

Summary of the Six Conversations that Build Accountability and Commitment

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These six conversations are founded on a sincere belief that all change and transformation is linguistic in nature. That focusing on people's potential, and their best nature is much better than solving problems of the past or people's deficits. And that by having these conversations, we can create a community that helps organizations succeed beyond average performance.

The Invitation Conversation- Transformation occurs through choice, not mandate. Invitation is the call to create an alternative future.

How we are called together to experience our sense of freedom in any gathering? What types of invitations allow people to grant themselves unlimited permission to participate and own the relationships, tasks, and process that lead to success? How can we craft compelling messages that challenge all invited participants to stay? The invitation must contain a hurdle or demand if accepted. It is a challenge to engage? Most leadership initiatives or training are about how we get or "enroll" people to do tasks and feel good about doing things they may not want to do. Our belief is that we should have people "self-enroll" in order to experience their freedom of choice and commitment. How we invite people to join us in our work and mission is critical to how far they own and commit to the ultimate success of that mission.

Change is a self inflicted wound. People need to "self-enroll" in order to experience their freedom of choice and commitment.

The leadership task is to name the debate, issue the invitation, and invest in those who choose to show up. Those who accept the call will bring the next circle of people into the conversation.

The Possibility Conversation is one that focuses on what we want our future to be as opposed to problem solving the past. This is based on an understanding that living systems are really propelled to the force of the future. The possibility conversation frees people to innovate, challenge the status quo, and create new futures that make a difference. In new work environments this conversation has the ability for breaking new ground and in understanding the prevailing culture.

Problem solving and negotiation of interests makes tomorrow only a little different from yesterday. Possibility is a break from the past and opens space for a future we had only dreamed of. Declaring a possibility wholeheartedly is the transformation. In new work environments this conversation has the ability for breaking new ground and in understanding the prevailing culture. It confronts people with the freedom of choice and creation, change and commitment.]

The leadership task is to postpone problem solving and stay focused on possibility until it is spoken with resonance and passion.

The Ownership Conversation is one that focuses on whose organization or task is this? The conversation begins with the question, "how have I contributed to creating the current reality?" Confusion, blame and waiting for someone else to change are a defense against ownership and personal power. The conversation explores the sense of ownership that the group can create together by having conversations that really matter individually and collectively.

The enemy of ownership is innocence and indifference. The future is denied with the response, "it doesn't matter to me--whatever you want to do is fine?" This is always a lie and just a polite way of avoiding a difficult conversation around ownership. We believe the ownership conversation is a

critical cornerstone for the success of any strategy implementation. What is it that matters most for people to individually and collectively own the strategic direction in an organization? And what factors help ownership become real and fundamental in the full cycle of human experience, business development, or strategy implementation?

People best create that which they own and co-creation is the bedrock of accountability. It is the belief that I am cause.

The leadership task is to confront people with their freedom.

The Dissent Conversation is allowing people the space to say "no". If we cannot say "no" then our "yes" has no meaning. People have a chance to express their doubts and reservations, as a way of clarifying their roles, needs, and yearnings within the vision and mission being presented. Genuine commitment begins with doubt, and "no" is a symbolic expression of people finding their space and role in the strategy. It is when we fully understand what people do not want that we can fully design what they want. Refusal is the foundation for commitment.

The leadership task is to surface doubts and dissent without having an answer to every question.

The Commitment Conversation is about individuals making promises to their peers about their contribution to the success of the whole organization. It is centered in two questions: What promise am I willing to make to this enterprise? And, what is the price I am willing to pay for the success of the whole effort? It is a promise for the sake of a larger purpose, not for the sake of personal return.

The leadership task is to reject lip service and demand either authentic commitment or ask people to say no and pass. We need the commitment of much fewer people than we thought to create the future we have in mind.

The Sixth Conversation is Around Gifts. What are the gifts and assets we bring to the enterprise? Rather than focus on our deficiencies and weaknesses, which will most likely not go away, let us build on the gifts we bring and capitalize on those. Instead of problematizing people and work, the conversation is around searching for the mystery that brings the highest achievement and success in work organizations. Confront people with their essential core that has the potential to make the difference and change lives for good. This resolves the unnatural separation between work and life.

The leadership task is to bring the gifts of those on the margin into the center.