

## **“Fierce Conversations” Overview**

What gets talked about in a group or organization and how it gets talked about determines what will or won't happen. Weak Teams want agreement. Strong Teams want the truth.

When you think of a fierce conversation, think passion, integrity, authenticity, and collaboration. Think cultural transformation...Think leadership!

Why conversations? Success or failure occurs, gradually, then suddenly, one conversation at a time. Each of us owns a piece of the truth about what's going on in our relationship.

It starts with listening to yourself as you have never listened before. Begin to overhear yourself avoiding the topic, changing the subject, holding back, telling little lies, and being imprecise in your language, being uninteresting even to yourself.

At least once today, when something inside you says, “This is an opportunity to be fierce,” stop for a moment, take a deep breath, then come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it real. Say something that is true for you.

### **Three transformational ideas:**

- Make the connection between conversations and your personal and professional success.
- Our work, our relationships, and our lives succeed or fail one conversation at a time. The conversation **is** the relationship.
- All conversations are with myself and sometimes they involve other people.

### **Four Objectives of Fierce Conversations**

- Interrogate Reality - be open and learning other's perspectives?
- Provoke Learning - ask curious questions and really explore the other's perspective
- Tackle Tough Challenges - identify and address the relevant issues in a truthful and courageous manner. Ask yourself: "What are the most important issues I should be addressing? Which issues am I avoiding?"
- Enrich Relationships - The conversation is the relationship

### **Seven Steps of Fierce Conversations**

1. **Name the issue** - *"I want to talk with you about the effect \_\_\_\_\_ is having on \_\_\_\_\_."*
2. **Select a specific example** that illustrates the behavior or situation you want to change. *"For example, \_\_\_\_\_."*
3. **Describe your emotion around the issue.** - *"I feel \_\_\_\_\_."*
4. **Clarify why this is important** -- What is at stake to gain or lose for you, for others, for the team, or for the organization. *"From my perspective the stakes are high. \_\_\_\_\_ is at stake. And most importantly, \_\_\_\_\_ is at stake."*
5. **Identify your contribution(s) to this problem.** - *"I recognize my fingerprints. I have/may have \_\_\_\_\_. For this, I apologize."*
6. **Indicate your wish to resolve this issue.** - *"I want to resolve this with you (restate the issue)"*
7. **Invite the other to respond.** - *"I sincerely want to understand your perspective. Talk to me."*

Fierce Conversation Training is based on the principles of Susan Scott's business best-sellers *Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life, One Conversation at a Time*, *Fierce Leadership – A Bold Alternative to the Worst “Best” Practices of Business Today*.