

# Crucial Confrontations

## Discussion Questions

*Move from “thinking about it” to “got it” with a regular discussion of Crucial Confrontations: Tools for Resolving Broken Promises; violated expectations, and Bad Behavior. Organize a small group of family members, friends, coworkers, or colleagues, and hold a weekly discussion. Here’s a short list of questions to get you started:*

1. Behind the serious and long-lasting problems that families, teams, or organizations typically face are crucial confrontations that people either aren’t holding or aren’t holding well. Explain why this is.
2. What are the confrontations you typically avoid? What performance gaps have you had the courage to step up to but have handled poorly?
3. When deciding if they should hold a crucial confrontation, what tricks do people typically employ in order to talk themselves out of speaking up? What tricks do you use most often? What will it take for you to break the silence-to-violence habit?
4. When deciding what to confront, what mistake do people typically make? How does the term “Groundhog Day” apply to crucial confrontations?
5. Someone has let you down. You figure he or she did it on purpose so you’re about to give him or her a piece of your mind. Why is it that you are now at risk of making the situation worse?
6. Why are the first few seconds of a crucial confrontation so important? What mistakes do people typically make when first describing a performance gap?
7. What motivates people and why? When it comes to motivating others, what mistake are people in positions of power likely to make?
8. When people aren’t able to deliver on a promise, what mistakes might a new leader or parent make? When others are blocked from performing, why ask them for their ideas on how to solve the problem? Why should you “make it easy” for others?
9. You’re talking about a problem and a new one comes up—what should you do? If you decide to deal with the new problem, when are you merely being distracted? When are you being sensible and flexible?
10. What principle from this book did you find most important? Which one was the most surprising?
11. What skill did you find to be the most difficult to put into practice? Why was that? What will it take to get better at that skill?
12. How can your discussion group help each member become better at holding crucial confrontations?
13. How can you help each other prepare or practice for a particularly difficult confrontation?
14. What methods can you use to remind yourselves to be on your best behavior—particularly when you’re becoming upset and are about to move into “lecture mode”?

Note: These discussion questions are not intended for use in corporate training and are only meant for informal reading groups or book clubs. For inquiries regarding training courses, please call us at 1.800.449.5989 or visit us at [www.vital-smarts.com](http://www.vital-smarts.com).