

# ACHIEVE

Centre for Leadership & Workplace  
Performance

Difficult Conversations

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# WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

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- Lack of clarity
- Too many demands
- Personality styles
- Value differences





# THE BASICS

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- **Issue:** area of disagreement or contention
- **Position:** what each individual says publicly about what will solve the issue
- **Interests:** internal thoughts and feelings, often held privately. They motivate us to take the position we have taken (includes hopes, fears, concerns, expectations, assumptions, beliefs, feelings and values)

# Top 10 Interests

1. Fairness

2. Efficiency

3. Happiness

4. Justice

5. Learning

6. Professionalism

7. Reputation

8. Respect

9. Responsibility

10. Safety

And more....

Consensus

Ease

Friendship

Harmony

Success

Simplicity

Good of the Group

Ownership

Pride



# EXPLORE INTERESTS

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- What do you hope will happen if we do it that way?
- What are afraid might go wrong?
- What are your concerns about this position?
- What is important to you about that?
- What are the reasons you need [state position]?



# GETTING WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

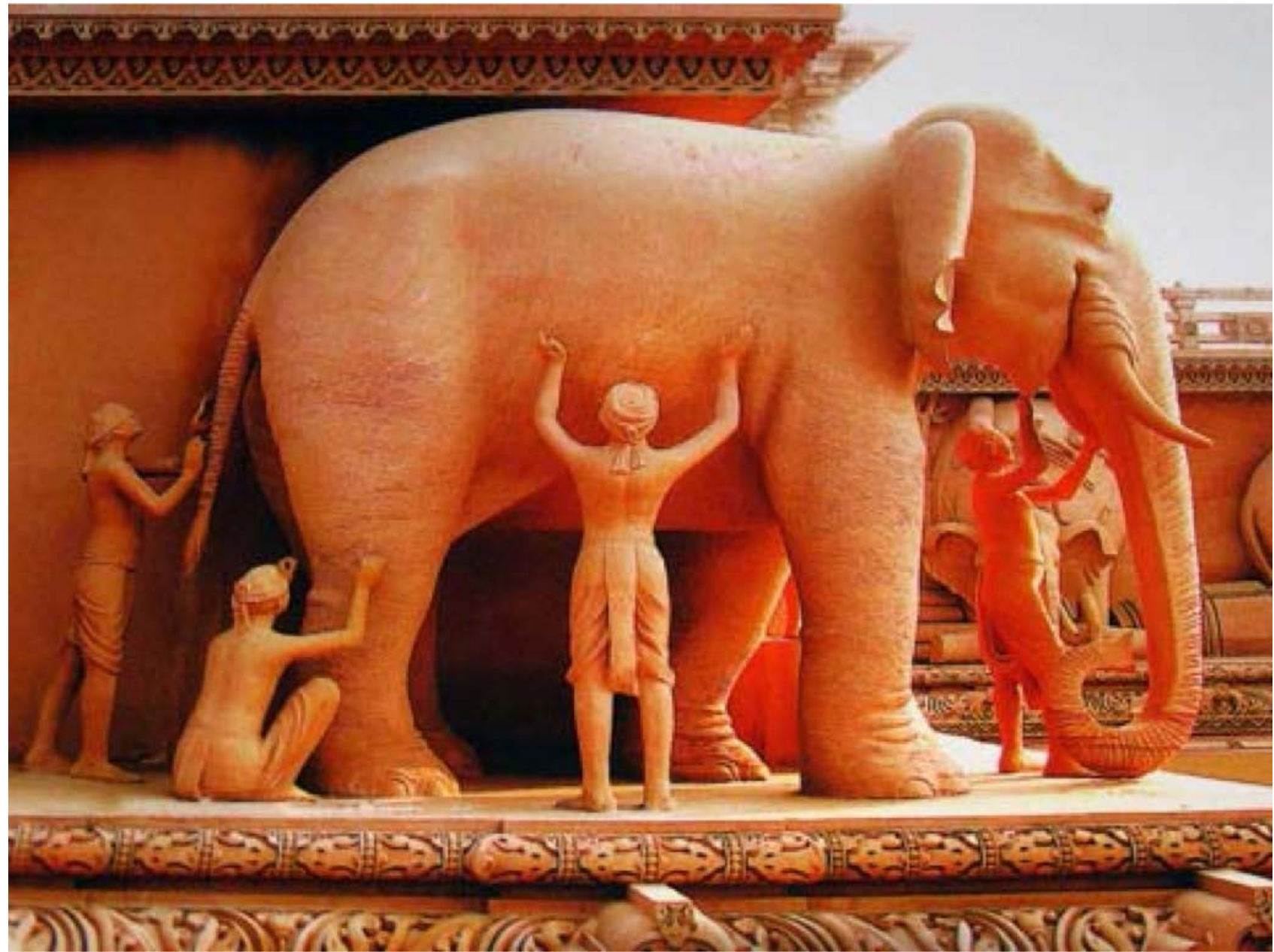
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## **Interests**

- Focus on shared goals
- Bring us together
- Allow us to move beyond the conflict

## **Positions**

- Focus on differences
- Pull us apart
- Cause us to get stuck





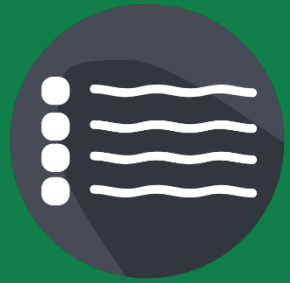


# YOUR SITUATION

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Think about a recent situation.

- 1) What were the positions being held by the parties involved?
- 2) What were your interests?
- 3) What may have been their interests?
- 4) What possible common interests are there?



# TRIGGER PHASES AND GESTURES

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## Disinterest

“I don’t care”

“I don’t want to hear about”





# TRIGGER PHRASES AND GESTURES

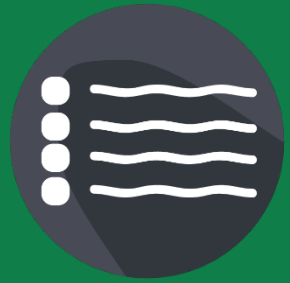
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## Blame

“If you paid attention, you would...”

“Obviously you haven’t been listening...”





# TRIGGER PHRASES AND GESTURES

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## **Others:**

“You wouldn’t understand”...

“Because we have always done it this way”.

“You need to calm down”.

“We’ve tried everything and nothing works”.





***Always*** and ***never*** are two words  
you *should always* remember *never*  
to use.

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W e n d e l l J o h n s o n

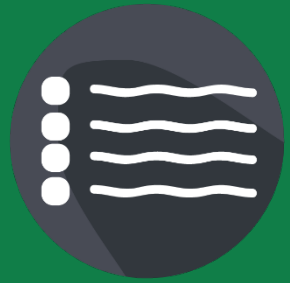


# WHERE DO WE GET STUCK?

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- When we are faced with too many choices, we can get 'frozen' and have anticipatory regret of not making an alternative choice.





# WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

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Provide Clarity and Focus





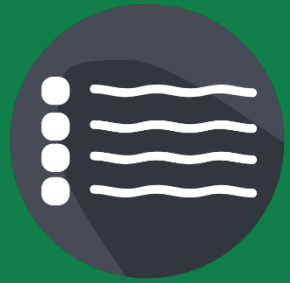


# WHERE DO WE GET STUCK?

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- When we have unanswered questions and believe we do not have enough information to make a decision.





# WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

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Provide information and statistics.

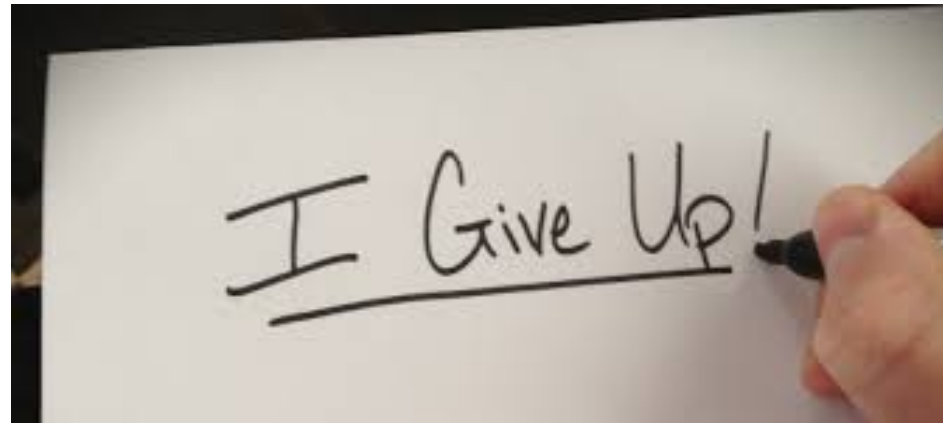




# WHERE DO WE GET STUCK?

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- When we do not feel we have any choices, we resign ourselves to an option that we may not agree with.





# WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

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## Inclusive Brainstorming

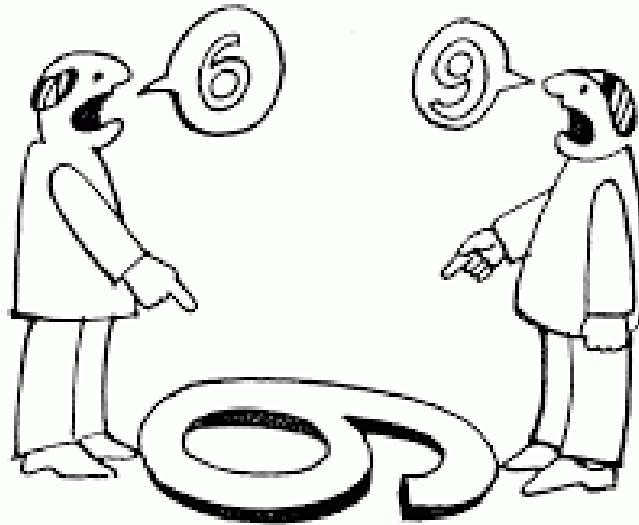


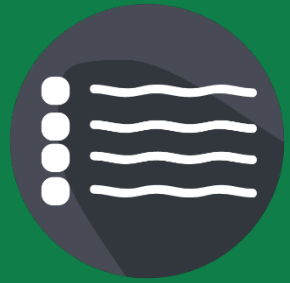


# WHERE DO WE GET STUCK?

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- When we believe our views and opinions are not being listened to, we can feel disrespected.



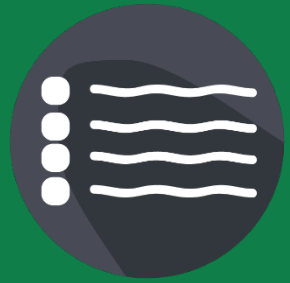


# WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

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## Active Listening





# ACTIVE LISTENING

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Validate: Acknowledge to the best of your ability their feelings and emotions

Get curious and ask open-ended questions: Tell me more about.... How do you see....?

Paraphrase: Use your own words to let the other person know what you think they said.

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