

following worksheet with Brown's Rumble Starters. Pairing the language and paradigm of Brown's work on trust and conflict with this useful tool will provide you with everything you need to become comfortable with conflict regardless of your natural inclinations or communication style. In the True North Sport's Coach Development Academy, we will explore these tools in greater depth. More information on the academy that accompanies this workbook can be found at www.TrueNorthSports.net.



WORKSHEET

Confrontational Conversation



My Opening Statement

(Keep this to a maximum of 60 seconds... any longer, and your partner will tune you out and begin to formulate their defense)

1) Name the Issue

(Choose issue without emotion. "I want to talk about the effect _____ is having on _____")

2) Select a specific example that illustrates the behavior I want to change.

(Describe like a video camera—take out emotion and just describe facts. No judgement, few adjectives. Choose examples that had the most witnesses. If you didn't witness it, say "I learned that ____ happened.")

3) Describe my emotions around this issue.

(I feel...; avoid using the word "disappointed".)



Confrontational Conversation (continued)

4) Clarify why this is important – what is at stake to gain or lose for you, for others, for the team.

(You might want to gauge response before saying "Your place on this team is at stake.")

5) Identify my contribution(s) to this problem.

("I have let this go on without addressing it, and for that I apologize.")

6) What I will say to invite my partner to respond.

("I sincerely want to hear your point of view.")

7) Interaction.

(Use paraphrasing to check for accuracy of understanding. Keep digging below the surface. Make sure your partner knows that you have heard her point of view.)

8) Resolution.

(What was learned, where are we now? What is needed for resolution? What is our new understanding?)

The most important idea to take away here is that healthy, high performing team cultures regularly build the tools to have hard conversations. The higher the trust level among your team, generally the less tough those conversations will be. Conversely, in low trust environments, tough conversations become nearly impossible and are often avoided altogether until pent up emotions surface. Adopting language and practicing the skills associated with healthy conflict are vital principles for your culture building process.