

FOUR STEPS TO HAVING EMPATHIC-LED CONVERSATIONS

1 CREATE HEADSPACE
Position your idea so it engages the emotional decision-maker.

Consider the question:

I'd like to float an idea that could help you and the business in a way that might surprise you. Do you have headspace to talk about this?

2 INVITE FEARS, UNCERTAINTIES, AND DOUBTS
Ask questions that invite undiscussables

Consider these questions:

- What risks do you perceive?
- Even though we're just floating this idea, what could worry you about it?
- How do you feel about that?

3 BUILD BRIDGES FROM EMOTIONAL TO RATIONAL
Enable insights about the thinking process

Consider these questions:

- How do you compare the cost of the problem with the cost of doing something?
- What's the tipping point that would mean it was time to do something?
- How will you decide whether to do something or not?

4 ALIGN ACTION TO VALUES
Have conversations that align with values

Consider these questions:

- That would also mean you (avoid a problem or maximized a solution).
- That makes sense because as you said....
- That also aligns with what you're doing...

THE KEY QUESTION

Does your solution offer an escape hatch to a probable imminent and probable "loss" scenario?

YES

The emotional decision-maker is your friend, therefore:

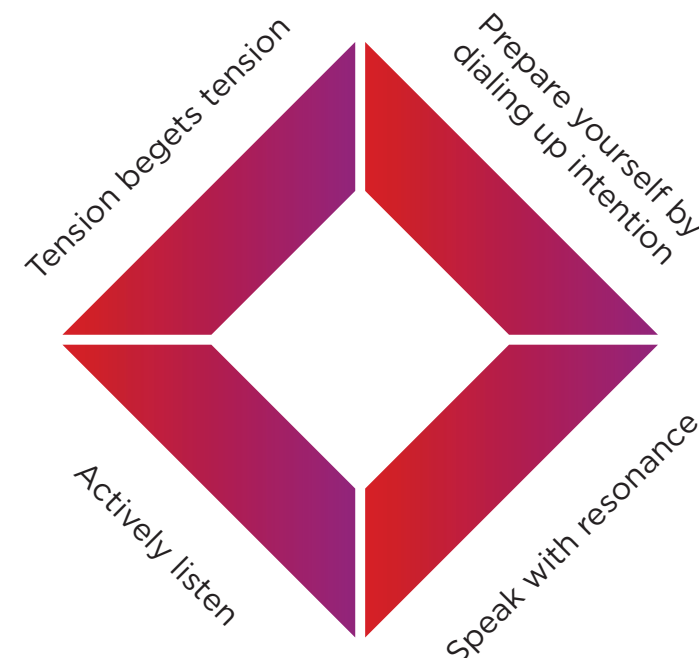
- Empathize
- Investigate
- Provide insight
- Differentiate
- Close
- Implement solution

NO

The emotional decision-maker is not your friend, therefore:

- Invite fears, uncertainty, and doubt about acting
- Ask coaching-style questions that build bridges from emotional to rational decision-making
- Offer support

HOW WE SPEAK MATTERS



COACH FOR CONFIDENCE TO ACT

The emotional decision-maker exaggerates the personal risks of taking action*

A lack of confidence to proceed

A lack of motivation to proceed



FLIGHT



FIGHT



FREEZE



ENGAGE