



Constructive Debate™

A Collaborative Approach to Building Better Ideas

Length: 1 Day | Credits: 7 PDUs | Talent Triangle - Leadership

Overview

To be successful as global competitors, leaders in today's organizations must establish and maintain an environment that supports the open exchange and exploration of ideas, leading to fuller participation, greater innovation, and better decisions. Healthy debate is sometimes discouraged in organizations that are conflict-averse. Then, in "the meeting after the meeting," people discuss their opinions and ideas — a discussion that might have offered or improved a good idea or prevented a bad one from being moved forward. To prevent this waste of intellectual capital, it is essential to model, encourage, and facilitate critical thinking, broad participation, diversity of opinions, and clear communication of ideas so that potential innovations first get a hearing and then undergo a thorough process of exploration and development. Minimizing the impact of internal competitiveness, defensiveness, and vested interests allow good ideas to become true innovations.

In this seminar, you will learn how to establish the conditions that encourage constructive debate and to eliminate those conditions that prevent potentially useful ideas from getting a hearing or allow poorly thought-through ideas to be implemented. Constructive Debate™ helps teams to express, engage, and explore ideas and eliminate the conditions that allow mediocre or bad ideas to pass through and/or prevent potentially useful ideas from getting a hearing.

Objectives and Outcomes

Participants will:

- Express your ideas and engage others clearly and directly
- Develop skills for constructive discussion and debate in your organization
- Invite others to explore, challenge, and test their own ideas or conclusions
- Offer a constructive, non-defensive response to others' challenges
- Establish and maintain an environment that supports constructive debate
- Use processes and tools that support constructive debate

Who Should Participate?

Leaders, managers, team members, and individual contributors whose ideas have an impact on the organization's ability to innovate and compete.

Content Outline

Overview and Positioning

- Discussion of organizational climate and needs
- Introduction to key definitions and concepts

Conditions for constructive debate

- Benchmark exercise
- Review of requirements for successful and constructive debate
- Constructive debate model

Introduction of ladder of inference and constructive debate skills

- Skill practice: expressing and engaging

Active practice in the skills of dialogue

- The art of dialogue

Summary of dialogue skills

- Transition to debate

Skill practice: exploring and challenging

- Active practice in the skills of dialogue and debate

Introduction to process tools

- Review of process tools that support constructive debate

Planning for constructive debate

- Introduction of planning tools
- Application to a specific upcoming opportunity

Conducting a constructive debate

- Practice and feedback in conducting a constructive debate

Next steps and commitments

- Review of key learnings and follow-up planning

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