"Honest Conversations"

In today's fast-paced IT environment, effective communication isn't just a skill—it's essential. **This training programme is designed for ICT professionals working with in-house, remote or hybrid teams.** Whether you're influencing stakeholders, guiding peers, or collaborating with managers, you'll gain practical tools to have **honest, constructive conversations** - upwards, sideways, and with direct reports.

Why this program exists in the ICT Sector

In Ireland's highly competitive ICT sector, where demand for skilled professionals consistently outpaces supply, the fear of losing key talent can make managers hesitant to address issues directly. A lack of confidence or experience in managing difficult conversations only adds to the challenge, leading to avoidance. As a result, even small issues can snowball, often ending in "quiet quitting" for workplaces with more open and supportive cultures.

"In sectors such as ICT, high attrition rates are strongly linked to poor workplace communication, unclear expectations, and lack of management support." **Source: European Commission, Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe, 2024.**

This programme is designed to break that cycle. It gives IT leaders, project managers, and individual contributors simple, practical, and proven tools for holding honest and effective conversations. The techniques are rooted in real-world experience and can be adapted to fast-moving environments where client focus and project deadlines are critical.

Learners will leave with a set of practical tools that can be embedded into everyday work life, helping to build a high-trust, resilient culture where issues are addressed early and constructively. This proactive approach supports stronger retention, encourages innovation, and enhances collaboration and overall team performance.

Build your 'Communication Stack' Practical Skills You Can Apply Immediately

MODULE 1
'Root-Cause Analysis'

Analyzing root cause/s of avoidance.

Analyzing the cost of avoidance.

Adopting a future-focus framework.

MODULE 2
(De-) Escalation Tool

Principles of escalation and de-escalation.

Learning to apply de-escalation techniques and emotional reactions using the C.A.L.M. model.

MODULE 3
Mental & Practical Preparation

Shifting to a 'Positive Intention' mindset.

Reflection and perspective-taking approach

Preparing the 'psychologically safe' space.

MODULE 4
Interpretation & Communication

Verbal & Non Verbal Communication

Reading body language and handling emotional signals.

Listening skills and questioning techniques.

MODULE 5
Practical Application

Applying the toolkit to a real-life scenario.

Preparing for a typical fact - based conversation.

WORKSHOP 1 | **WORKSHOP 2** | **WORKSHOP 3**

A practical, common-sense approach with Interactive workshops.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

ONLINE & IN-PERSON DELIVERY

Developers, QA & DevOps Engineers – collaborating on code, testing & deployment.

Product Managers, BAs, and Project Leads – aligning teams and managing priorities without direct authority.

UX/UI Designers and Data Professionals – working across disciplines to influence and deliver results.

IT Consultants and Security Specialists – navigating client or internal relationships where influence matters.

Remote and Distributed Team Members – where communication can easily break down without face-to-face contact.

Others: People Managers at all levels, High Potential Employees, Graduates/New joiners, Individual contributors that engage cross functionally

3 Workshops Online
Over 3 mornings 9.30 to 1pm
Day 1 – 4th Sept
Day 2 – 11th Sept
Day 3 – 18th Sept

Cork In Person –
1 and ½ Day Delivery
02nd & 03rd September
OR
16th & 17th September

Additional dates and Face to Face delivery available upon request

Benefits to Learner

Employee wellbeing is of paramount importance. This interactive, practical training is designed to equip learners with the tools, confidence, and mindset needed to communicate affectively and proactively. It empowers individuals to handle tricky conversations either peer to peer, direct reports or upwards with managers before they escalate into bigger problems.

KEY BENEFITS

- Confidently and effectively handle 'Honest Conversations' to prevent issues from snowballing.

- Understand the reasons behind avoidance and the impact it has on workplace relationships, employee wellbeing and productivity.

- Learn practical de-escalation techniques to manage emotional responses in any situation.

- Develop the skills to prepare for objective, fact-based conversations in advance.

- Enhance verbal and non-verbal communication, including body language, listening, and questioning techniques.

- Use a simple, effective framework and real-life case studies to build competence and confidence.

- Reduce the time spent dealing with the consequences of preventable escalations.

- Contribute to employee wellbeing by creating a culture of open and honest conversations at work.

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Skillnet

Benefits to the Employer

This practical, evidence-based training delivers measurable benefits to organisations by equipping employees and leaders with the confidence and skills to address issues early—before they escalate into costly or disruptive consequences.

KEY BENEFITS

Improved employee retention – Honest, timely conversations help build trust and engagement, reducing the risk of losing valuable talent, especially in today's competitive job market.

Enhanced organisational culture – Fosters a culture of openness, respect, and accountability, leading to improved collaboration, morale and employee wellbeing.

Stronger leadership capability – Managers and team leads gain the skills to handle difficult conversations constructively, reducing reliance on HR and improving local decision-making.

Increased productivity – Resolving interpersonal issues early minimises disruption and allows teams to stay focused on business-critical work.

Reduced risk and compliance exposure – Proactively addressing people issues lowers the risk of grievances, formal disputes, and potential non-compliance in regulated environments.

Consistent communication standards – Equips teams with a shared language and framework for addressing challenges, improving clarity across departments and functions.

Fewer escalations to HR – Early intervention reduces the number of time-consuming and avoidable issues that reach HR or senior leadership.

Boosted employee confidence and wellbeing – Employees feel heard and respected, improving psychological safety and overall wellbeing at work.

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Skillnet

TRAINER BIOG.

Background:

18 years in Snr HR Roles

12 Years in Learning, Development & Training

15 Years family business – Hospitality - SME

Education:

Degree in HR Management –	National College of Ireland
Dip Mediation & Conflict Resolution	NUI Maynooth
Dip Employment Law	Law Society Ireland
Dip Coaching	Forte Institute
Trained as Workplace Investigator	Baker Tilly

Expertise:

Training and Development, Workplace Investigations & Conflict Resolution

HR Services from Recruitment to Exits

Career Highlights:

100% success in formal disciplinary hearings – never lost a case

Mary Jo Parker

087-8585045

Professional Journey

Mary Jo Parker
(Dip. In Employment Law, certified mediator. Trained coach and workplace Investigator)

JACK JORDANS DOUGHISKA

HRBP

BT

SNR. HRBP

Johnson&Johnson VISION

SNR HR MGR

VERITAS

ASSOC. DIR HR

elan

Head of Transition to Industry

Innopharma

HR Consultancy

synecco

Client Services Lead

SAP

Head of Volunteer Programme

VOLVO OCEAN RACE 2011 – 2012

FOR BOOKINGS

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