

# Difficult Conversations

## Overview

This programme helps delegates to confidently tackle potentially difficult conversations in a variety of workplace settings. By identifying the different personality types and how to deal with them effectively, it provides the skills necessary for dealing with challenging people and conflict situations. It particularly helps a manager when they have to tackle poor performance or absence conversations – from an informal conversation through to a formal meeting. Delegates are provided with practical techniques to help them manage a wide variety of potentially confrontational conversations and situations confidently and effectively.

## Objectives

- Understand classic characteristics of challenging conversations, people or situations and strategies for managing each.
- Pre-empt difficult situations and avoid escalating them further.
- Recognise personality types with which you may personally feel challenged.
- Mastering proactive, assertive conversations.
- Manage aggressive behaviour.
- Calm angry, upset and unresponsive individuals.
- Strengthen your ability to influence and negotiate.

N.B. Prior to the course delegates will be asked to complete a pre-training form that will enable us to tailor the course further.

# Content

- The need for managing difficult conversations
- Understanding my natural preference towards difficult conversations- self assessment
- Understanding behaviour and its impacts
  - What makes a situation/ individual challenging?  
Understanding difficult behaviour
  - An introduction to T. A and the psychology behind communication
  - How to turn a negative person or situation into a positive one
  - Body language, voice, mirroring, environment layout etc
- Key communication strategies that help you deal effectively with difficult conversations
  - Paraphrasing to avoid assumptions or misunderstandings
  - Using feedback in both positive and negative contexts
  - Empathy – practical activities
  - Listening and questioning skills to get the true perception of the situation, show confidence and maintain control
- Three different behaviour types
  - Clarifying the difference between aggressive, assertive and passive behaviour
  - Recognising the effects of each type on oneself and others
- Dealing with difficult situations
  - Situations that may arise – highlighting practical ways to deal with them
  - Dealing in fact– not emotion
- Using positive language and a positive approach to influence outcomes
  - Practical exercises based around real-life scenarios
- Action planning
  - Summary and close