

Build the skills to have difficult conversations

Issued by [SACAP](#)

6 Mar 2023

As social creatures, it's natural to feel a sense of trepidation, or even full-blown anxiety, when you know that a high stakes conversation is on the cards. While avoidance is an understandable reaction, the respite is generally short-lived, and the consequences of not engaging with what needs to be said and heard can be significant.



At work and in our personal relationships, there's a far greater expectation nowadays that we are willing and able to have timely conversations about scary or uncomfortable topics, but not everyone has this skill set. Karolyne Williams, the head of Strategic Innovation at [Sacap \(the South African College of Applied Psychology\)](#) says: "Mastering critical, tricky conversations is an essential life skill, and the good news is all of us can get better at it. There's a particular mix of people skills and knowledge that you need to navigate through tough conversations. What you want to be able to do effectively is work collaboratively towards the best outcomes, while listening to others and considering their perspectives. While we can never be utterly certain of where a difficult conversation may lead, we can learn to conduct ourselves in ways that will ensure that the encounter goes as well as possible."

Williams heads up the Sacap Global division of online short courses and micro-credentials which help people upskill, re-skill and attend to their continuous learning that is demanded by fast changing 21st century workplaces. She says: "From junior staff to senior management levels, it's vital that people build their skills to handle hard conversations. Shying away from them only feeds emotions such as resentment and anger, which degrades teamwork and collaboration. It can also lead to missed opportunities which can come at high costs to individuals and organisations."

*“ From junior staff to senior management levels,
it's vital that people build their skills to handle hard conversations. ”*

Whether or not you are expected to be adept at hard conversations in your workplace, most people are interested in having these skills as part of their personal development. Mastering critical conversations between parents and children, life partners and even between friends can deepen bonds and enhance the authenticity of the important relationships that sustain our well-being.

To meet this demand, Sacap Global launched their '[How to have Critical Conversations' short course](#) which has been

designed and developed by experts in applied psychology. Providing 20 hours of learning, the course is a journey in self-discovery combined with practical know-how and takes place in your own time over a three-month period. It covers topics such as *How I show up in the world*, *Why might I find critical conversations hard?*, *Expressing my voice*, *How to navigate a critical conversation using the 10P Model*, *Performance review conversations*, and *How to make critical conversations work well*.

Williams says: "This is ideal for busy, working people who want to engage in learning at their convenience and in their own time. This is a unique, affordable and flexible course featuring video, readings and self-reflection exercises which teach people the lifelong skills of engaging confidently in difficult conversations, at work and in their personal lives, to achieve positive, progressive outcomes for all involved."

The bottom line is that difficult conversations don't have to devolve into arguments and disagreement does not have to be something negative. It starts with showing up authentically in the world and then building the skills enables you to lean into critical conversations that can turn out to be enriching experiences. You may find it rewarding to help someone consider a different perspective and you can learn something new yourself. Developing your confidence in addressing a difficult situation makes it less likely that you will avoid it, which is so important because the longer you wait, the more emotionally charged it can become.



EDUCATION

How short courses boost professional development and lifelong learning

SACAP 21 Oct 2022



In 2023, Sacap Global's '[How to have Critical Conversations' short course](#) is available:

- Class of 2023 April – June
- Class of 2023 July – September
- Class of 2023 October – December

To find out more visit www.sacap.edu.za/course/how-to-have-critical-conversations/.

▪ **How AI tools are transforming coaching in SA** 2 Apr 2024

▪ **Sacap announces new direction for business higher certificate courses** 20 Feb 2024

▪ **The psychological advantage in today's workplaces** 24 Jan 2024

▪ **Sacap is growing: Addition of PGCE electives** 4 Dec 2023

▪ **How coaching and wellness are intersecting** 22 Nov 2023

SACAP



SACAP offers you a wide range of qualifications in the fields of psychology, counselling and coaching with our one-of-a-kind approach to learning.

[Profile](#) | [News](#) | [Contact](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [RSS Feed](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>