

# ARE YOUR CANDID CONVERSATIONS WORKING?

**An assessment for leaders who need to deliver honest messages that are heard, respected, and acted on.**

Avoiding a difficult conversation feels kind in the moment. But withholding the truth does a disservice to the person on the receiving end and to the business. And having the conversation isn't enough if the message doesn't land the way you intended.

This assessment will help you identify whether you are avoiding the conversations that matter, having them in a way that works, or somewhere in between.

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## SECTION 1: COURAGE

- Are there conversations you have been putting off because they feel uncomfortable: a performance issue, a role change, a difficult dynamic, or feedback someone needs to hear?
- When you avoid a hard conversation, are you honest with yourself about whose comfort you are really protecting, theirs or your own?
- Are you making assumptions about how the other person will react and letting those assumptions stop you from having a conversation that might go better than you think?
- Are you consistent in your message, or does your own discomfort cause you to pull back, soften, or contradict what you've already said over time?

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## SECTION 2: CLARITY

- When you deliver a difficult message, whether it is about performance, a role change, or a decision that affects someone's future, are you specific enough that the person knows exactly where they stand?
- Do you soften the message to the point where the person walks away uncertain about what it means for them and what is expected going forward?
- Regardless of how the news lands, does the person leave the conversation understanding why it was necessary in the first place?

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## SECTION 3: COMPASSION

- Do you create space for the other person to respond, ask questions, and be heard, or do you expect resolution in the same conversation?
- Are you giving the other person time to process and following up to check in, rather than assuming the conversation is complete?
- Regardless of the outcome, does the person walk away feeling respected and valued as a person, not just managed as a situation?

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## WHERE TO FOCUS

- If most of your answers felt confident, you are having the conversations that matter and delivering them well. The next step is consistency.
- If several gave you pause, you are likely having some conversations but avoiding or mishandling others. Pick one section and start there.
- If you struggled to answer most of these, the good news is that candid communication is a skill, not a personality trait. It can be learned, practiced, and improved.