

PRODUCTIVE CONFLICT

CONVERSATION GUIDE

THE GOOD FIGHT

THIS CONVERSATION GUIDE can be used to prepare you for a difficult conversation. The questions in this guide are based on the content in *The Good Fight*. I've referred to the relevant chapters in the book to guide you. Use the Guide in conjunction with the Conflict Debt Assessment and the other Good Fight tools to set yourself up for more productive conflict.



1. Complete the Conflict Debt Assessment and reflect on the most important issues that you need to surface and resolve.

2. List three situations where you would benefit from paying down your conflict debt.
[Learn more about conflict debt in Chapter 1]

- a.

- b.

- c.



3. Pick the situation (*of the three*) that you want to take action to resolve. How would you describe it in your own words? Try to be as objective as possible. How would a neutral third-party describe the situation?

4. Think about the other people in the situation and try to understand their perspective and their stake. What might a good solution need to include for them.

		OTHER PARTIES		
		Name:	Name:	Name:
PERSPECTIVE	MY PERSPECTIVE			
	GOOD SOLUTION			

5. What will be the secret to establishing a line of communication with the people involved? How could you frame your position or your concerns in a way that will minimize defensiveness? *[Learn more about establishing a line of communication in Chapter 4]*

Remember:

- Avoid absolutes such as “always,” “never,” or “every”
- Soften your language with “I’m wondering,” or “How would...?”
- Use objective language and avoid judgement
- Make subjective statements only about your own thoughts and feelings



6. How can you create a connection with the person or people with whom you’re in conflict? What have you learned already about how they’re feeling and what they value? These are the clues you’ll need to figure out the real issue that’s beneath the surface. *[Learn more about creating a connection in Chapter 5]*



7. What are some great questions you can use to show you’re interested in the other person’s point of view? Have a few ready in your back pocket. There are lots of suggestions in the 100 Productive Conflict Questions

8. Refer to the Conflict Strategies for Nice People How-to Guide. Which of the strategies might be useful in this situation? How will you frame the discussion? *[more on the Conflict Strategies in Chapter 6]*



9. When and where would be the best place to broach this discussion? Is this something that needs to happen in a meeting? Can you find a less formal opportunity to raise the issue?

10. What mindset will you need to keep the conversation productive? Are you ready to approach the person with the mindset of an ally?

Mindset of an Ally:

- Working toward a solution not backing them into a corner
- Validating the person not trying to trump them
- Talking calmly not yelling
- Being candid to build trust rather than eroding trust
- Making yourself more value to the team not vulnerable to being removed

11. Make a commitment to yourself. I will...(do what) (by when)
