

Courageous Conversation Script Builder

Prepare your feedback. Step in with clarity, courage, and care.

Use this tool to prepare what you will actually say — before you walk in. Work through each step of the ALIGN model and write your own language. Not a script to recite. A structure to anchor you.

- A** **Acknowledge**
Set the tone. Name the relationship.

- L** **Lay it out**
State the behaviour. Specific, not general.

- I** **Impact**
Connect behaviour to what it costs.

- G** **Gain agreement**
Invite their perspective. Listen first.

- N** **Next steps**
Co-create what changes and when.

A) Acknowledge

PURPOSE

Set the tone. Recognise the relationship, effort, and that feedback takes courage on both sides.

PROMPTS / STARTERS

“I value our working relationship, and that is why I want to talk about this.”

“This may feel uncomfortable, but it is important to me that we have this conversation.”

Your Script:

L) Lay it out

PURPOSE

Present the facts clearly and neutrally. Avoid judgment — only what you observed.

PROMPTS / STARTERS

“In yesterday's meeting, I noticed...”

“On [date], when [situation happened], you [specific behaviour].”

“In the last two [reports/presentations/visits], I observed...”

Your Script:

I) Impact

PURPOSE

Connect the behaviour to its effect on you, the team, clients, or organisational values.

PROMPTS / STARTERS

“Because collaboration is one of our values, this had the effect of...”

“This caused [emotion] because it [effect on me/team/client].”

“When this happens, the result is...”

Your Script:

G) Gain agreement

PURPOSE

Invite their perspective. Create shared understanding before moving forward.

PROMPTS / STARTERS

“How did you see it?”

“What part of this resonates, and what feels different from your perspective?”

“Can we agree on what happened so we can move forward?”

Your Script:

N) Next steps

PURPOSE

Co-create clear, actionable commitments with accountability and support.

PROMPTS / STARTERS

“What steps can we take to avoid this in future?”

“What support from me would make this easier?”

“Let us define what success looks like so we both know when we have achieved it.”

Your Script:

Remember: After a feedback conversation, take a moment to reflect on what happened and what you want to carry forward. Use the Post-Conversation Debrief in Hold the Room to make the learning stick.

The goal is not a perfect script. It is the clearest, most honest version of what you need to say. This is the structure that holds you when the conversation gets hard.