

Before you start...

Take a slow breath in, then a longer breath out. Repeat 3 times...



Remember:

Don't react to the burr.
Use **BUR**!



TIP: Use with

The **BUR** Framework
Why difficult people stick with us



B

BEHAVIOUR

What am I actually seeing or hearing?

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Avoid labels and judgements such as:

- ✗ Difficult ✗ Negative ✗ Defensive
- ✗ Rude ✗ Uncooperative

Instead, describe the observable behaviours

What specifically have I seen them do?

What specifically have I heard them say?

What's the impact?

What impact is this behaviour having on:

- ☐ Me ☐ The Team ☐ Customers
- ☐ Performance ☐ Relationships ☐ Results

Notes:



U

UNDERSTAND

What might be driving this behaviour?

Get curious before you get critical

What might be driving this behaviour?

- ☐ Pressure ☐ Stress ☐ Fear
- ☐ Conflicting priorities ☐ Lack of skill
- ☐ Lack of confidence ☐ Uncertainty
- ☐ Feeling unheard ☐ Other:

What else could be true?

What might I not yet understand?

If I were looking at this situation with curiosity rather than judgement, what would I notice?



R

RESPOND

How do I want to respond

Intentionally choose your response

What outcome do I want from this conversation?

What leadership qualities do I want to demonstrate?

- ☐ Calm ☐ Clarity
- ☐ Courage ☐ Compassion
- ☐ Curiosity ☐ Accountability
- ☐ Respect

What questions could I ask?

What boundary, message, or expectation may need to be communicated?

My Leadership Commitment

The conversation may not go exactly as planned. That's ok.

- ☐ Stay curious
- ☐ Listen to understand
- ☐ Choose my response
- ☐ Focus on behaviours, not judgements
- ☐ Keep it constructive

COMMON LEADERSHIP TRAPS

- ✗ Mind reading
- ✗ Making assumptions
- ✗ Taking it personally
- ✗ Reacting emotionally
- ✗ Focussing on blame

INSTEAD

- ✓ Observe
- ✓ Get curious
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Clarify expectations
- ✓ Choose your response

Want to strengthen your leadership impact?

Great leadership isn't about changing difficult people. It's about understanding behaviour, leading with intention, and creating better conversations.

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