Detox your team
A low-conflict language for discussing and managing toxic behavior

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Why explore toxic behaviors?

Blaming
Defensiveness

Stonewalling
Contempt

What is your ‘common’ toxic behavior?

What brings it out?
Antidotes for blame

- Are you willing to go on without blaming?
- Address the behavior, do not attack the person
- Soften the start-up
- Find the request behind the criticism
- Ventilate to coach
- Use “I feel … I want” statements.
Antidotes for defensiveness

Active listening – use when team are not hearing each other accurately. “Bob, what did you hear Jim say?”

2% rule
Antidotes for stonewalling

Check for flooding and soothe
Get permission to proxy / speak for team member
Address fears of what will happen
Encourage engagement
Antidotes for contempt

- Are you willing to resolve this without sarcasm?
- Ventilate to coach
- Check for flooding and soothe
- Use “I feel … I want…” statements
Call to Action: What will you do with your teams?
Protocol for Dealing with Toxic Behaviors

Research says that teams that have a conflict protocol perform better than teams who don’t.

Conflict Protocol Questions

- Think about your ideal team. How would that team handle conflicts and disagreements?
- What are some behaviors you want to have happen when conflict occurs?
- What are some things you do not want to happen when conflict occurs?
- How will you hold one another accountable for these agreements?
- What will you do if someone breaks an agreement?
Some general antidotes to toxic behaviors

- Educate your teams on their impact
- Call them when you see them; agree to proceed without them
- Create a conflict protocol with your teams
- Train your team to deal with toxins, e.g., COIN

Increase Positivity During Conflict using COIN (Context, Observation, Impact, Next)
• **Context** puts the event or behavior in a time frame and setting so that it can be remembered. Where and when did this occur?

• **Observation** describes the actions and behavior that were witnessed, without evaluation or interpretation of the intent.

• **Impact** speaks to the reason for concern. Describe in a neutral way the impact on you, other people, the work, the organization.

• **Next** – a request for change. Establish agreements and understandings about what will be different in the future.

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**References**

• John Gottman. *Why Marriages Succeed Or Fail*.


• John Gottman. *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*.

• Virginia Satir. Lots of stuff.

• CRR Global. *Organization and Relationship System Coaching (ORSC)*.

• CRR Global. *Increasing Positivity During Conflict using COIN (Context, Observation, Impact, Next)*.