

# ONE-ON-ONE CONNECTIONS

## Appreciative Conversations



*Session Purpose:* As we reset, evaluate your approach to communication through a positive lens or facilitate this same exploration with your team member.

### Objectives:

- Explore appreciative conversations
- Practice flipping from the typical negative frame to the positive
- Understand how language choice and framing is critical to effective communication

*Session Overview:* This framework will help guide individuals through a more positive approach to conversations.

Ponder the four types of conversations depicted by Dr. Jackie Stavros and Dr. Cheri Torres in their fascinating book, *Conversations Worth Having*:

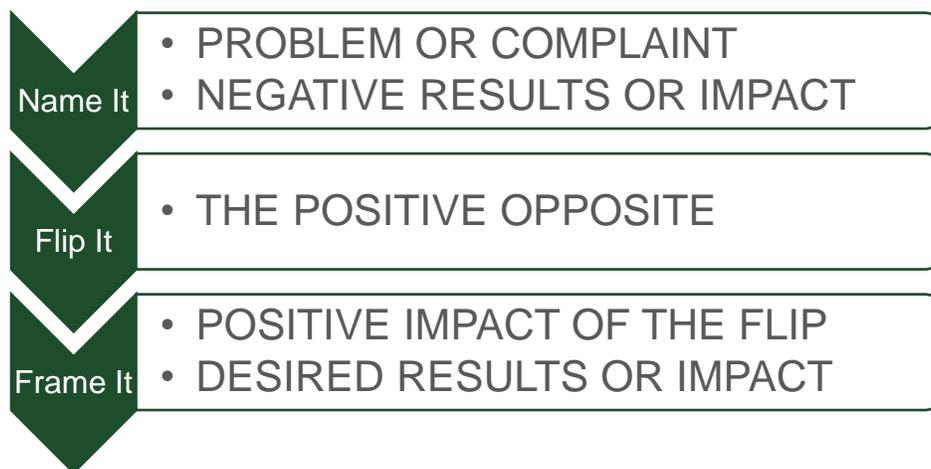
Nature of Conversation	Inquiry Based	Statement Based
Appreciative	“Conversations Worth Having”: Add value through appreciative questions & dialogue. E.g. How can we take what we learned & make the next time we do this even better?	Affirmative: Add value with appreciative comments & statements. E.g. What a great job you did with the Baker account, you should feel proud!
Depreciative	Critical: Devalue through depreciative questions & defensive interactions. E.g. Who the %\$@ made this stupid mistake?	Destructive: Devalue through depreciative comments & statements. E.g. If I have to work with that idiot again, I am going to quit, you know they only got the job because they know the dean!

Adapted from Stavros & Torres, 2018, p. 29

Which conversations do you tend to participate in and how do these make you feel?

Having more “Conversations Worth Having” can have marked positive impacts on the workplace and you! Here’s how to do so—positive reframes & generative questions.

1. We are incredibly adept at complaining & droning on about what we don’t want in a situation, this is how our brains are hardwired, so it is natural & normal. With intentional practice, we can create a new habit. Instead, when we can focus on what we actually WANT, the positive image of that outcome can compel us towards it. Practice flipping to a positive reframe of the situation with Stavros’ & Torres’ model.



Your Turn

**NAME IT:** Detail a situation that you are struggling with, a problem or thing you don’t want. E.g. I never get the credit I deserve.

**FLIP IT:** Describe the situation if it were the opposite. What do you want? E.g, I receive all the credit I deserve for my job well done.

**FRAME IT:** What is the impact if the positive were in place? What is the desired outcome? Proceed as though the positive opposite is in place. E.g. I feel valued & excited to do my job. I create positive impact with my job performance thanks to this engaged energy.

2. Use generative questions which build energy & creativity through curiosity, an open mind, & a search for positive in the situation. “Generative questions focus on the best of what is and *what might be*” (Stavros & Torres, 2018, p. 55). These



types of questions release us to create transformational results instead of the same old status quo outcomes.

### Your Turn

For the situation you explored above, compile a list of generative questions that you can ask yourself, team members, confidants, anyone involved in the situation, etc. E.g.s Is that true...always? What would be different for you if this situation were the positive opposite? Are there any positive unforeseen outcomes from the situation? How can you point your strengths at a positive outcome? Who could support you or your situation?

