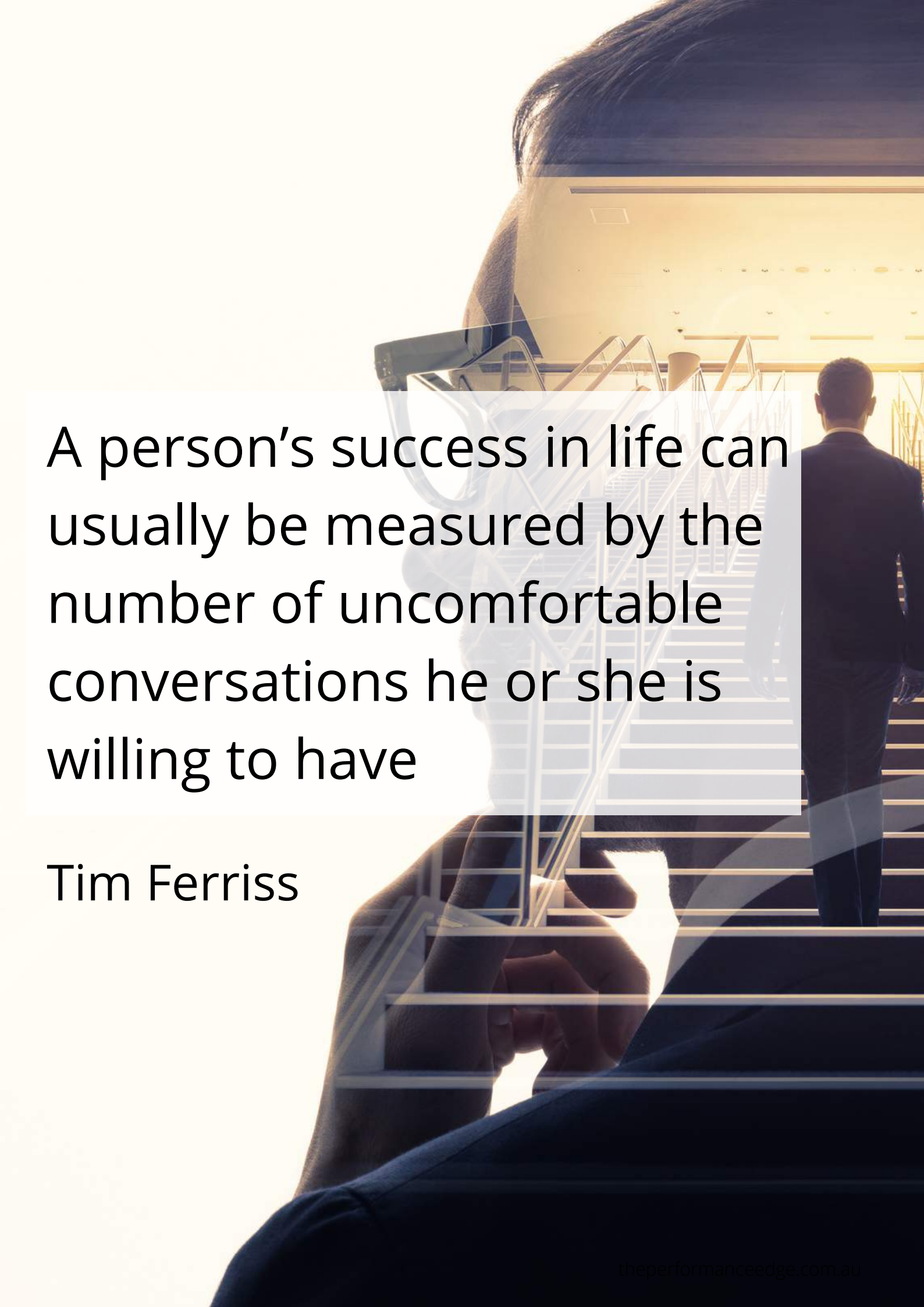
- Environment – Book a meeting room away from others dependant on conversation intent.
- Timing – Identify the best time of the week and day to conduct the conversation.
- Resources – Have the code of conduct, policies and or procedures on hand printed out if necessary.
- Support – Tissues, glass of water and details of any company employee assistance program (just in case)

Follow Up – This is the most important point to follow through to ensure long term behaviour change.

In my experience this is the most missed opportunity for managers. We focus on the conversation delivery but not ‘what happens after’.

Things to consider:

- Make sure you agree on the Future behaviour
- Send email or letter dependant on the severity of the conversation straight after the BIIF meeting outlining future behaviour.
- Normalise into the week/day activities.



A person's success in life can usually be measured by the number of uncomfortable conversations he or she is willing to have

Tim Ferriss

B.I.I.F. Model

B - Behaviour

I - Impact

I - Intention

F - Future





B.I.I.F. Model

There are many models to having difficult conversations and each have their own merits. I have found over the years using the BIIF model has given me a great foundation to the delivery of the conversation.

BEHAVIOUR – Describe the behaviour which has been observed

IMPACT – Describe the impact of the behaviour on individuals, the team and business

INTENTION – Explore the intentions (Other person to respond)

FUTURE – State the future behaviour you would like to see in the future.

B

Behaviour – This articulates the behaviour being observed, from you the manager. You must own this part of the feedback process. Do not state 2nd or 3rd person witness testimonies. If this happens you will lose the overall impact of your feedback.

I

Impact – This section states the impact the behaviour has on the individuals, team the business and industry. The employee could be unaware of the impact of their behaviour. If you have a strong impact statement, then they will change their behaviour. In my experience if you have a strong impact statement your employee will apologise and say, "I didn't realise I had that impact".

I

Intention - This is an opportunity for the other person to have their right to reply and or justify their behaviour. It is not for them to start blaming others or becoming aggressive. In this section you ask the question, "I'm curious, what was your intention?" The secret to this section is to be comfortable with silence and be genuinely curious.

This is an important section for the deliverer – it gives you an opportunity to find out the reasons behind their behaviour. It could give you an insight into something you don't know.

F

Future – State the behaviour you would like to see from them in the future. Every conversation has the end goal and this is the moment to articulate to your employee what the standards are and what you expect to see from them moving forward.



B.I.I.F. EXAMPLE

Identify the issue or problem

You have a team member who answers a phone call during a meeting while a guest speaker was speaking about improving product delivery.

Behaviour

At today's meeting I noticed you were on your phone for over 10 mins

Impact

While you were on the phone you missed vital information that will make your job easy, everyone in the meeting felt like you didn't respect their time. We spent a lot of money \$10k to bring in a subject matter expert to help the team to save money and time to improve our product delivery.

Intention

I'm curious what was your intention?

Future

*In the future I would appreciate you leave your phone on the table, turn it onto do not disturb and only use it at the designated break times. If you are waiting on an important call let me know and we can manage it effectively.
Are you willing to do this?*

B.I.I.F. TEMPLATE



Identify the issue or problem

Behaviour

Impact

Intention

Future



CONSIDERATIONS

There are a range of considerations when delivering the conversation, if you can be prepared and take some simple steps you will get the best possible outcome.

Things to consider:

Location – identify a suitable location to deliver the conversation, book a meeting room, go offsite, in your office.

Setting the scene – Give a brief overview of the conversation and why they are there. Use empathy and be honest. “I wanted to talk to you today”, “I wanted you to know this first”, “I care about you and want to know”.

Start strong – Clear and precise opening and follow the script to avoid being derailed.

Deal with derailing behaviour – Be firm and stop the conversation, use your hand or use assertive language and label the behaviour you are seeing. Ultimately you are in control of the conversation.


Body Language – Be aware of the shadow you cast, posture, gestures all have an impact on the other person.

Professional – Be calm and remain professional during the whole situation. Do not allow your emotions to take over. If you are finding this happening step away to compose yourself.

Be curious – Ask questions to clarify points, if you are genuinely curious the other person will respond with more information.

Ending – End meeting effectively and do not allow it to trail off. Be clear and repeat the future statement.

Follow Up – Send a follow up email after the meeting to document what you expect in the future. Check in with them in couple of days later to normalise the feedback and see how they are tracking



Nearly 4 in 10 employees say their manager fails to frequently engage in honest conversations about work topics

SHRM

WHAT YOU CAN DO NEXT



Having difficult conversations is about identifying opportunities to keep your employees on track and performing.

Remember having a conversation doesn't need to be a big ordeal, it can be a quick 2 minute conversation that when delivered effectively will have a great impact.

We naturally avoid having these types of conversation and hope things will get better by themselves, the trust is it never does and we end up spending time, energy and effort further down the employees recruitment cycle to terminate them, resulting in lost money.

If you have a difficult conversation coming up and would like to discuss it completely free click the button below to book in a free coaching call.

Remember employees want feedback and you deserve to give it to them.

They will thank you in the long run.

It starts here **CLICK BELOW** to book a call with me to get your leadership journey started.

[CLICK HERE](#)

