

Conversation Planner

Use this tool to help you prepare for a conversation involving some degree of conflict. It is a stand-alone piece so that you may use it and re-use it as you need to (i.e., keep an original so you can make copies).

Prepare for the conversation by responding to the following questions yourself:

1. **Purpose:** What do I want to achieve from this conversation? How do I define the issue? What is my greatest concern? Be honest and clear with yourself. (How do I think the other person might answer these questions?)

2. **Inquiry:** Separate any assumptions you have made from actual facts about the issue or concern. What questions do you want to ask the other person? What information do you want to share with that individual? What do you most want him/her to understand about you and this issue; conversely, what do you need to understand about him/her and the issue from his/her perspective?

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3. **Solutions:** What are some possible ways to resolve this issue? Do you think the other person would be open to these suggestions? What do you think he or she might want? If appropriate, invite the other party to brainstorm solutions with you when you actually have the conversation.

4. **Reflection:** After the conversation, check in with yourself. How do you feel about it? Do you feel that the issue has been resolved? If not, what else do you need? What have you learned from this process – either about the issue itself, about yourself or the other person?

After you respond to these questions on your own, you may choose to share them with the other person.