Dialogue in Leadership
Communicating Across Conflict

CAMPUS DIALOGUE & DELIBERATION
HTTP://CDD.UCDAVIS.EDU
HARING 1153

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What does Campus Dialogue & Deliberation do?
Objectives

- Understand what dialogue is
- Learn how to ask strong questions to communicate across conflict
- Practice applying the questions
Icebreaker

• Name
• Pronouns
• Major
• What’s one word you think of when you hear “dialogue”?
What is dialogue?
Hal Saunders

"Dialogue is a process of genuine interaction through which human beings listen to each other deeply enough to be changed by what they learn...No participant gives up their identity, but each recognizes enough of the other's valid human claims so that they will act differently toward the other."

Dr. Harold Saunders, Founder of Sustained Dialogue Institute (SDI)
## The Three D’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual and/or conversational</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>Collaborative, towards a sense of community understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presents ideas, often in a “clean” or “sophisticated” way</td>
<td>Succeed or win, often by proving others’ logic to be ‘wrong’</td>
<td>Re-evaluate and acknowledge assumptions and biases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share information, seek ‘neutral’ conclusions</td>
<td>Focus on ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ through evidence</td>
<td>Bring out areas of ambivalence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek answers and solutions</td>
<td>Look for weakness</td>
<td>Look for shared meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give answers, often those in accordance with academic standards</td>
<td>Search for flaws in others’ logic; critique their position</td>
<td>Discover collective meaning; re-examine and destabilize long held ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen to find places of disagreement or to gather rational pieces of an argument</td>
<td>Listen to form counterarguments</td>
<td>Listen without judgment and with a view to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid areas of strong conflict and difference</td>
<td>Focus on conflict and difference as an advantage</td>
<td>Articulate areas of conflict and difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retain relationships</td>
<td>Disregard relationships</td>
<td>Build relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid silence</td>
<td>Use silence to gain advantage</td>
<td>Honor silence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Dialogue vs. Discussion table was adapted from Differentiating Dialogue from Discussion: A Working Model (Wardle and Sevy, 1997) and Identifying the Differences Between Dialogue, Discussion, and Debate (Vanderheiden, 2002, adapted from Koontz Nunn, 2009).*
Foundation

ADAPTED FROM SUSTAINED DIALOGUE INSTITUTE
Deep Listening

- Be present, focusing on the moment

Suspension of Judgment

- Develop the ability to witness what others are saying without evaluating

Identifying Assumptions & Biases

- Make assumptions known
- “Tell me more about that”

Reflection & Inquiry

- use 'I' statements

Individual’s Lived Experiences
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Dominant Group</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>European descent</td>
<td>Other ancestral background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women and intersex folx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Cisgender men and women</td>
<td>Trans, non-binary (NB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Heterosexual individuals</td>
<td>Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual (bi), Asexual (ace), Pansexual (pan), and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class/Socioeconomic Status (SES)</td>
<td>Middle-class, wealthy, those with reliably wealthy social networks</td>
<td>Working class, low-income, chronically impoverished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship &amp; Nationality</td>
<td>Legal citizens born in country; those with green cards</td>
<td>Undocumented, refugees, asylees, Immigrants from minority dominant countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability &amp; Mental Health</td>
<td>Able-bodied folx, neurotypical folx</td>
<td>Developmental disability, physical disability, those with mental health issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>Those represented by representatives or well-established lobbying groups; those with access, knowledge, and time to influence political processes</td>
<td>Those excluded from process (gerrymandered areas, convicted felons); those without influential representatives or lobbying groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Young and middle-aged adults</td>
<td>Elderly, teenagers, children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tools

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE QUALITIES OF AN EFFECTIVE LEADER?

HOW DOES DIALOGUE FIT IN?
Dialogue in Leadership

- *Respect* your team
- Incorporate *different perspectives* into your work
- Celebrate *diversity*
- *Challenge* your own beliefs
- *Improve* team dynamics
- Learn how to have *healthy conflicts*
“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”
– George Bernard Shaw
Intent vs. Impact

A good rule of thumb: Ask for clarification before assuming malintent.

The Dynamics of Intent & Non-Intent

1. Makes initial statement with potential to cause hurt

2. Emotional reaction - but with conflict coaching realises trigger and is able to over-ride emotional response

3. Response - explains pain but recognises likely to be no intent

4. Emotional reaction to suggestion may have caused harm - but with coaching takes ownership - apologises for unintended hurt

5. No escalation

2 C’s: Intervening in Tense Conversation

1. **Clarify** the speaker’s comment to get a sense of what they are actually saying

2. **Change the conversation to experiences**
   - What do you think this means to you?
   - How do you think it has affected your perspective?
   - What did you think/feel at the time?

Identifying what people don't say can be just as important as hearing what they are saying.
Ask open-ended questions from a place of curiosity, not suspicion

Example:
Someone says they don’t want to vaccinate their child.

Immediate response:
“What do you mean? That’s ridiculous! Do you know how much of a health risk that is??!!?!”

How can you rephrase your response using the 2 C’s?
Application
Four Corners Activity
You can only be successful in society if you work hard enough.
Remember...

• Inquire from a place of curiosity, not judgment.
• Ask for and share about life experiences that have shaped hopes, concerns, values, and views.
• Note uncertainties, gray areas, and complexities for self and others.
• Ask and explain about meanings of words, especially if they are charged.
Debrief

• What stood out to you from that experience?
• When do you see yourself using these tactics as a leader?
• How does this connect to socially conscious leadership?
• What surprised you?
• What do you want to talk further about?
Revisiting our Objectives

- Understand **what dialogue is**
- **Learn how to ask strong questions** to communicate across conflict
- **Practice** applying the questions

Dialogue allows us to
- seek mutual understanding
- reassess our earlier assumptions
- allow ourselves to be changed
- gain new understandings based on the experiences of others

Questions?
Thoughts?
Stay in Touch

Campus Dialogue & Deliberation

http://cdd.ucdavis.edu

Facebook: https://tinyurl.com/DavisCDD

Come find us! Haring 1153

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"DIALOGUE EQUIPS STUDENTS WITH COMMUNICATION SKILLS NECESSARY FOR INCREASINGLY DIVERSE ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND WORK ENVIRONMENTS."

SUSTAINED DIALOGUE INSTITUTE