Behaviors That Foster and Undermine Effective Conversations

What Do We Want to Hear and See in Group Conversations?

- ➢ Active listening through paraphrasing and by asking follow-up clarifying and probing questions
- ➢ Active listening through nonverbal communication (making eye contact with each other, nodding)
- ➢ Questions and wonderings grounded in genuine inquiry
- ➢ Summarizing of each other's ideas
- ➢ Invitations to quieter members
- ➢ Making sure that everyone's voice is heard
- ➢ Probing questions that go below surface comments
- ➢ Clarifying questions that elicit more information
- ➢ Appreciations for what others say and do and for taking risks
- ➢ Productive conflict around ideas
- ➢ Respect for the opinions of others and valuing their input
- ➢ Problem solving
- ➢ Offering of ideas, suggestions, solutions, and next steps
- ➢ Empathy for each other and others outside of our team (including students, parents, and administrators)
- ➢ Flexibility and vulnerability
- ➢ Thoughtfulness around the language that is used and awareness of the impact that certain words have
- ➢ Awareness of emotions when appropriate

What Don't We Want to Hear and See in Group Conversations?

- ➢ Going off topic and into long digressions
- ➢ Dominating the conversation by taking up too much airtime or trying to dictate the conversation
- ➢ Being sarcastic
- ➢ Disengaging and not participating
- ➢ Avoiding contentious topics
- ➢ Criticizing people and their ideas with negative comments
- ➢ Dismissing the ideas of others with "Yeah, buts"
- ➢ Taking pride in being a devil's advocate
- ➢ Being contrary and blocking team progress
- ➢ Boasting about personal skills or experience
- ➢ Pulling rank on each other
- ➢ Insulting team members or others outside of our team (including students, parents, and administrators)
- ➢ Gossiping about others
- ➢ Blaming others
- ➢ Complaining about things that are outside of our sphere of influence
- ➢ Using emotions to hijack a conversation
- ➢ Using language that is explosive and can trigger others as a way to bully the conversation
- ➢ Being distracted by other things (technology) or people

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