

Episode 61: How do I tell someone to do something?



No one enjoys these conversations but some basic rules make them easier.

1. Why is this so important?

How often have you told someone something and “they didn’t get it”?

Or you need someone to do something and they don’t want to?

These are 2 types of difficult conversations – ones you start and ones they start.

Ones you start are typically about clearer direction or bad news. The other will be about issues.

Both require clarity and listening but we will focus on the first today.

Either way, you are either not having the difficult conversation or are about to.

You have to make sure your message is both heard and understood.

2. The conversation – 6 stage process

1. Start with small talk - you need to get the meeting into a conversation.
2. Ask an appropriate series of questions that explores the area.
3. Identify the gap between what you want and what they understand.
4. When the gap is clear, express clearly what you need to be done.
5. Let them ask questions and get clarity about your request.
6. Agree a date to check the progress.

3. Biggest problem you can have.

The biggest challenge is when what you are asking or telling is not clear.

You must be clear about the outcome you want and be able to say it simply.

Don’t look for clever words – look for clear unambiguous clarity.

If they don’t get it, it’s your fault not theirs.

Bottom line: Sometimes you need to say what you want and how you want it. Clever words obscure your needs. Listen to their response and understand it – it might tell you something about what you’re asking.