

The background is a vibrant blue with several thick, white, abstract lines that create a sense of movement and depth. These lines are layered, with some appearing to pass over others, creating a complex, geometric pattern. The lines vary in thickness and direction, some being straight and others curved, contributing to a modern and dynamic aesthetic.

ORIENTATION TO CAREER CONVERSATIONS

MANAGER GUIDE

OCTOBER 2009

A PROJECT OF THE

Canadian Research Working Group on Evidence Based Practice
in Career Development



AUTHORS

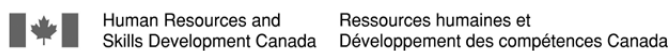
Vivian Lalande, University of Calgary, Alberta

Bill Borgen, University of British Columbia

Lee Butterfield, University of British Columbia

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Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF)



CREDITS

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Lorraine Beaudoin, Productions AlphaZULU

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HANDOUT 1: OBJECTIVES OF THE ORIENTATION

The objectives of the orientation are to :

- ✔ Enhance your understanding of the aims and objectives of career conversations,
- ✔ Examine potential challenges to implementing career conversations in your place of work,
- ✔ Review your personal assets and the resources you can access in successfully engaging in career conversations with employees,
- ✔ Enhance your understanding and abilities by practicing conducting career conversations,
- ✔ Develop action plans for addressing challenges in conducting effective career conversations in your place of work.

HANDOUT 2: SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

DAY ONE

9:00 to 9:50	BLOCK A Opening Activities A.1 Introductions and Expectations A.2 Setting Norms
9:50 to 10:15	BLOCK B Overview, Aims, and Past Experience with Career Conversations
10:30 to 11:15	BLOCK C Identifying Challenges to Implementation
11:15 to 12:00	BLOCK D Impact of Change on Work Life
1:00 to 2:30	BLOCK E Identifying Assets E.1 Accomplishments Exercise
2:30 to 3:15	BLOCK F.1 Skills Needed to Conduct Effective Career Conversations
3:15 to 4:15	BLOCK F.2 Communication skill practice
4:15 to 4:30	BLOCK F.3 Closure

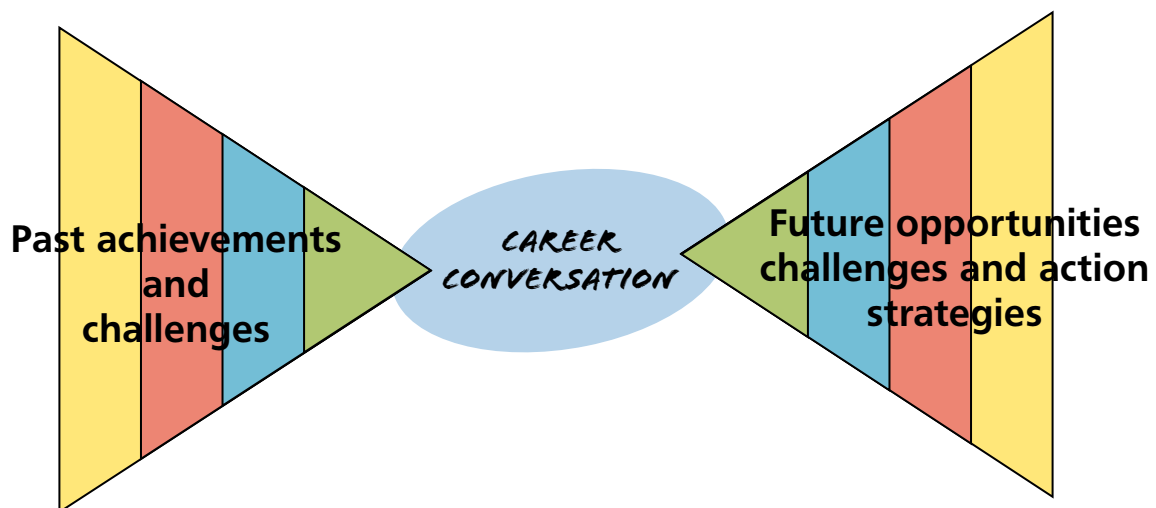
DAY TWO

9:00 to 9:15	Review / Preview
9:15 to 10:15	BLOCK G.1 The Utility of Career Conversations
10:30 to 12:00	BLOCK G.2 Demonstration and Practice of Career Conversations
1:00 to 2:30	BLOCK H Options for Addressing Challenges to Implementation
2:45 to 4:00	BLOCK I.1 Action Plans
4:00 to 4:30	BLOCK I.2 Closure

HANDOUT 3: WHAT IS A CAREER CONVERSATION?

A career conversation is simply a discussion between an employee and his or her manager that supports the employee in developing career goals and an action plan for achieving these goals. This conversation will not always result in a specific decision or plan right away, but will set the stage for an employee to later clarify goals and set plans. Employees and managers may have a number of career conversations over a period of time. The employee often navigates toward other jobs or work opportunities in the same organization as a result of the career conversation. This result is beneficial for both the employee and the employer. The employee can acquire more meaningful work, be promoted, find better work/life balance, or feel more personal/professional fulfillment. The employer can retain their more satisfied workers and adapt more easily to changing business goals.

The employee's career goals are informed by his or her personal needs and characteristics, as well as the business needs and strategic plan of the employer. As employees set career goals, certain training options may be identified that will provide the skills needed to achieve these goals.



A career conversation is usually one hour long and may lead to follow-up conversations. Both the employee and the manager need to do some preparation before the conversation occurs. During the conversation open communication is critical and often flows through a natural process that is outlined in the diagram on handout 5.

HANDOUT 4: PURPOSES AND TOPICS OF CAREER CONVERSATIONS

NOT A CAREER CONVERSATION...

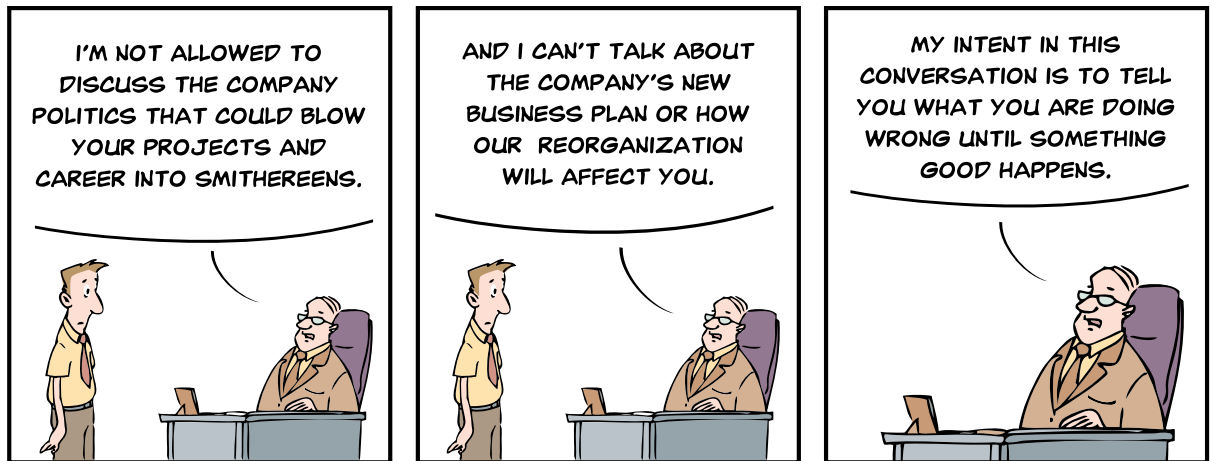


Illustration: www.alphaZULU.com, 2010

Main Purpose of Career Conversations:

To facilitate the development of specific goals and a plan for employee development that is mutually beneficial to the employee and the organization.

CAREER CONVERSATION TOPICS

SHARING OF INFORMATION :

Information related to career management

Types of relevant information (about employee or company):

Employee skills and performance

Relevant skills and past performance:

Job and career path options within workplace

Possible career path options:

Training options

Mentorship opportunities

People who may be suitable as mentors:

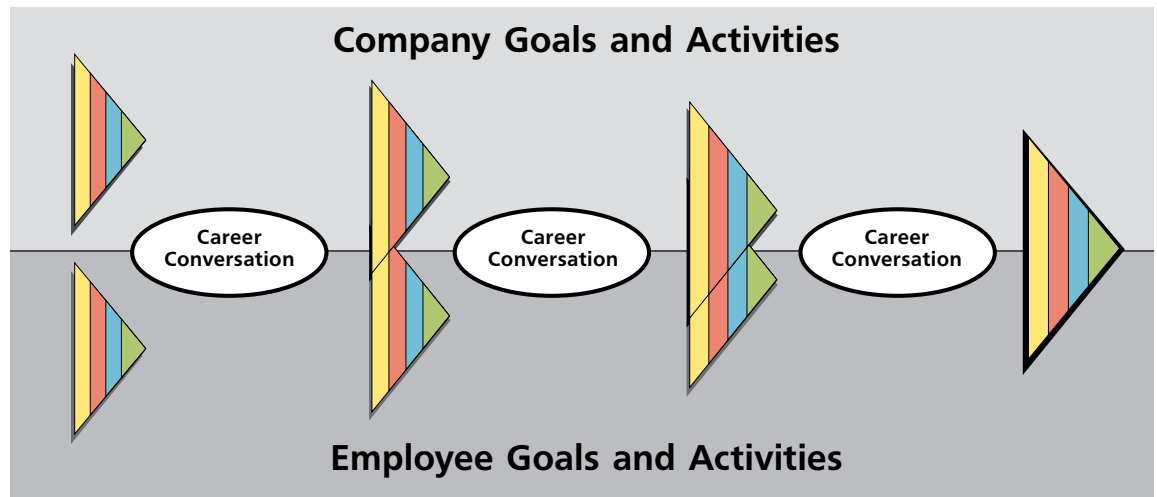
ACTIVITIES :

Career goal setting (Initial goals)

Development of action plan (Progress toward setting a plan)

HANDOUT 5 : THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF CAREER CONVERSATIONS

A PROCESS OF ALIGNMENT



Notes

HANDOUT 6: THE CAREER CONVERSATION PROCESS



Notes

HANDOUT 7: THE STRUCTURE OF THE CAREER CONVERSATION

Expanding Exploration

- ✓ General Opening Interaction
- ✓ Clarifying the Purpose of the Conversation
- ✓ Reviewing the Challenges on the Employee Positioning System

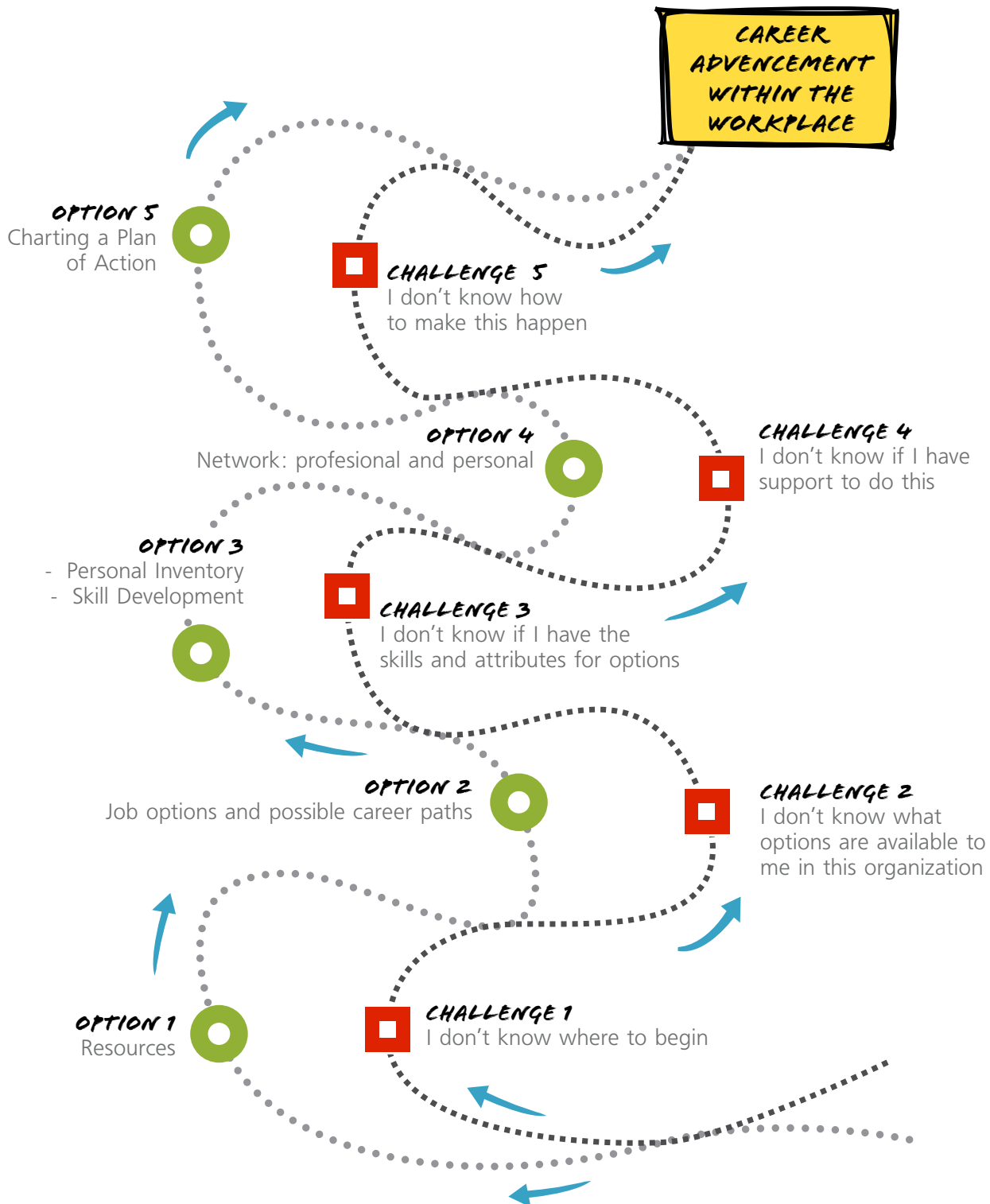
Discussing Possibilities

- ✓ Discussing the Employees' Reactions to Reviewing the EPS
- ✓ Discussing the Options Connected with the Challenge or Challenges Relevant to the Employee

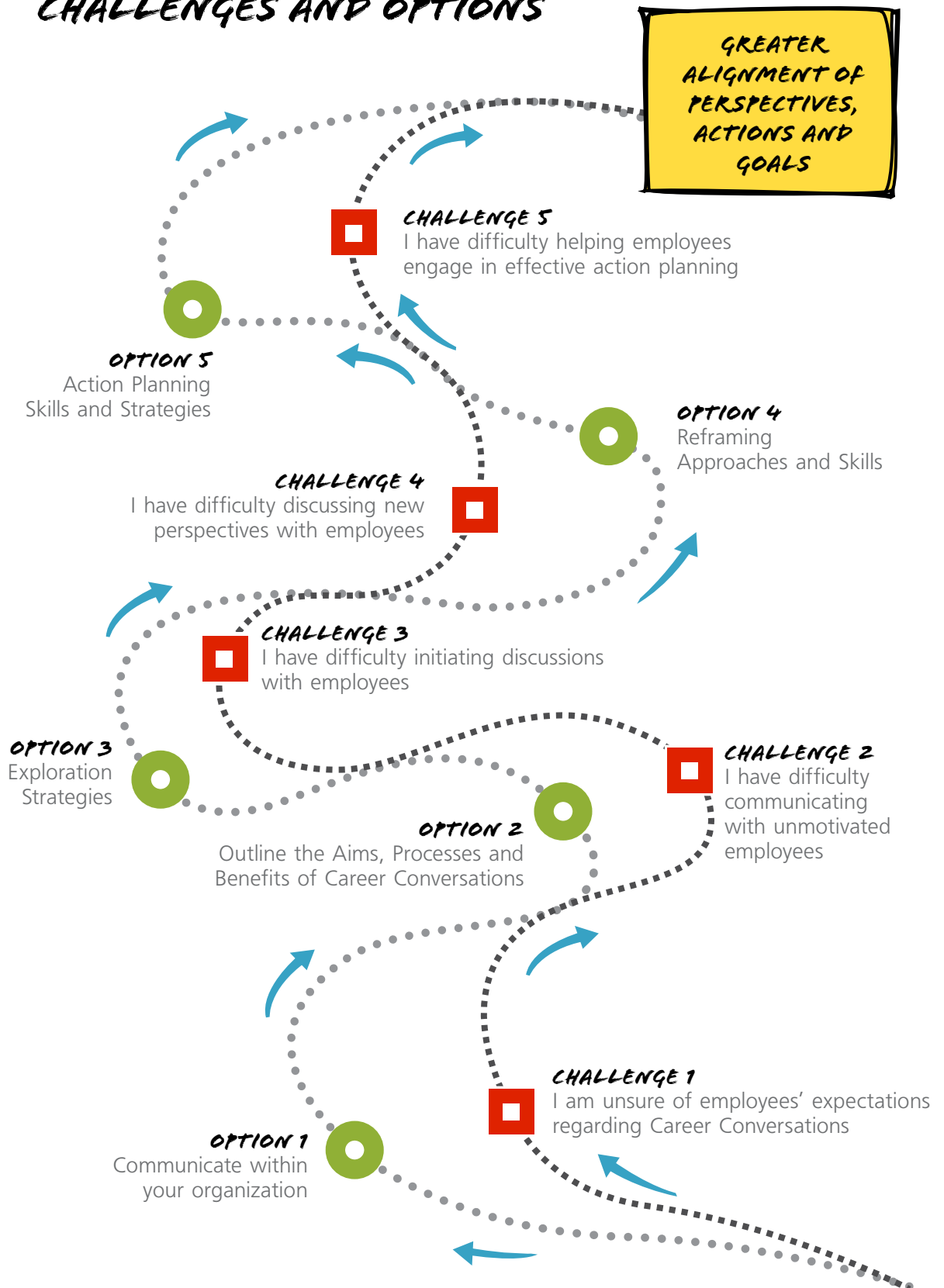
Encouraging Action

- ✓ Discussing Possible Action Planning Strategies Using Options to Address Identified Challenges
- ✓ Encouraging Further Contact to Discuss Challenges with Implementing Action Strategies

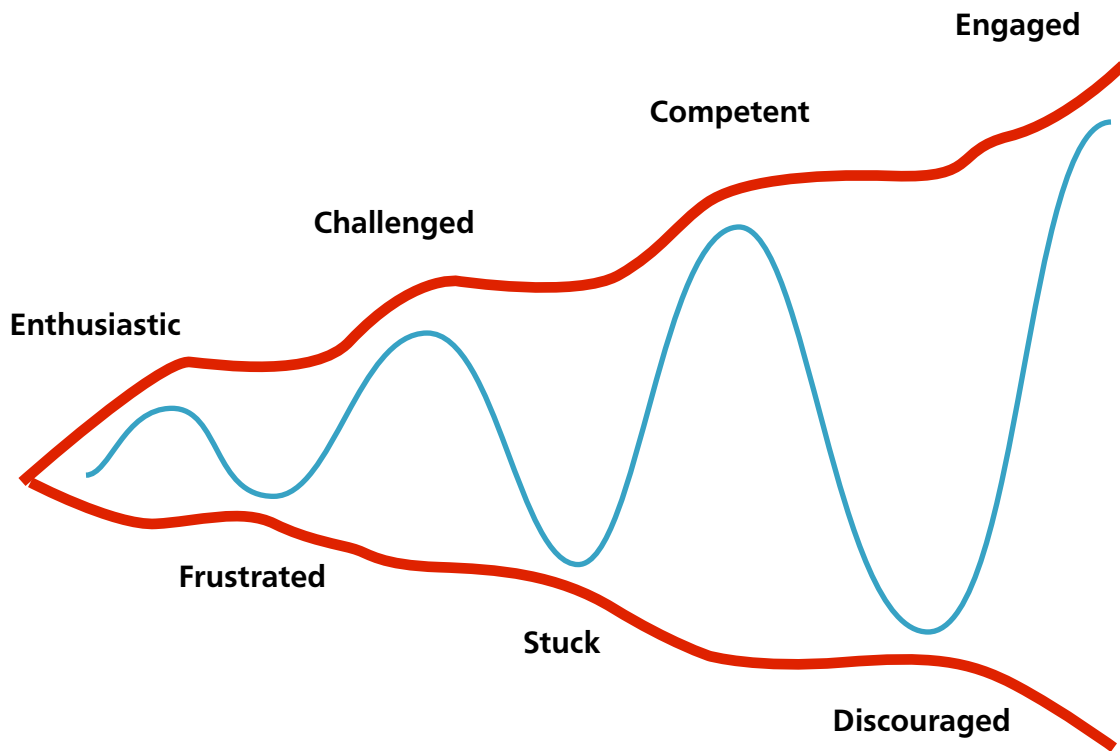
HANDOUT 8: CAREER CONVERSATIONS: EMPLOYEE POSITIONING SYSTEM (EPS)



HANDOUT 9: CAREER CONVERSATIONS: CHALLENGES AND OPTIONS



HANDOUT 10: IMPACT OF CHANGE ON WORK LIFE



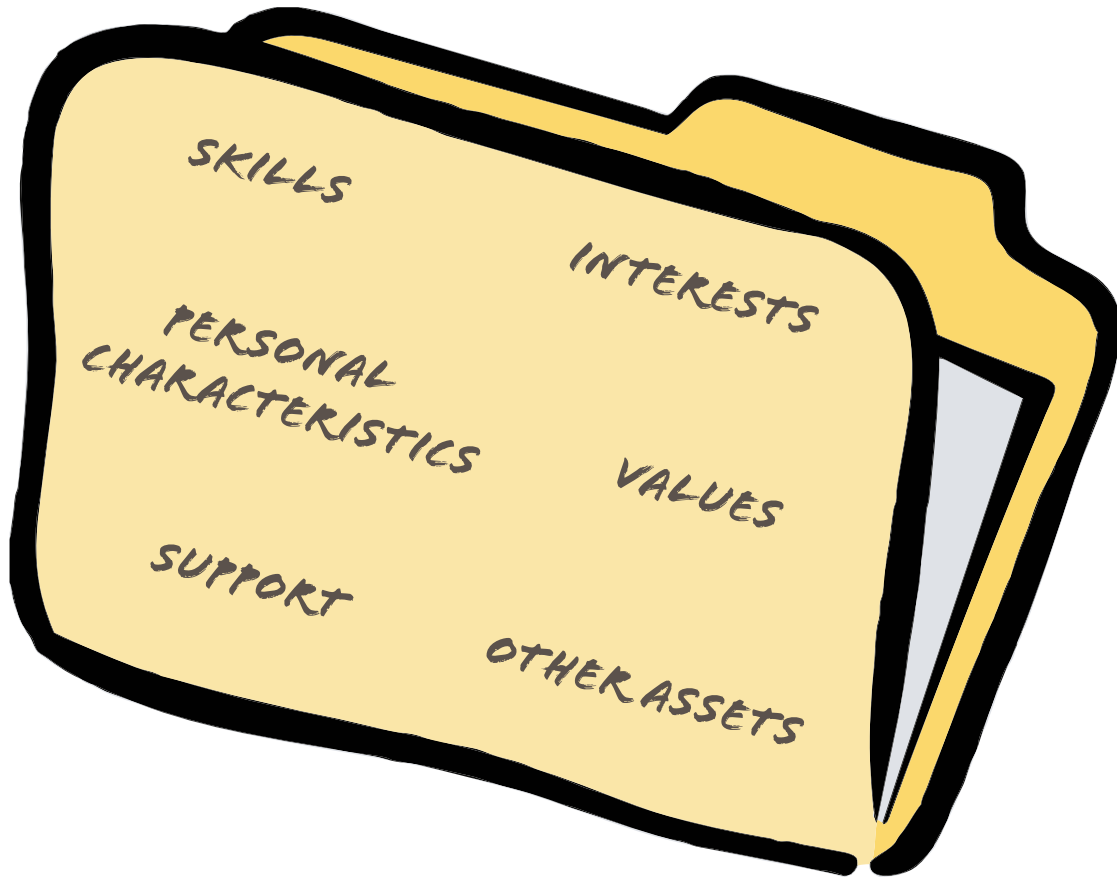
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**HANDOUT 11:
WHAT HELPED AND HINDERED WORKERS
WHO WERE DOING WELL WITH CHANGES THAT
AFFECTED THEIR WORK...**

CIT Category (% Part.)	HE	HI	WL
Support – Friends & Family	80	16	16
Personal Attitudes /Traits / Emotions	76	38	-
Self-care	64	20	33
Internal Framework / Boundaries	60	-	7
Taking Action	51	2	11
Management Style / Work Environment	42	71	69
Support – Professionals	33	7	16
Support – Work Colleagues	33	16	-
Skill /Role Competence	29	2	20
Personal Life Issues / Changes	13	42	29

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HANDOUT 12: PORTFOLIO OF ASSETS



HANDOUT 13: INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING FOR ASSETS

Think back to a specific time when you did something about which you felt really good. With this in mind, answer the following questions:

- ① What was the experience that you felt good about ? How were you involved ?
What did you achieve ?

- ② What skills did you use ?

- ③ If someone were watching, what would they say about how you did it (e.g. quickly, carefully, cheerfully, etc.) ?

- ④ What did you like or dislike about what you were doing ?

- ⑤ How did you get along with others ?

(Continued on next page ...)

HANDOUT 13 (CONTINUED): INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING FOR ASSETS

Now that you have had a chance to think about a specific time when you did something that you felt really good about, take the information from the previous page and summarize your assets next to each of the following categories.

CATEGORY	MY ASSETS
SKILLS	
INTERESTS	
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS	
VALUES	
OTHER SKILLS	

HANDOUT 14: SKILLS NEEDED TO CONDUCT CAREER CONVERSATIONS

Hearing the Employee's Perspective																			
Active Listening																			
Paraphrasing																			
Primary Empathy																			
Open Questions																			
Clarifying Questions																			
Summarizing																			
Providing Another Perspective																			
Information Giving																			
Strength Challenge																			
Self-disclosure																			
Planning Action																			
Goal Setting / Contracting																			

HANDOUT 15: COMMUNICATION SKILLS SUMMARY

Listening to the Employee's Perspective

Active Listening Attending to non-verbal and verbal messages - involves understanding and is not simply hearing.

Paraphrasing Restating of the content of a message in another way.

- e.g. If I understand you correctly, you're not interested in participating in this project.
- e.g. So what you're saying is that we don't need to spend time on that part of the arrangement.

Primary Empathy Reflecting surface feelings along with experiences or behaviours that accompany the feelings.

- e.g. It's upsetting when someone doesn't let you tell your side of the story.
- e.g. You're feeling disappointed about the results because you never had the chance to properly prepare.

Open Questions Open-ended statements of inquiry that cannot be responded to with yes or no responses.

- e.g. I would like to hear some of your ideas about how to organize this material. How do you think it should be arranged?
- e.g. You are certainly clear that this isn't something you want to do. What are some of the reasons for your strong feeling?

Clarifying Checking understanding of a message by asking to hear it again or asking for more information/details.

- e.g. You said you weren't interested in being a part of this project. I'm wondering how this decision is going to affect your involvement with the other projects. Are you still interested in being part of them?
- e.g. You haven't said much in the last couple of days. Is something bothering you?

Summarizing Pulling together several ideas.

- e.g. A number of good points have been made about key issues. Let's take a few moments to go over them and write them on the board.
- e.g. We seem to be going all over the map this morning. If I understand you correctly, the three major points you are making are...

Providing Another Perspective

Information Giving

Providing information in a clear, succinct, and non-threatening manner.

- e.g. In answer to your question about the system, we will use the following procedure. . .
- e.g. I have some information on the new computer system and will give this to you.

Strength Challenge

Building on strengths, what they have been doing to prepare towards reaching their goals. Involves primary empathy and a challenge.

Reflecting to a person ways in which his/her actions may be getting in his/her way.

Includes: empathy, addressing specific issues, and inviting dialogue. Self-disclosure is often included.

- e.g. You said that you would never be able to work with the new system, but I noticed that you only made two errors in the last practice.
- e.g. You've told me that you can't talk in front of groups. I've noticed, however, that when you're confident in your material you are able to make a strong presentation in front of others.

Self-disclosure

Sharing some of your own experiences to help the employee further understand a topic under discussion; to support the point of view of the person or to suggest another point of view.

- e.g. You feel angry about having to learn this new system. When I first found out about it, I was also upset, but also a bit uncertain about whether I was going to be able to figure it out. I wonder if you're a bit uncertain as well.
- e.g. I can sure understand your fears about standing in front of groups. I used to tie myself in knots before making a presentation. It helped me when I learned to accept my anxiety rather than fighting it - if that makes any sense to you.

Planning Action

Goal-setting / Contracting

Helping employees set concrete and achievable goals, and develop plans for reaching them.

- e.g. O.K. let's see what would be reasonable to attempt to do before we meet again.
- e.g. Maybe we should discuss who will do what and in what kind of a time frame before our next meeting.

HANDOUT 16: CAREER CONVERSATION CHECKLIST

Expanding Exploration

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| General opening interaction | <input type="radio"/> |
| Clarifying purpose of conversation | <input type="radio"/> |
| Reviewing and identifying any relevant challenges on Employee Positioning System : | |
| • Employee doesn't know where to begin | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Employee doesn't know what options are available to him or her in this organization | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Employee doesn't know if he or she has the skills or attributes | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Employee doesn't know if he or she has the support needed | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Employee doesn't know how to make this happen | <input type="radio"/> |

Discussing Possibilities

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Discuss employee's reactions to EPS : | |
| • Understand and normalize feelings such as fear, anxiety, sadness, and anger | <input type="radio"/> |
| Discuss options connected to the challenges relevant to the employee : | |
| • Information giving, referral to employee work book, and self disclosure | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Resources available to employee | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Job options and possible career paths | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Personal inventory and skill development | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Personal and work support networks | <input type="radio"/> |
| • Chart a plan of action | <input type="radio"/> |

Encouraging Action

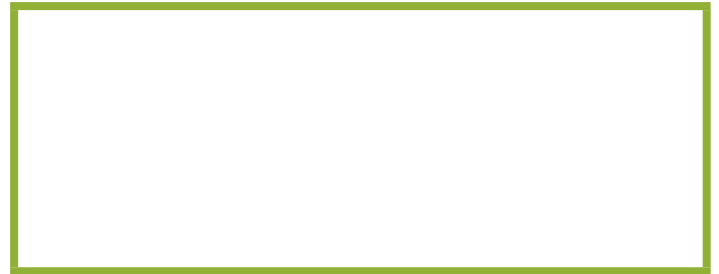
- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Discussing possible action planning strategies using options to address identified challenges | <input type="radio"/> |
| Encouraging further contact to discuss challenges associated with implementation action strategies | <input type="radio"/> |
| Date of follow-up conversation | <input type="radio"/> |

HANDOUT 17: PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

You have already determined your starting point (your first issue, the first action you might take). In light of this, chart the plan of action you must take in order to move towards implementation.

YOUR PLAN OF ACTION

How will you reach it ? e.g.
What will you have to do ?
Who can help ?
When ?



A large, empty rectangular box with a green border, intended for writing the details of the action plan.

How much time
do you need ?



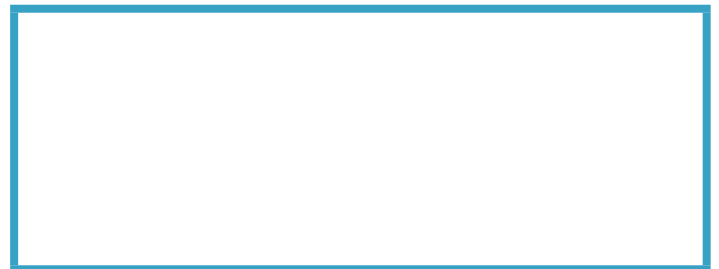
A large, empty rectangular box with a red border, intended for writing the time needed for the action plan.

What potential obstacles do
you see ahead as you move to
your first stopover ?



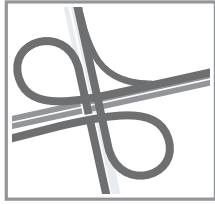
A large, empty rectangular box with a yellow border, intended for writing potential obstacles.

What strategies can you put
into place to ensure that you
will be successful ?
Don't forget your assets.



A large, empty rectangular box with a blue border, intended for writing strategies to ensure success.

HANDOUT 18: SAMPLE ACTION PLAN



MY ACTION PLAN

Name

Date

Action Plan prepared with

IDENTIFIED NEEDS

GOALS (Short and long term)

Date

HANDOUT 19: CAREER CONVERSATIONS WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Workshop Objectives

- ✓ Enhance your understanding of the aims and objectives of career conversations ;
- ✓ Examine potential challenges to implementing career conversations in your place of work ;
- ✓ Review your personal assets and the resources you can access in successfully engaging in career conversations with employees ;
- ✓ Enhance your understanding and abilities by practicing conducting career conversations ;
- ✓ Develop action plans for addressing challenges in conducting effective career conversations in your place of work.

Workshop Assessment Instructions

In responding to the general questions, please use a two-step process :

- ① Decide on whether the characteristic in question is acceptable or unacceptable, then
- ② Assign the appropriate rating :
 - (0) **Unacceptable**
 - (1) **Not really acceptable, but almost there**
 - (2) **Minimally acceptable (but still OK)**
 - (3) **Somewhere between acceptable and exceptional**
 - (4) **Exceptional**

Example

Unacceptable		Acceptable			
0	1	2	3	4	
▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	
0	1	2	3	4	

ORIENTATION TO CAREER CONVERSATIONS - MANAGER GUIDE

Date

Compare your knowledge BEFORE and AFTER the workshop.

REGARDING THE WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES, and knowing what you know now, how would you rate yourself before the workshop, and how would you rate yourself now?

BEFORE WORKSHOP				
Unacceptable				Acceptable
0	1	2	3	4

AFTER WORKSHOP				
Unacceptable				Acceptable
0	1	2	3	4

Clear understanding of the aims and objectives of career conversations

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Knowledge regarding potential challenges to implementing career conversations in my workplace

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Knowledge about your personal assets and the resources you can access in successfully engaging in career conversations with employees

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Clear understanding of how to conduct career conversations

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Developed action plan for addressing challenges in conducting effective career conversations in your place of work

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

GENERALLY WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE				
Unacceptable				Acceptable
0	1	2	3	4

How useful did you find the workshop ?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

How would you rate the workshop facilitation ?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

How would you rate the workshop facilities (room, etc.) ?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

How would you rate the food ?

0	1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---	---

Learning Assessment Instructions																					
<p>For each component of the workshop topics listed below, please assess how useful that component was for you, using the 5-point scale below :</p> <p>(0) Negligible (1) Inadequate (2) Useful (3) Very useful (4) Outstanding</p>	<p>Example</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Unacceptable</td> <td colspan="3">Acceptable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>▼</td> <td>▼</td> <td>▼</td> <td>▼</td> <td>▼</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </table>	Unacceptable		Acceptable			0	1	2	3	4	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	0	1	2	3	4
Unacceptable		Acceptable																			
0	1	2	3	4																	
▼	▼	▼	▼	▼																	
0	1	2	3	4																	

	WORKSHOP TOPIC				
	Unacceptable		Acceptable		
	0	1	2	3	4
	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Challenges associated with implementing a career conversation and options for overcoming challenges	0	1	2	3	4
The impact of changes on individual's work life.	0	1	2	3	4
How to identify personal assets	0	1	2	3	4
Communication skills for career conversations	0	1	2	3	4
Demonstration and practice of career conversations	0	1	2	3	4
Resources to meet employee career planning challenges	0	1	2	3	4
Setting Action plans	0	1	2	3	4

What were the 3 best features of this workshop for you ?

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____

What were the 3 features of this workshop that were less relevant for you ?

- ① _____
- ② _____
- ③ _____

Please provide any additional comments about the workshop in the space below.

Thank you for taking the time to participate and for completing this evaluation form.

