



Restorative Conversations

We all have moments at work where we either want to scream or stomp a little! When communicating with colleagues becomes difficult or near impossible we need a new strategy to overcome the 'communication hurdle'.

A brilliant tool for achieving this goal is called Restorative Practice, or as I like to call them restorative conversations.

The restorative conversation process has its foundations in Restorative Justice. The main theme to these conversations is active listening for all and justice for all.

A restorative conversation is simple in its framework. It is a calm and open space where the following questions are asked of the offender and the victim:

Offender are asked these *restorative questions*:

- "What happened?"
- "What were you thinking about at the time?"
- "What have you thought about since the incident?"
- "Who do you think has been affected by your actions?"
- "How have they been affected?"

Victims are asked these restorative questions:

- "What was your reaction at the time of the incident?"
- "How do you feel about what happened?"
- "What has been the hardest thing for you?"
- "How did your family and friends react when they heard about the incident?"

(See International Institute For Restorative Practices for more details and research behind these questions)

As you reflectively ask these questions you enable a space for people to open up and become more receptive to resolving difficult interpersonal communications. You also discover the way forward, which is empowering for both parties and reestablish a safe a secure work space.

Of course, active listening is key to the entire process. So listen, think and then speak/act!

Do not let bad feelings, due to poor communication, hamper the success of your team and workplace.



[Source: iirp.edu](http://iirp.edu)