MINDSET GO

SHIFTING MINDSETS · EST. 2014



A HALF-DAY KICKOFF AND THREE-MONTH REINFORCEMENT SERIES FOR LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Courageous Conversations

How to Shift Mindsets and Lead Change through Conversation

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Program Overview

Whenever you're not getting the results you want, it's likely an important conversation either hasn't happened or, when it did, was ineffective. Effective performance management is accomplished by coaching leaders at all levels through obstacles and holding people accountable for lapses in behavior. Both individual and organizational success are often determined by how quickly, effectively, and directly we speak up when it matters most.

Every courageous conversation avoided risks fostering toxic cultures, lowering productivity, increasing employee turnover, and stifling growth. Execute courageous conversations to fast-track careers, develop your leadership and teams, and grow your bottom line.

Takeaways:

- Ask strategic, insight-driven questions that uncover root causes and inform better decisions.
- Lead conversations that foster alignment, ownership, and collaboration, not forced compliance.
- Resolve issues sustainably by clarifying expectations and natural consequences.
- Remove barriers, maintain momentum on strategic priorities, and drive consistent performance.

The program opens with a four-hour in-person session. Three 90-minute virtual sessions follow, one a month for three months, with leaders meeting in small groups. Each session starts from what leaders tried since the last one, so the new habits have room to take hold between sessions.

Kickoff: Courageous Conversations (Half-Day, In Person)

Leaders leave this half-day with one conversation structure they can run on any performance or behavior issue, plus a real conversation from their own team mapped and rehearsed before the session ends. The session starts with the cost of waiting: a conversation avoided tends to resurface later as slipping performance and a standard the rest of the team stops taking seriously. From there, leaders work through the structure step by step. They open on the specific behavior rather than the person, ask questions that surface the root cause before offering a fix, and close with clear expectations and the natural consequences that follow if nothing changes. Most of the time goes to practice. Leaders run their own conversations in pairs and adjust their approach on the spot, while the stakes are low. The aim is a conversation the other person leaves owning, not one they simply endure. That ownership is what keeps strategic priorities moving long after the kickoff.

What leaders will be able to do:

- Open a conversation on the specific behavior, not the person.

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- Ask root-cause questions before offering a fix.
- Close with clear expectations and the natural consequences that follow.
- Adjust their approach in the moment when a conversation goes off course.
- Run one real conversation from their own team, already mapped and rehearsed.

Virtual Session 1: Questions That Find the Root Cause (90 Minutes, Month 1)

Leaders leave this session asking one or two questions before offering any fix, and typically find the solution holds longer because of it. Working in small groups, leaders open with what they tried since the kickoff, including conversations that stalled and moments they defaulted to telling instead of asking. Those examples become the material for practicing questions that separate a clarity problem from an effort problem. A missed deadline, for example, can trace back to unclear priorities as easily as to low effort. Each leader leaves with one stalled conversation reworked and a commitment to run it before the next session. Root causes addressed once tend to stay addressed, which gives managers back time they would otherwise spend revisiting the same issue.

Virtual Session 2: Expectations and Natural Consequences (90 Minutes, Month 2)

Leaders leave this session able to close a conversation with expectations the other person can restate and consequences they see coming rather than feel imposed. The session opens on what happened after the conversations leaders ran since the last session: where behavior shifted and where it slid back. Leaders then practice the close, the part that tends to get rushed: stating the standard in observable terms, connecting it to the result it protects, and naming what follows if it isn't met without making it a threat. They also work through how to respond when someone pushes back or agrees too quickly. When people own the standard, leaders spend less time enforcing it and more time on the priorities that grow the business.

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Virtual Session 3: The Follow-Through Conversation (90 Minutes, Month 3)

Leaders leave this session with a follow-through rhythm that keeps commitments moving after the program ends. After reviewing where progress has held or stalled since the last session, leaders practice the conversation that tends to get skipped: the one after a commitment is made. One version recognizes progress specifically enough that the behavior repeats. The other addresses a repeat lapse directly, without restarting from zero or escalating too fast. Leaders also look at their own part, since a stalled commitment can trace back to a barrier only the leader can remove, such as competing priorities or a decision still waiting on them. Leaders who hold that rhythm tend to protect both strategic momentum and the people who drive it.

> *This is a sample program. Each engagement is tailored to your organization's goals, and investment varies based on the number of participants, program length, delivery format, and level of customization. Contact MindsetGo to design a program for your leadership team.*

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Courageous Conversations: Choose Your Target Behaviors

Each behavior below is something your leaders would visibly do or say by the end of the program. Choose the three to five you most want every leader demonstrating. Those choices become the program's measure of success, and each session is shaped to develop them.

Check the box next to the three to five behaviors you select. We will confirm your selections together during onboarding.

- [ ] **We default to curiosity before judgment.** Before raising an issue, we consider our own role and open with a question rather than a conclusion about the other person's motives.
- [ ] **We prepare each courageous conversation around one behavior.** Before the meeting, we identify the real problem we suspect and set one realistic outcome based on how ready the person is to change.
- [ ] **We raise concerns as they happen.** We address frustrations directly with our manager and peers as readily as with our team, rather than letting them pile up until they spill over.
- [ ] **We ask "What's in the way?" before offering a solution.** We identify the barrier first and hold off on problem solving until we understand what is driving the issue.
- [ ] **We agree on the problem and its urgency before discussing solutions.** We acknowledge the concern the person raises, then confirm they see the underlying problem as a challenge worth solving now.
- [ ] **We set expectations that cover what, when, and why.** We state the reason behind a request so people understand its priority without asking.
- [ ] **We define success as an observable behavior.** We replace broad goals like "hit your deadlines" with the specific behavior that, done consistently, would resolve the issue.
- [ ] **We respond to problems with "Thanks for coming to me. What do you propose?"** We invite the other person's solution before offering ours, so team members bring ideas along with problems.
- [ ] **We close with a commitment, not just agreement.** We ask "What's the plan?" and leave with the first two steps and a follow-up date, so "That's a good idea" turns into action.
- [ ] **We stay with the change until it holds.** We secure permission up front to remind people of their commitments, and we keep check-ins on the calendar even after progress shows.

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