



ACTION4YOUTH CASE-STUDY: SUPPORT - CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS WORKSHOP WITH ANNIE SIMPSON



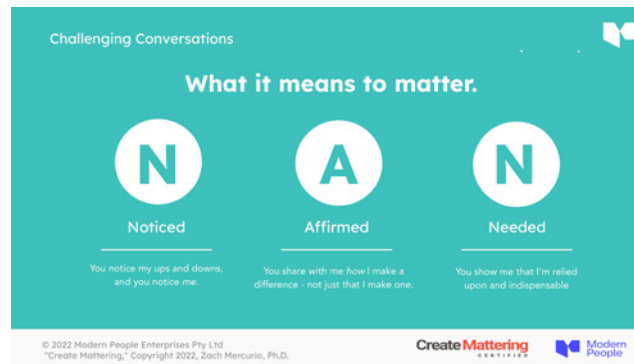
As part of our [NCI funding ACTION4YOUTH](#) provides 21st century skills training to our [Young Farming Champion \(YFC\)](#) mentors, careers advisors, students (the next generation employees) and our prospective employers.

Following her successful workshop on [Values at Work](#), Annie Simpson has delivered another masterclass teaching our ACTION4YOUTH stakeholders how to have challenging conversations in the workplace.

Challenging conversations are a part of business, and it is in the best interest of employees to empower their people with impactful tools and frameworks to promote more positive outcomes," Annie says.

\$4.45 billion is the cost of recruiting for the people who resign every year because of challenging conversations going wrong so this workshop was an important step in rectifying this problem.

The workshop began by introducing the concept of mattering, which is the belief that we are all a significant part of the world around us and that we are noticed, affirmed and needed right now.



It then taught participants to recognise what form a challenging conversation could take before giving tools and frameworks to best address these issues.

Challenging conversations come in many shapes and forms, including giving and receiving feedback, discussing 'failures', sharing personal challenges, and calling out the elephant in the room," Annie says.

The difference between ego-based (defensive, armoured, fear-based, fixed, transactional) and heart-based (authentic, open, others focused, situational and adaptive, personal/human) conversations was also explored, as was using emotionally intelligent practices to realise objectives while being considerate of the person at the other end of the conversation.

Recognising your own bias or 'monkey brain' helps you approach the situation with emotional intelligence and great self-awareness, but when we cannot control the behaviours and attitudes of others, how can we set ourselves up for success during these often uncomfortable moments?" Annie asked the participants before giving them time to reflect on or prepare for their own challenging conversations.

Challenging Conversations

Recognise Monkey Brain Moments

Denying	Displacing	Intellectualising	Rationalising	Passive Aggressiveness
If I deny the truth (to myself or to you), I will avoid discomfort or confrontation.	I think I'm angry at you, when really I'm angry at someone else.	If I analyse the situation but don't connect to the emotion, it won't hurt or upset me.	If I can logically explain why something has happened, it will all make sense.	If I quietly express annoyance or anger, you'll know how I feel without the confrontation.

Recognise Monkey Brain Moments

Over-Generalising	Catastrophising	Discounting Positives	'Shoulds'	Black and White Thinking
If one experience has been like this, all similar experiences will be like this.	The worst possible outcome is going to happen in this situation.	Others say I did a good job, but it wasn't good enough for me (or I was just lucky).	I should do this, or I shouldn't do that. If not, there will be shame, blame or guilt. There is no 'want' or ownership.	It was not a success, so it was a failure. OR if it was not good, it was bad.



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THE CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS WORKSHOP PROVED POPULAR WITH YFC:



This workshop gave me tangible, workable ideas to confidently head into difficult conversations in all areas of my life. The confidence knowing all parties can benefit will help me become a better team leader. Thank you so much Annie!"

- Jessica Fearnley



Through a sharing of Annie's wisdom, I feel more equipped to prepare for challenging conversations into the future. I particularly found it useful when Annie provided advice on how to set principles for tough conversations, along with sharing valuable models and tools to help me become more receptive to feedback. A key takeaway for me was a greater self-awareness of how ego can be a barrier to challenging conversations, and the importance of taking 'heart' into these conversations to help ensure the desired outcome is achieved."

- Dylan Male



I really enjoyed the Challenging Conversations workshop with Annie. I found it very relevant, addressing common challenges encountered in both a professional and personal setting. The workshop provided skills and resources, that are particularly important for young people currently in or entering the workforce. During the workshop I found myself reflecting on conversations and situations I'd encountered in the past, and thinking about how differently I'd approach them now. I took a lot away from this workshop, and feel I'm better equipped to address future challenging conversations."

- Ani Dilanchian

Annie Simpson's workshops are definitely meeting the targets of ACTION4YOUTH by empowering stakeholders to reflect on, and improve, the way they operate in a 21st century environment.