

**Navigating Difficult Conversations: Effective Strategies for Productive Public Sector Dialogues.**



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**LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION**

**Proactive Communication Approach**  
 Shift from reactive to proactive communication for high-stakes municipal conversations with clarity and confidence.

**Message Structure and Preparation**  
 Learn to prepare and structure messages to reduce defensiveness and clarify goals before conversations.

**Managing Resistance Effectively**  
 Develop strategies to respond to resistance or pressure without escalating tension in discussions.

**Maintaining Professional Presence**  
 Maintain professionalism and credibility in environments shaped by authority and public accountability.

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**FRAMING HIGH-STAKES MUNICIPAL CONVERSATIONS**

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**WHY CONVERSATIONS WITH MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS FEEL DIFFERENT**

- Complex Authority Structures
- Pressure and Emotional Undercurrents
- Balancing Personal and Institutional Roles
- Strategic Communication Preparation

These conversations must balance outcomes AND relationships.

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**PREPARATION AS A STRATEGIC TOOL**

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**WHY PREPARATION DETERMINES COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES**

- Importance of Preparation
- Reducing Anxiety and Reactivity
- Aligning Communication Goals
- Anticipating Challenges

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USING THE CLEAR FRAMEWORK FOR INTENTIONAL PREPARATION



- Clarify Your Goal
- Lead With Purpose
- Expect Reactions
- Anticipate Challenges
- Respond Intentionally

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# STRUCTURING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

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THE ABC MODEL

- A – Acknowledge
- B – Bridge
- C – Communicate

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# MANAGING RESISTANCE AND MAINTAINING PRESENCE

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## UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO RESISTANCE

- Forms of Resistance  
Resistance appears as:
- Pushback
  - Deflection
  - Emotional reactions

### Effective Response Strategies

- Using Structured Options
- Viewing Resistance as Information

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## POWER, ROLE, AND CONFIDENCE WITHOUT ESCALATION

- Power Dynamics in Communication
- Confidence Without Escalation
- Effective Presence Techniques
- Navigating Challenges in Dialogue

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# INTEGRATION AND APPLICATION

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## APPLYING CLEAR AND ABC IN REALISTIC SCENARIOS

- Intentional Preparation
- Structured Communication
- Maintaining Presence
- Leadership Through Communication

Effective conversations maintain both clarity of outcome AND strength of relationship.

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THANK YOU!



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