



SPURWINK
going the distance

LEADING BY GOING THE DISTANCE

Session 3: Accountability – Giving Feedback

December 19, 2017

Starboard Leadership Consulting

Laura Mitchell

lm@starboardleadership.com

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Tasks

- Delegate work and roles/responsibilities
- Create motivating environments
- Coach employees up
- Build cohesive, effective teams
- Manage sideways and up

Goals

- Maximize what each employee has to offer
- While earning their loyalty
- And building their ownership and excitement for the work and results of the company



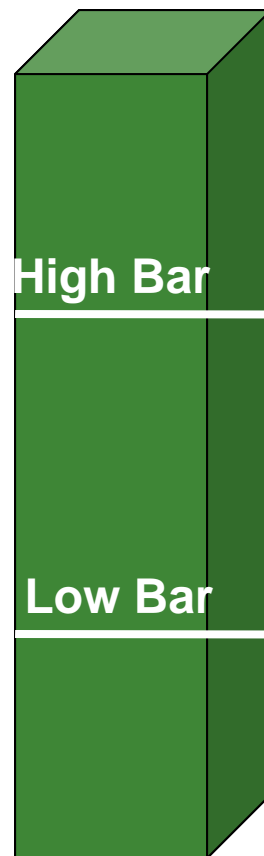
SPURWINK

PRINCIPLE #1: OWNERSHIP FOR RESULTS



SPURWINK

PRINCIPLE #2: CLEAR AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS



High Bar = the behavioral expectations you collectively agree on are critical to being smart and healthy

This gap = your culture differentiator and the source of most managerial challenges

Low bar = the minimum threshold for acceptable behavior (below which employment termination is an easy decision)



SPURWINK

DELEGATING REVIEW: OWNERSHIP & EXPECTATIONS

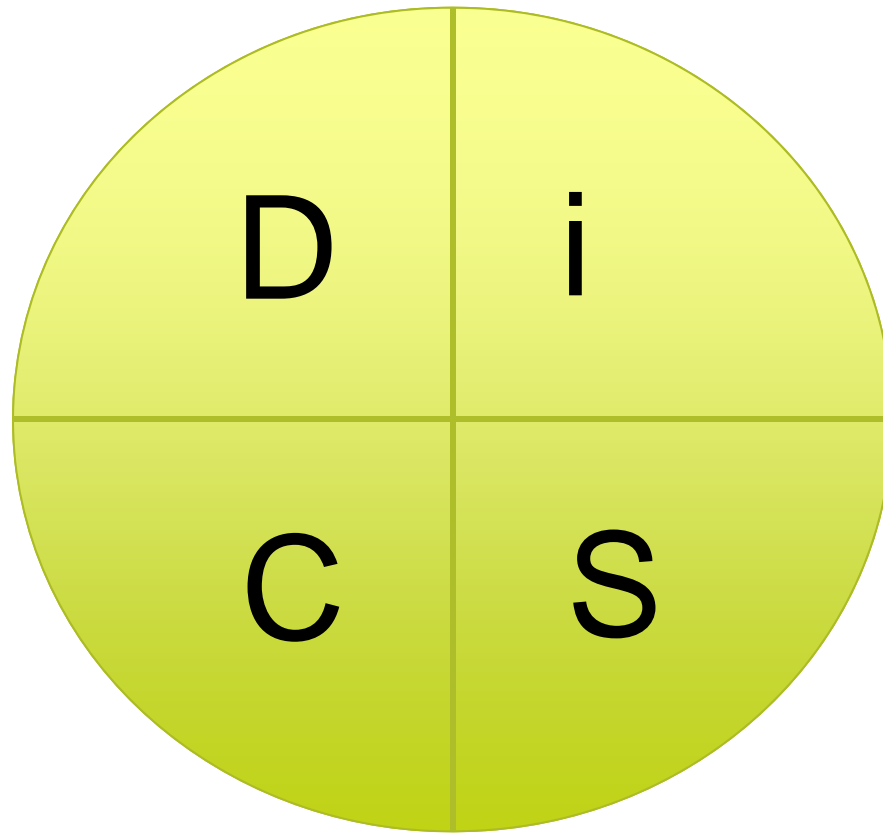
Seven pieces of information matter

1. What does success look like?
2. When is it due?
3. Who else needs to be involved?
4. What resources are available?
5. Why does the work matter?
6. What has worked well previously?
7. Are you really on the same page?



SPURWINK

PRINCIPLE #3: ADAPT YOUR APPROACH



TODAY'S FOCUS: PRINCIPLE #4

Consistent Accountability & Feedback



Making strategic choices habitually to talk about uncomfortable topics with another person to help them become more successful and strengthen your relationship.

WARM UP: HOLD THIS PERSON IN YOUR MIND

Think of an employee you have found challenging to coach or provide feedback to – a person whom you have avoided dealing with at times.

Perhaps this is someone:

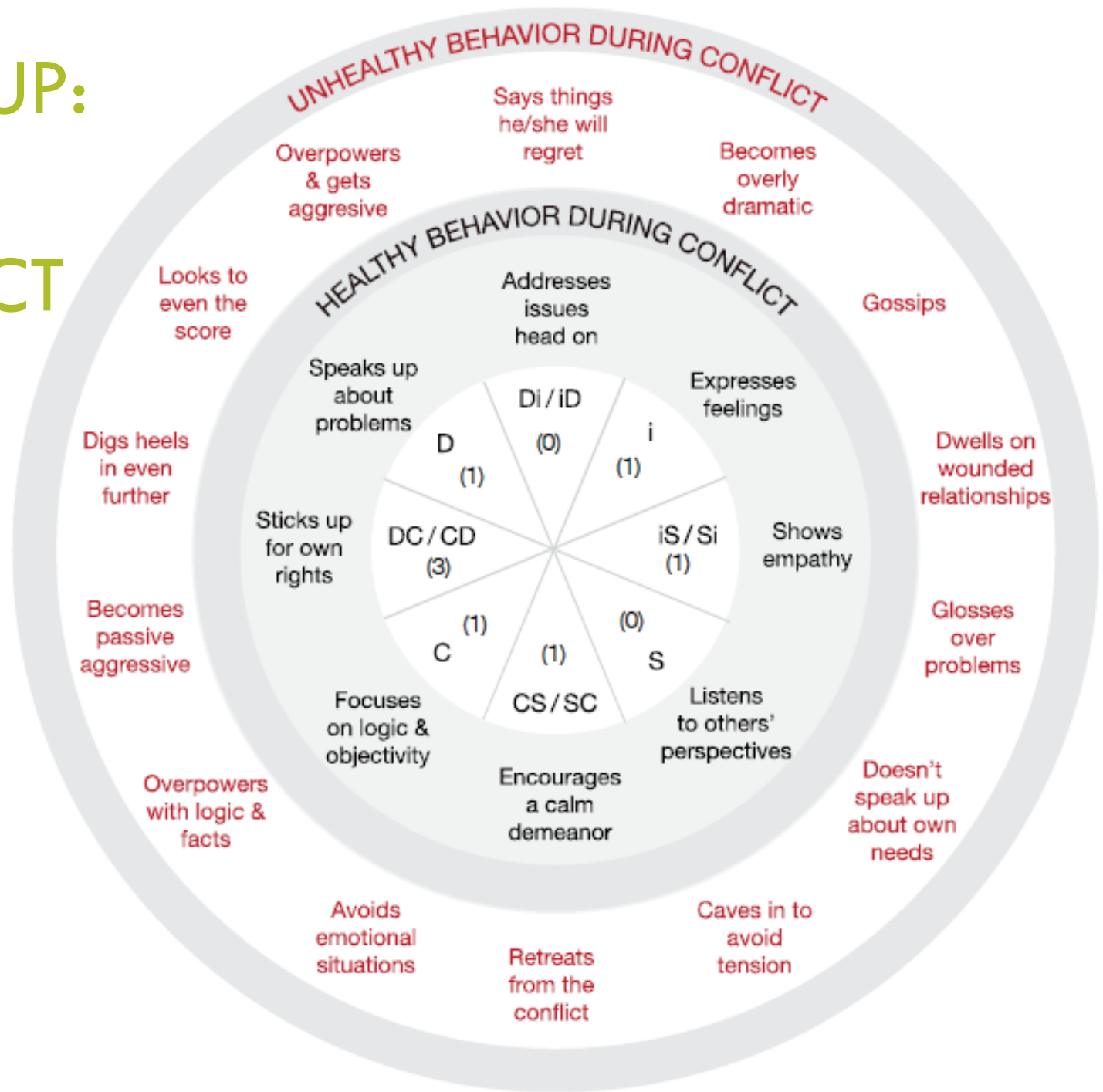
- You gave feedback to in the past and they became highly emotional or defensive
- Who you worry that honest feedback will “break”
- With whom you’re simply not sure how to bring up the issues
- You are currently working “around” by giving work associated with her position to others
- With whom it feels easier just to tolerate a lower level of performance – after all, they might leave in a year



SPURWINK

WARM UP: DiSC IN CONFLICT

Self
Assessment
What are
your natural
conflict
tendencies?



CONFLICT SELF ASSESSMENT

What other factors have shaped your approach to conflict?

- Our relationship to conflict is anchored in a history of habit...
- And the norms of our culture...
- And the norms within individual workplaces...
- And influenced by societal stereotypes.

CONFLICT SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Thinking about your past, were you always more of a fighter? Or did you tend to accommodate others?
- Look back over particular moments of conflict early in your life and career—were you rewarded or punished for your approach?
- When you think about conflict now, do you get a pit in your stomach and feel like fleeing? Or does your heart race and you feel the urge to jump in?
- The last time tension was high with someone at work or at home, how did you react?

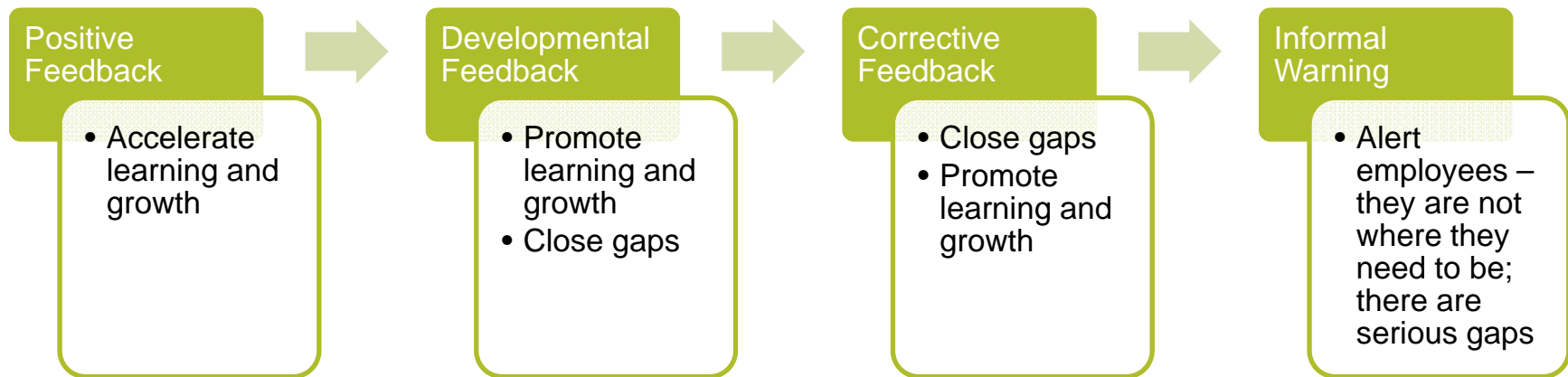


SPURWINK

GROWTH-FOCUSED FEEDBACK

Natural Consequences

The Start of Progressive Discipline



Most managers need to focus more here!

This is a Bottom-Line Conversation!



SPURWINK

TYPES OF FEEDBACK

- **Positive feedback**
 - Recognizes when an employee is doing well
- **Developmental (Constructive) feedback**
 - Shares ways a good employee could do even better
- **Corrective feedback**
 - Conveys things that must change in order for the employee to meet your expectations



WONDERFUL THINGS TO SAY OFTEN

...but not examples of effective positive feedback!

- *"I really value your input."*
- *"Great job everyone!"*
- ***"Thank you."***
- *"Wow, way to go!"*
- *"I really **appreciate** your work on this project!"*
- *You are awesome!!*



SPURWINK

HARMFUL THINGS TO SAY

...and also not examples of effective feedback

- *“What were you thinking?” (asked rhetorically)*
- *“I don’t know why we’re getting this information just before the meeting, but I guess we’ll have to go ahead and talk about it.”*
- *“Do you need me to do your job for you?”*
- *“Great job everyone, but remember to turn in your timesheets promptly and leave the building clean.”*




SPURWINK


BASIC FEEDBACK STRUCTURE

- 
- Name the issue
 - Describe the behavior you've observed in a short sentence

- 
- Give examples

- 
- State the impact of that behavior on you and/or others
 - When appropriate, probe for reasons why

- 
- Make a recommendation OR
 - Clearly describe your expectations moving forward

- 
- Follow-up after an appropriate interval of time if it's developmental or corrective feedback



PREPARING FOR FEEDBACK

- Reflect beforehand on what the real issue is and what you want to say.
- If you're fuzzy about what the real issue is and/or how to address it, talk to a colleague.
- Give the employee an appropriate amount of heads-up.
- Consider what you can do to make the environment as comfortable as possible.



SPURWINK

PREPARING FOR FEEDBACK

What type of issue is it?

WITH COLLEAGUES

- Task related
- Process related
- Relationship rooted
- Status driven

WITH EMPLOYEES

- Behavioral
- Performance related



SPURWINK

WHAT TYPE OF FEEDBACK DOES YOUR EMPLOYEE NEED?

<p>HIGH</p> <p><i>Job competence represents work results, the ability of the employee to accomplish his/her responsibilities and meet goals, which requires possessing the requisite skills.</i></p> <p>Job Competence</p>	<p>Developmental or corrective feedback focused on <u>behavior</u></p>	<p>Positive feedback plus stretch assignments</p>
	<p>Corrective feedback plus a structured plan for improving quickly</p>	<p>Developmental or corrective feedback focused on <u>job competence</u> plus skills training</p>
<p>LOW</p>	<p>Behaviors</p>	<p>HIGH</p>

How the employee conducts him/herself. Behaviors can include interpersonal skills, teamwork and collaboration, commitment, motivation, tone, approach, and other defined or implied organizational values or competencies.

PRAISE IS NOT POSITIVE FEEDBACK

- Praise is supposed to make your employees feel good and motivate them, but often it does just the opposite.
- **Employees don't trust the praise.** When does the shoe drop?
- **Employees resent it.** Managers often use positive feedback to overcome resistance to requests.
- **We praise the wrong things – not building the growth mind set**
- **We don't really praise anything:** “Great job” sounds like noise after a while.



SPURWINK

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Positive feedback is highly specific information delivered in such a manner to accelerate employee learning and growth.

The most underutilized tool for accelerating employee learning and growth



SPURWINK

POSITIVE FEEDBACK EXERCISE

- Identify one employee who works for you who would benefit from hearing directly and specifically from you about something you observe they are doing really well.
- Using the basic structure for feedback, prepare what you will say to them.
- With a partner, **role play** the positive feedback each of you wants to deliver.
- Give each other feedback on what you hear one another saying.



ACCOUNTABILITY CONVERSATIONS

The first step is all in your head!

Before you *say* anything

1. Determine what outcome matters to you most at this time.
 - What performance or behavior gap should you really address?
 - How do you unbundle a bunch of elements and decide what to address?
2. Decide whether to have the conversation.
3. Master your own stories!



SPURWINK

1. IDENTIFY THE ISSUES

CPR helps identify the issue you need to address

Content: The **first time** something happens (or you are addressing it), deal with the single event – the here and now.

Pattern: Pattern issues acknowledge that problems have a history. **Frequent and continued violations** of expectations affect the employee's predictability and eventually harm respect and trust.

Relationship: The employee has **repeatedly broken promises** and it's the string of disappointments that has caused you to lose trust in them.



SPURWINK

BEFORE YOU *SAY* ANYTHING: PERFORM CPR

Managers good at accountability conversations don't discuss repeated infractions as if each successive one was the first one.

1st time late = she's late = Content

2nd time late = failed to live up to a promise = Pattern

3rd time late = may have relationship issue and head to HR and discipline = Relationship



SPURWINK

BEFORE YOU *SAY* ANYTHING: PERFORM CPR

- Getting at the gist of an issue takes time and practice
 - If **pressured by time and hyped up emotions**, we can miss the real problem and stay on Content.
- Unbundle the problem.
 - **What is bothering you (or your team) the most?**
 - If you don't, you'll likely address the wrong target or too many targets.
 - Distill the issue to a **single sentence**.



EXPAND THE OPTIONS AFTER CPR BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING

- Expand the possible list of issues by **considering the consequences and the employee's intentions.**
 - What are the consequences to me?
 - To our relationship?
 - To the task?
 - To other stakeholders?
- Choose which issue you will address by asking **what you most want for an outcomes** for you, for others, for the relationship.



SPURWINK

EXAMPLE: CPR AND CONSEQUENCES

Imagine you have a staff specialist who promised to have her financial analysis to you by Tuesday, noon. She miscalculates how long it will take her and delivers it to you just before day's end on Wednesday. Being late is not necessarily the problem except that the analysis was due to go out in the Board Meeting packet mailed late Tuesday afternoon to the agency's Board. **You're worried that having to send along the financial analysis separately (and late) will make your department and senior leadership look bad.** It's also the third time that she has let you down **and you're beginning to wonder whether you can count on her.** Perhaps you'll now have to **supervise her more closely to make sure she stays on track** of her assignments and deadlines. **This will cost you precious time and will likely make her feel micromanaged.**

Each of these responses on your part is a consequence of the original act. Which one will you address? Her late? Department looks bad? Need to micromanage?

2. DECIDE WHETHER TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING

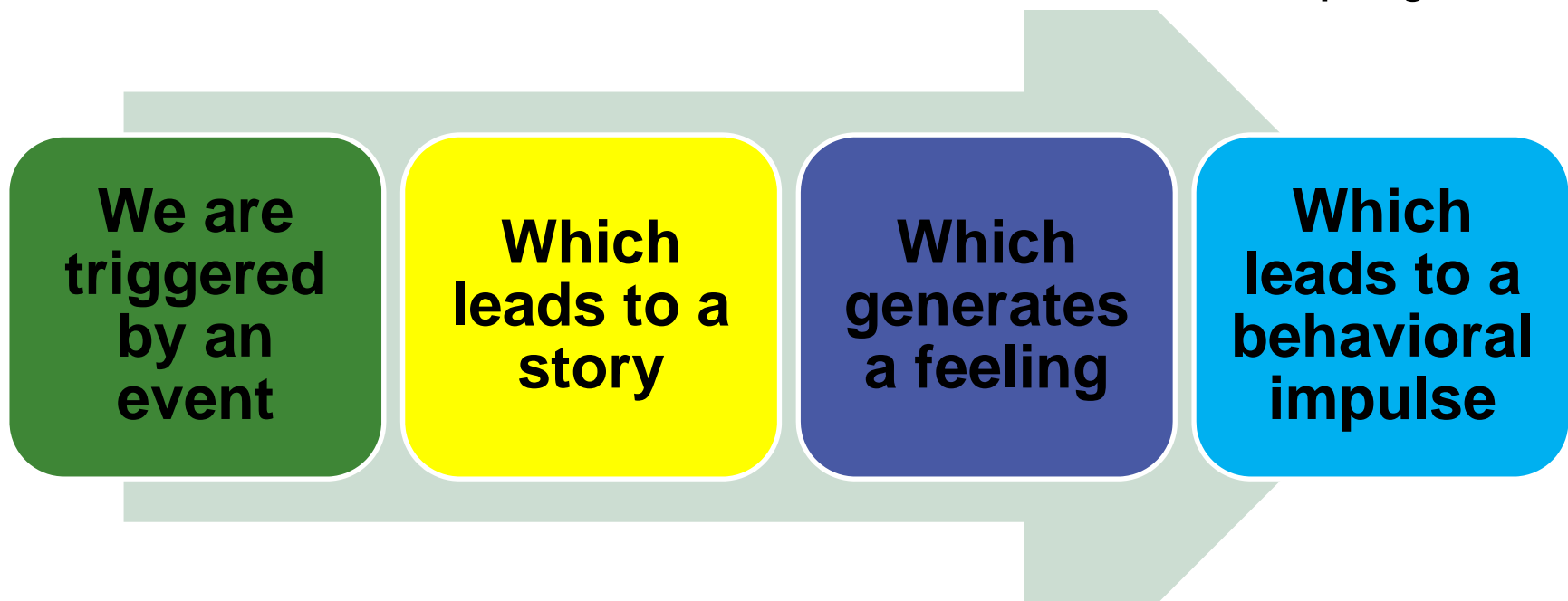
- Do nothing.
- Deal with it indirectly.
- ★ Deal with it directly.

The 4 Cs:
1. Carp
2. Cope
3. Converse
4. Cut Out



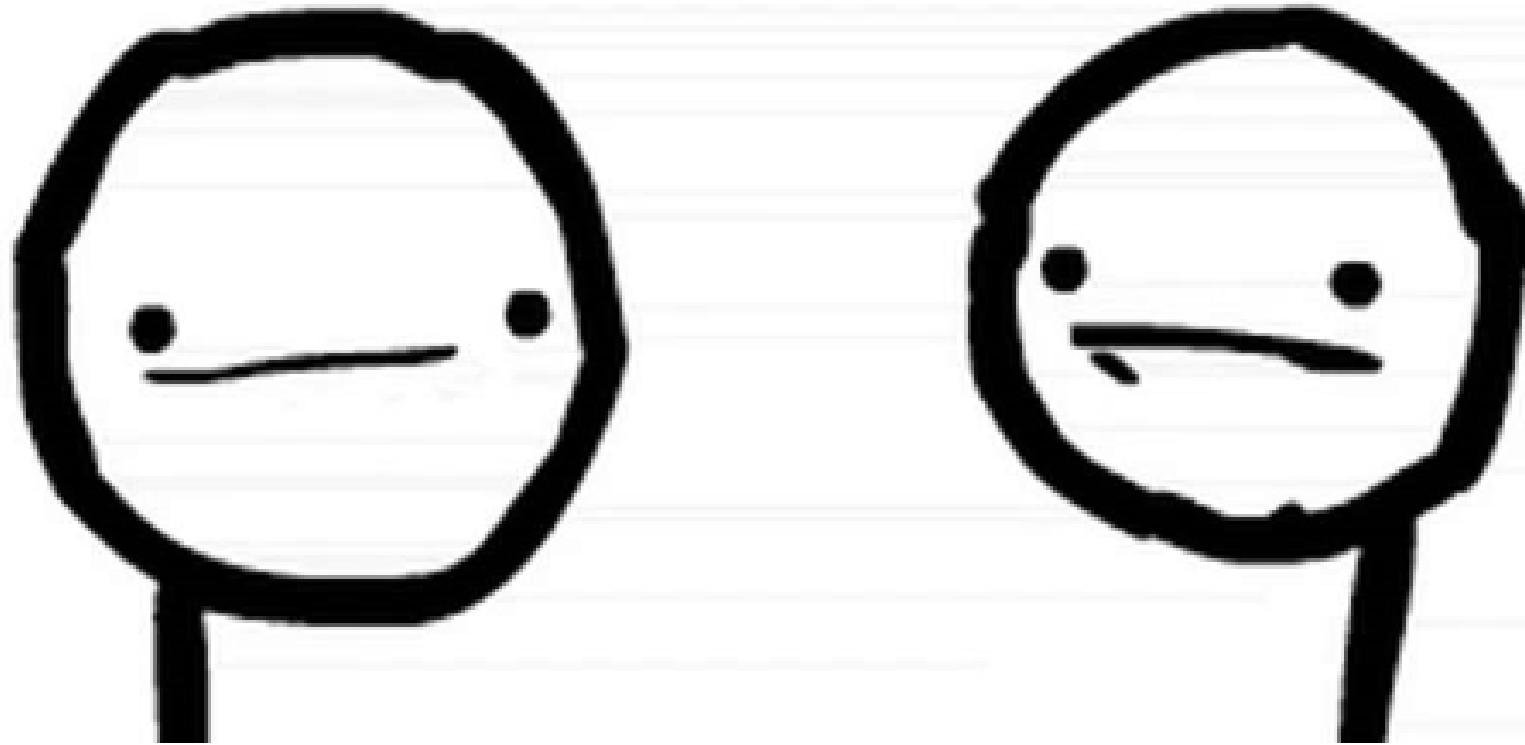
3. BEFORE YOU SAY ANYTHING MASTER YOUR STORIES

Don't ask, "What's the matter with that employee?"



Do ask, "Why would a reasonable, rational and decent employee do that?" This is the root of empathy. You're ready to have an accountability conversation when you can demonstrate empathy.

And Now You're Ready to Engage the Employee



DELIVERING FEEDBACK OVERVIEW

1. Start with safety. Sit on the same side of the table
 - Wait until you're calm enough to lay out the problem "in front of us" rather than "between us" or "solely on you."
 - Describe gap calmly and without judgment.
2. Describe the natural consequences/impact of his/her behavior
3. Paint a picture of what success looks like/expectations
4. Try to identify which consequences/impacts are motivating for the employee.
5. Model the openness you are expecting in return.



SPURWINK

MODEL APPROPRIATE VULNERABILITY

This is hard for me too

- By shifting from superhuman to mere mortal
- By moving away from the practice of giving armored feedback
- The goal is not to get comfortable with hard conversations, but to allow discomfort in the room



HOW NOT TO GET STARTED



- Don't serve up a sandwich.
- Don't play charades.
- Don't pass the buck upstairs.
- Don't ask employees to read your mind.



SPURWINK

DEVELOPMENTAL FEEDBACK EXERCISE

Scenario 1

You observe a new employee, Kim, in client reception snapping back at the mother of a pediatric client who is checking in 20 minutes late for her child's appointment. (She's been bumped from the schedule and now will be seen on a walk-in basis.) Kim says, in response to Mom's push back, "well, it's not our fault you were so late." This comment, in turn, evokes an angry tirade from Mom.

Scenario 2

You're observing Tim managing a client injury. Everything's going well until it's time to clean up and you notice that Tim doesn't put on gloves, which he's required to do (he straightened up the room, emptied the trash, stepped out once to consult with another staff member, etc.).

Scenario 3

It's come to your attention that Phil has been late several times over the past month in submitting his time sheet. This has resulted in folks from payroll having to track him down to determine his hours, causing extra work for the office at a time when they're under tight deadline.



SPURWINK

TIME TO ENGAGE THE EMPLOYEE

How to get started

1. Start with safety
2. Share your path
3. End with a question



SPURWINK

1. START WITH SAFETY: WARNING SIGNS

- People assess risk based on: **Are bad things....**
 1. Currently happening to them?
 2. About to happen to them?
- Watch for signs that safety is at risk
 1. You don't respect them (**no mutual respect**)
 2. You don't care about their goals (**no mutual purpose**)



SPURWINK

1. START WITH SAFETY: CONVERSATION OPENER

- Calmly describe the gap between what you were expecting and what was observed.
 1. **The first 30 seconds matters!**
 2. If your tone of voice, facial expression or words show disrespect, bad things are currently happening to the employee.
- Be as clear and simple as you can.



SPURWINK

1. SAFETY FIRST: CONTRASTING STATEMENT TOOL

- At the very first sign of fear, you have to diagnose the source and restore safety before you continue
- Use “**Contrasting Statements**” to establish and restore safety:
 - Imagine what the employee might have erroneously concluded.
 - Immediately explain that this is what you *don't* mean.
 - Then explain what you do mean.



SPURWINK

1. SAFETY: CONTRASTING

*I don't want you to think I'm unhappy with how we work together. Overall, I'm very satisfied. I just want to talk **about how we make decisions together.***

*I'm not saying it was wrong of you to disagree with me in the meeting. We need to hear everyone's ideas in order to make the best choice. It's just that **I think the team heard your tone and words as attacking.***



SPURWINK

1. SAFETY: CONTRASTING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CONVERSATION

*I'm sorry. I didn't mean to imply that you were doing it on purpose. **I believe you were unaware** of the impact you were having, which is why I wanted to bring it up in the first place.*



SPURWINK

1. SAFETY: CONTRASTING

If it's OK with you, I'd like to spend a couple of minutes talking about how you handled that disgruntled client this morning. My goal is to come up with an approach that we're both comfortable with.

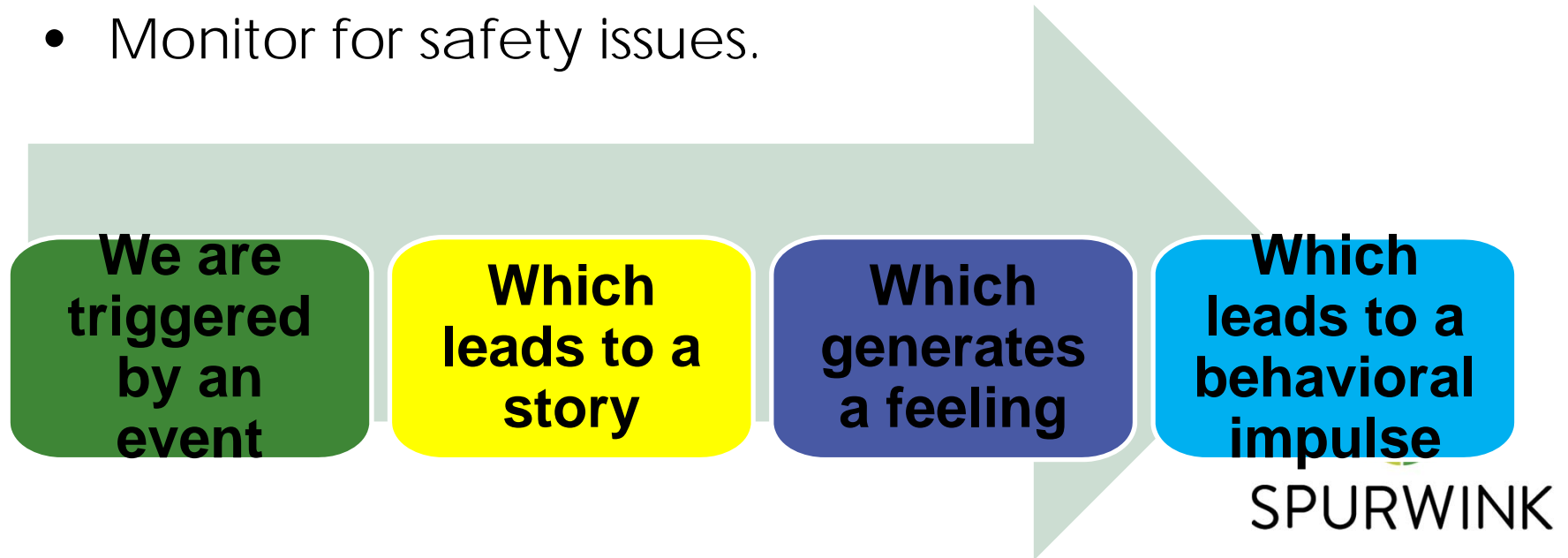
*I don't think we're talking about a huge problem, but I do think that **with a couple of small changes**, you would have an easier time dealing with clients that push back like that woman did this morning, and I will feel comfortable that we're not adding another layer to the problem.*



SPURWINK

2. SHARE YOUR PATH

- Don't lead with your story or conclusion
- Begin with the facts that are happening outside of your head. Explain **what** not why.
- Tentatively share your story. Avoid absolutes.
 - 'I thought we agreed' ...not, 'You said'
 - 'I was wondering if' ...not, 'Its clear'
- Monitor for safety issues.



3. END WITH A QUESTION

Here's the simplest diagnostic question you can end with:

“What happened?”

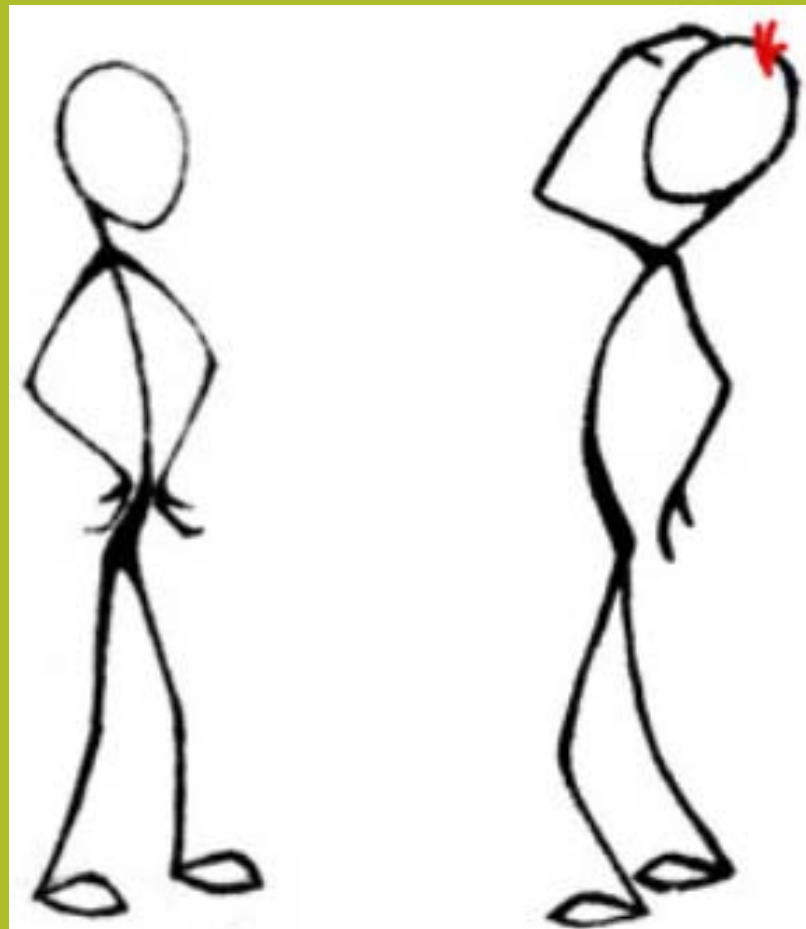
“Did I miss something?”

“Did you run into a problem of some kind?”



SPURWINK

Scenarios



SPURWINK

SCENARIO 1: GROUP OF 4

What is your opening line?

Stacy, an employee who works for you, failed to complete an important quality check. You observed the gap, decided to deal with it, and tried to determine the right problem to discuss. Since this was the first infraction, you've decided to talk about the content: she didn't complete the quality check. You admire Stacy and so have imputed good motive. How will you start the conversation?



SPURWINK

SCENARIO 2: GROUP OF 4

What is your opening line?

Your office assistant has double-booked you for appointments several times in the last month. Yesterday, you received a call from another department head's assistant wanting to confirm a meeting date with you directly. She indicated that she wanted to make sure your calendar was, in fact, clear because your participation in the meeting was important. How will you start a conversation with your office assistant? What will you say?



SPURWINK

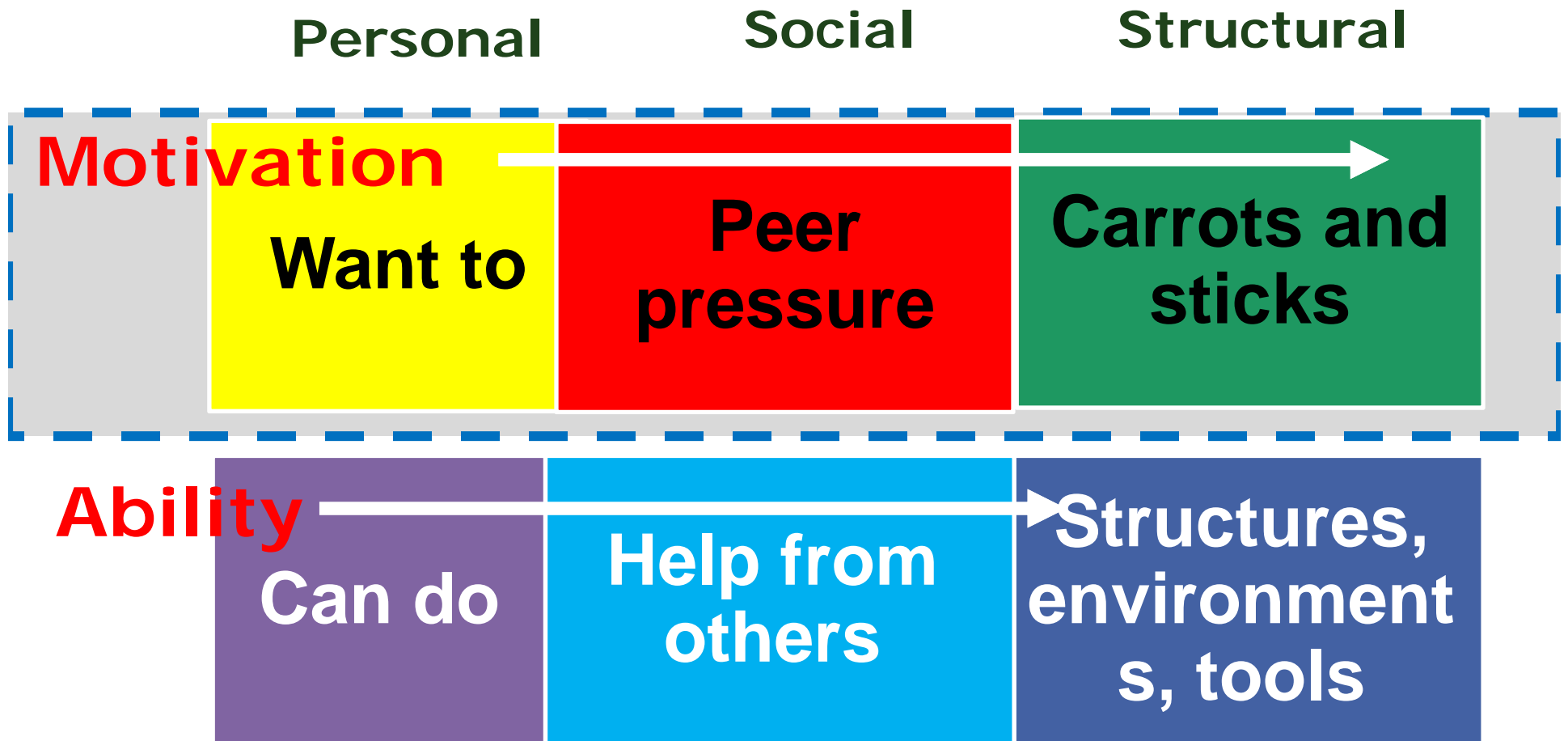


SPURWINK

NOW THAT YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CONVERSATION? WHAT DO YOU DO?



EXPLORE THE SOURCES OF MOTIVATION



SPURWINK

CAN YOU MAKE IT EASIER? DETERMINE THE ABILITY BLOCKS

Personal

Social

Structural

Motivation

Want to

Peer pressure

Carrots and sticks

Ability

Can do

Help from others

Structures, environments, tools



MAKE IT SAFE TO SEARCH TOGETHER



- Ask for permission
- Solicit feedback
- Prime the pump

ROLE PLAY

- Is that too hard for you?



SPURWINK

FLEXIBILITY AND FOCUS

- **Stay flexible**

- Note the new problem.
- Select the right problem to stay focused on: the original problem, the new one, or both.
- Resolve the new problem and return to the original issue.

- **Stay focused**

- Deal with one problem at a time.
- Consciously choose to deal with new issues; don't allow them to be forced on you.



SPURWINK

Loss of Safety

When an employee starts to back out of the conversation or push too hard, you need to reestablish safety. You will never resolve the topic at hand, if the employee feels unsafe talking about it.

Use the skill of **Contrasting** to restore mutual respect and shared purpose.

Loss of Trust

Broken promises are violations of trust and respect. **Never let trust issues slide.**

Remember this sentence, **"If something comes up, let me know as soon as you can."**

New Issue

You're talking about an expectation gap and the employee does something even worse during the conversation.

Bookmark the original topic and focus on the new one. Say, **"I'd like to pause our original conversation and talk about what just happened."**

Explosive Emotions

What if the employee becomes quite emotional (angry, frustrated, sad, anxious)?

How do you deal with other people's stories?

Ensure your safety.

Go straight to the emotion.

Explore the other person's path to action.

Use **AMPP** to listen deeply.

AMPP

When we are willing to talk about an employee's thoughts and feelings without mocking, squelching or attacking them, they are much more likely to calm down. Once they've calmed down, they're much more likely to be able to express their own thoughts rationally and listen to ours.

Ask - "What's going on?"

Mirror – describe the difference between what he said and how he said it

Paraphrase – put in your own words what you think the employee is telling you (don't parrot!)

Prime – guess what the other person may be thinking



SPURWINK

SCENARIO 3: GROUP OF 4

You have asked Keith, a person who reports to you, why he failed to attend the computer training that he had agreed to sit in on. He explains that he had intended to be there, but “something came up.” You can’t tell whether his response is code for a motivation problem or an ability problem, so you ask him exactly what prevented him from keeping his promise. You’re thinking that if it was anything other than a family emergency, you’re not inclined to be sympathetic. You know Keith hates computer training, and he really needs it. You had gone out of your way to arrange the schedule so Keith could attend the training, and now he’s telling you that something came up.



SPURWINK

REACHING CLOSURE

- Do a final check for motivation and ability.
- Summarize the expectation moving forward (what).
- Be clear about timeframe (immediately or by a certain date).
- If there are actions you will take summarize these as well.



SPURWINK

SCENARIOS 4-5: GROUPS OF 4

What do you do when you don't actually see the problem?

Coworkers complain endlessly, saying things like, "He's impossible to work with," and, "He can't be trusted," and, "He never listens to feedback." How do you handle hearsay?

We're making a break from the past. It used to be that we tolerated wide differences in behavior when it came to customer service. But now we're supposed to hold people accountable to a common set of standards. How do you change the rules in the middle of the game?



SPURWINK

SCENARIOS 6-7: GROUPS OF 4

A woman who works for me is always messing up the details. She's not bad enough to be called incompetent, but she's so borderline that you always worry about her work. What can you do?

What if the person is totally out of line most of the time but threatens to file a grievance if you confront him? And the worst of it is that because of his special circumstances, he'd probably win. Then what?

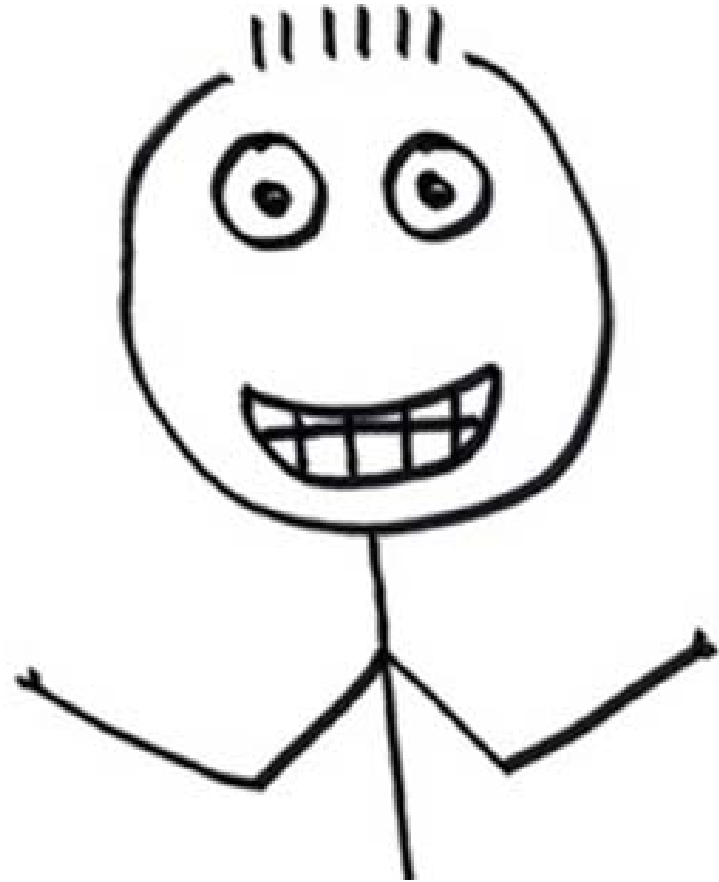


SPURWINK



HOMEWORK: Have 20 positive feedback conversations; 1 developmental or corrective.

THE END



Reference Books:

1. *Crucial Conversations*
2. *Vital Smarts*
3. *Giving Effective Feedback, Harvard Business Review*



SPURWINK