THE MISSING CONVERSATIONS
Critical Thinking During Times of Crisis

Dr. Craig Overmyer
www.culturesthatwork.com
THE NEW NOW

Volatile – Uncertain – Complex – Ambiguous

“You’ve got to stare down the fear wolf to get to the courage wolf.”  – Mark Divine
3 PROBLEMS TO ADDRESS

- Critical thinking skills are diminished
- Decision making is compromised
- Candid conversations are avoided
3 VALUABLE TAKEAWAYS

✓ Levels of Threat Exercise
✓ Critical Thinking Canvas
✓ Productive Conflict Profile Example Report
Everyone must say to themselves, when facing conflict, “I must challenge the story driving my behavior.”

—Mark Divine, author of Staring Down the Wolf

You can’t think your way out of a crisis. You have to talk your way through a crisis.

—Verne Harnish
LEVELS OF THREAT DURING CRISIS

1. Distant
   Watch

2. Nearby
   Warning

3. Here
   Touchdown
LEVELS OF THREAT

Level 1: Minor
(little impact on you, your family or business)

Level 2: Major
(you your family, your team and your business are disrupted,
but still functioning)

Level 3: Severe
(People, Strategy, Execution, Cash decisions are severely impacted.)
NEUROLEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: BRAIN-BASED COACHING

THE MISSING CONVERSATIONS
Critical Thinking During Times of Crisis

- **Status:** Less than or better than others
- **Certainty:** Ability to predict outcomes
- **Autonomy:** Sense of control
- **Relatedness:** In-group or out-group
- **Fairness:** Perception of fair exchange

Away Threat

Toward Reward

© Neuroleadership Institute 2015 | Brain Based Coaching - SCARF Profile Worksheet
© 2020 Cultures That Work, Inc. | 7
THREAT BUFFERS

Level 1: Connect often; serve others; focus on customers

Level 2: Create certainty; be present; be engaged moment by moment

Level 3: Make sleep a priority; nourish your mind; refuel the body
1. Be Vulnerable (Starting with the CEO)

2. Rate the level of threat from 1 to 3
   - Initially
   - Currently
   - Impact

3. Buffer the stress response
LEADERSHIP WHEN FACING THREAT

WRONG WAY

- “How’s everybody doing? Fine I hope!”
- Avoid the harsh realities
- It’s not safe to speak up.

RIGHT WAY

- Be vulnerable; start with the Boss.
- “What hasn’t been said, that needs to be said?”
- Deep Listening; Psychological Safety
3 VALUABLE TAKEAWAYS

✓ Levels of Threat Exercise
✓ Critical Thinking Canvas
✓ Productive Conflict Profile Example Report
Challenge for Leaders During VUCA

- Critical thinking skills are diminished
- Decision making is compromised
- Candid conversations are avoided
3 RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

PRODUCTIVE CONFLICT
Requires self-leadership from colleagues to honor each other’s style and make sure it's safe during In-The-Moment conversations.

UNPRODUCTIVE CONFLICT
This is false harmony. The conflict is hidden. It's comfortable to avoid issues, but artificial.

DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT
Conflict events trigger automatic biased thoughts, which in turn trigger destructive responses.
3 Distinctive Conversation Styles

- **Casual**: Hey! Hi!
  - We need to talk.

- **Crucial**: I have an issue.
  - It sounds serious.

- **In-The-Moment**: Tell me more.
In-The-Moment Conversations™

- Seize the Moment
- Remember the Future
- Learn from the Past
- Seek Accountability
Critical Thinking Defined

• Critical thinking is the analysis of facts for form a judgement.

• Critical thinking enables leaders to make decisions based on evaluation of factual evidence and the ability to logically analyze assumptions and biases.

• Leaders who score high in critical thinking assessments linger with ambiguity.

(Source: CHORUS, INC. – Hallmarks of Excellence® in Leadership)
Critical Thinking

Challenge assumptions

Root out biases

Ask questions that draw out new alternatives

Press for evidence to support new solutions
Critical Thinking Case Study

• Montrow Group facing a COVID-19 threat from a customer

• In-The-Moment Conversations™ guided by the Critical Thinking Canvas made all the difference

• How could the lessons learned from this story be applied in your workplace?
# Critical Thinking Canvas

**Team:**

**Date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness</th>
<th>New Now</th>
<th>Automatic Assumptions</th>
<th>Challenge Assumptions</th>
<th>Root Out Biases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insights</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scenarios</strong></td>
<td><strong>New Alternatives</strong></td>
<td><strong>If</strong></td>
<td><strong>Then</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*The Missing Conversations*

Critical Thinking During Times of Crisis

© 2020 Cultures That Work, Inc.
## Critical Thinking Canvas

### Critical Thinking Canvas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW NOW</th>
<th>AUTOMATIC ASSUMPTIONS</th>
<th>CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS</th>
<th>ROOT OUT BIASES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AWARENESS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the conflict?</td>
<td>What are the assumptions concerning the company culture, the business growth and the customer experience?</td>
<td>What do we know to be true? How can we reframe the assumptions to create a productive path forward?</td>
<td>CHOOSE THE TOP 3 BIASES FROM THE 20 BIASES WORKSHEET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the harsh realities of the brutal facts?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the impact on our customer’s ‘job’s-to-be-done’?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENARIOS</th>
<th>NEW ALTERNATIVES</th>
<th>IF</th>
<th>THEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOOD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UGLY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**THE MISSING CONVERSATIONS**

Critical Thinking During Times of Crisis

© 2020 Cultures That Work, Inc. | 20
20 COGNITIVE BIASES THAT SCREW UP YOUR DECISIONS

1. Anchoring bias. People are over-reliant on the first piece of information they hear. In a salary negotiation, whoever makes the first offer establishes a range of reasonable possibilities in each parent’s mind.

2. Availability heuristic. People overestimate the importance of information that is available to them. A person might argue that smoking is not unhealthy because they know someone who lived to 100 and smoked three packs a day.

3. Bandwagon effect. The probability of a person adopting a belief increases based on the number of people who hold that belief. This is a powerful form of groupthink and is a reason why meetings are often unproductive.

4. Blind-spot bias. Failing to recognize your own cognitive biases is a bias in itself. People notice cognitive and emotional biases much more in others than in themselves.

5. Choice-supportive bias. When you choose something, you tend to feel positive about it even if it was chosen by them. An example is someone—event if they believe people are a little in a white.

6. Clustering illusion. This is the tendency to see patterns in random events. It’s key to various gambling fallacies, like the idea that each roll of the dice changes the probability of rolling a certain number.

7. Confirmation bias. We tend to listen only to information that confirms our preconceptions—cognitive or emotional. A prime example is climate change, where people maintain their views even though the evidence that the planet was flat.

8. Conservatism bias. Where people favor prior evidence over new evidence or information that has emerged. People were slow to accept Darwin’s theory of evolution because they maintained their earlier understanding that the planet was flat.

9. Information bias. The tendency to seek information when it does not affect action. More information is not always better. With less information, people make more accurate predictions.

10. Ostrich effect. The decision to ignore dangerous or negative information by “looking the other way” commonly leads to the disaster. An example is the Japanese government that interests check the value of their holdings significantly less often during bad markets.

11. Outcome bias. Judging a decision based on the outcome—rather than how exactly the decision was made in the moment. Just because you won a lot in Vegas doesn’t mean gambling your money was a smart decision.

12. Overconfidence. Some of us are too confident about our abilities, and this causes us to take greater risks in our daily lives. Experts are more prone than the bias than laypeople, since they are more convinced that they are right.

13. Placebo effect. When simply believing that something will have a certain effect on you causes it to have that effect. In medicine, people given fake pills often experience the same physiological effects as people given the real thing.

14. Pro-innovation bias. A bias in which people think that anything will have a certain effect on them if you cause it to have that effect. In medicine, people think fake pills can often experience the same physiological effects as people given the real thing.

15. Recency. The tendency to weight the latest information more heavily than other data. Investors often think the market will always look the way it looks today and make unwise decisions.

16. Salience. Our tendency to focus on the most visually or conceptually obvious elements of a problem or concept. When you think about dying, you might worry about being killed by a car, as opposed to what is statistically more likely, like dying in a car accident.

17. Selective perception. Allowing our expectations to influence how we perceive the world. An example involving a football game between two universities showed that one team saw the opposing team commit more infractions.

18. Stereotyping. Expecting a group or person to have certain qualities without having any other information about the person. It allows us to quickly identify strangers as friends or enemies, but people tend to confuse and abuse it.

19. Survivorship bias. Asking how often comes from focusing only on surviving examples, creating us to misjudge a situation. For example, we might think that being an entrepreneur is easy because we haven’t heard of all those who failed.

20. Zero-risk bias. Socialists have found that we will generally overestimate the risk of an event occurring, creating a bias in decision evaluation. Overestimate the risk, and we will generally understate the risk of an event occurring, creating a bias in decision evaluation.

DECISION MAKING

WRONG WAY

• HEAR TO FIX; TELL TO SOLVE
• PROBLEM FOCUSED
• SEEK CERTAINTY

RIGHT WAY

• LISTEN TO LEARN; ASK TO EMPOWER
• SOLUTION FOCUSED
• SEEK CLARITY
3 Valuable Takeaways

- Level of Threat Exercise
- Critical Thinking Canvas
- Productive Conflict Profile Example Report
Decision Making-Gaining Clarity

Hindsight | Foresight | Insight | Action

THE MISSING CONVERSATIONS
Critical Thinking During Times of Crisis
HOW LEADERS SHOW UP MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE
CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS

Choose Your Focus

- Vision: the why
- Planning: the what
- Detail: the how
- Problem: the threat
- Drama: the panic
Threat or Reward

Choose Your Focus

threat or reward

Drama  Problem  Detail  Planning  Vision
DESTRUCTIVE VS. PRODUCTIVE CONFLICT

WRONG WAY

- SEIZED BY THE MOMENT
- AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS
- DESTRUCTIVE RESPONSES

RIGHT WAY

- SEIZE THE MOMENT
- REFRAME AUTOMATIC THOUGHTS
- PRODUCTIVE RESPONSES
3 VALUABLE TAKEAWAYS

✓ Level of Threat Exercise
✓ Critical Thinking Canvas
✓ Productive Conflict Profile Example Report
NEXT STEPS – COMPLIMENTARY RESOURCES

1. Levels of Threat Guidelines

2. Critical Thinking Canvas Guidelines

3. Productive Conflict Profile Sample
NEXT STEPS – COACHING PACKAGE

1. Critical Thinking Canvas Coaching
   - Individual - virtual 60-minute session
   - Small Group – virtual 90-minute session (limit 8)

2. Signed Hard Copy of our Best-Selling Book:
   *Accelerate Thru Conflict: The Missing Conversations... Before It's Too Late*

3. Annual subscription of *Accelerate Thru Conflict Magazine*,
   Published 4 times/year
NEXT STEPS – SPECIAL OFFER - INDIVIDUAL

$205 \times \cancel{\text{ }} \rightarrow \text{ } $145
NEXT STEPS – SPECIAL OFFER FOR GROUP COACHING

$195 ➔ $95
THANK YOU
Go in a Good Way!