







Soft Startups: Communication Skill Worksheet

What is a Soft Startup?

A soft startup is a gentle approach to initiating difficult conversations. By fostering a calm and respectful atmosphere, it encourages productive dialogue and reduces blame.

Elements of a Soft Startup

-  **Show Appreciation:** Acknowledge something positive before addressing the issue
-  **Pick the right time:** Save the conversation for a calm moment
-  **Be Careful:** Avoid insults, bad words or critical language
-  **Use "I" Statements:** Focus on how you feel, not what the other person did
-  **Stay Specific:** Stick to one issue at a time
-  **State Positive Needs:** Say what you need, not just what you don't want.

The Formula for a Soft Startup

- I feel [emotion]
- About[The situation]
- I would like [positive request or solution]

Examples: Harsh Startup vs Soft Startup

Harsh Startup

You never listen to me

You're so careless with your work

*I hate it when you leave the room
in a mess*

Soft Startup

*I feel unheard when I'm trying to
communicate.*

*I noticed some things we could
improve on in the project. Can we
go over them together?*

*I would really appreciate it if we
could clean up after ourselves.*



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Let's Practice!

Think of a situation where you used a harsh startup

What was the situation ?

How did you start the conversation?

How did this conversation go?

Rephrase your startup statement into a soft startup

How do you think this will change the outcome of the conversation?