

Powerful Conversations

How to Create “Moments of Truth” that Change Everything

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Leading Change

Steve Levin & Associates

5 Thistle Street, Portola Valley, CA 94028

Tel 650.851.3641 Fax 650.851.3640

www.leadingchange.net • steve@leadingchange.net

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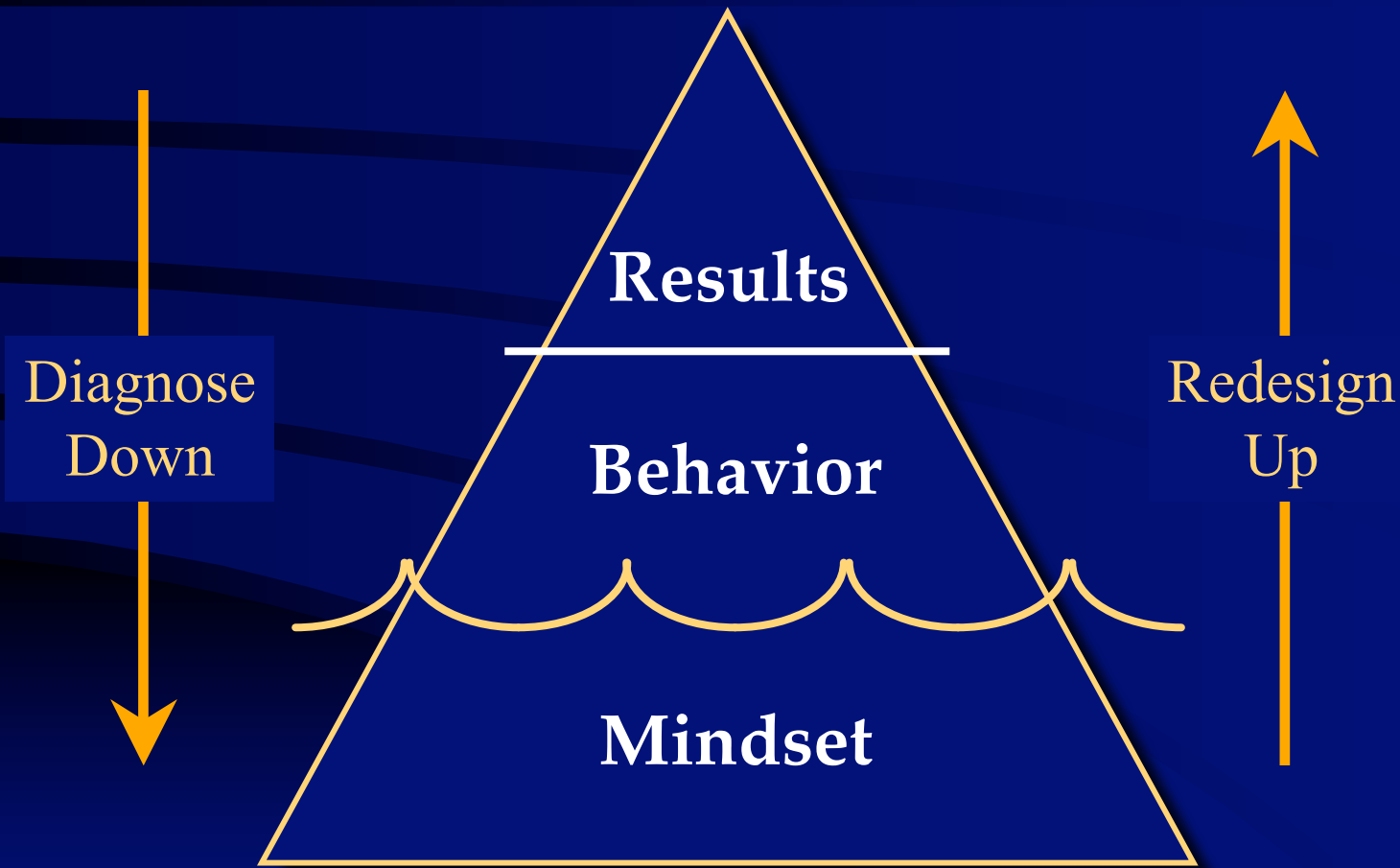
We all live under the same sky...
...but we don't all have the same
horizon.

-- Konrad Adenauer

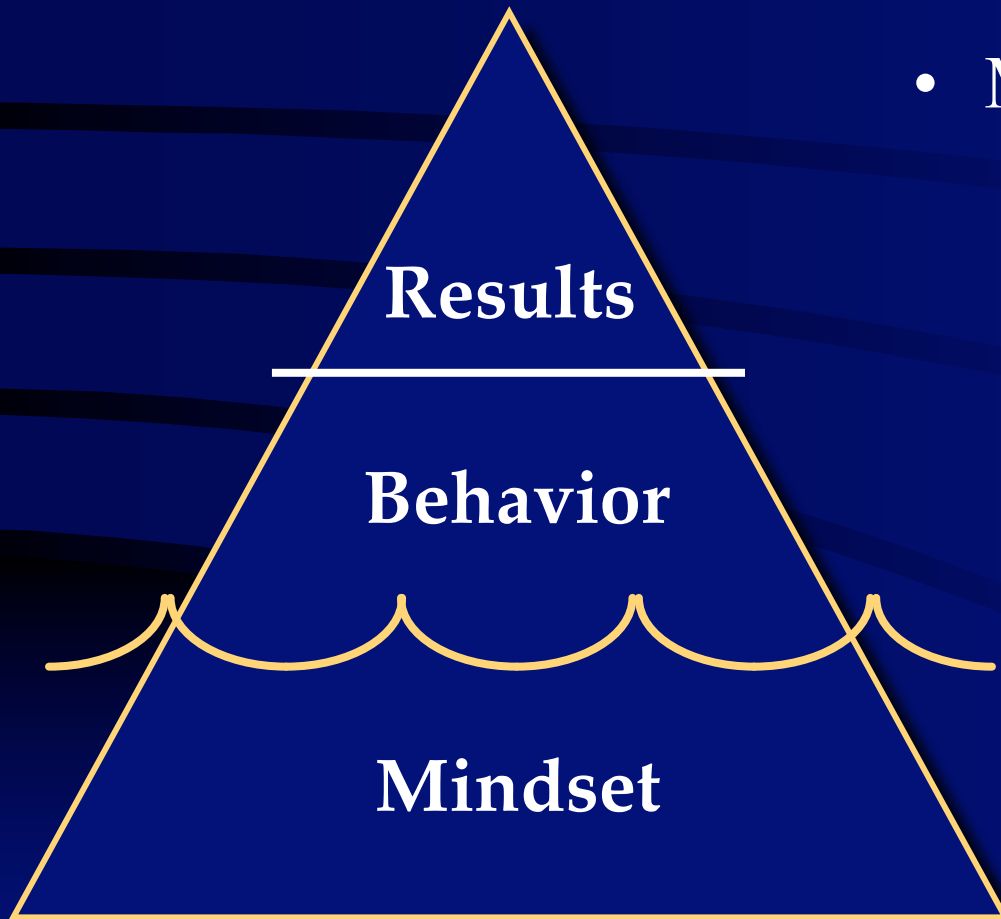
Acknowledgements

- Our clients
- Our teachers and colleagues
- Participants of thirty laboratories of “Powerful Conversations”
 - 4-months of action learning, virtual format
 - Real life, real time, “real play”
 - Intensive inquiry and feedback

The Path to Powerful Conversations



Exploring Mindset



- Mindset refers to:
 - Intentions
 - Assumptions, beliefs
 - Unspoken thoughts and feelings
 - Attitudes
 - Moods

What is a Moment of Truth?

- A gap between my story and my “reality”.
- A disruption from the drift.
 - Ah-ha! (Gulp) BFO.
- An inflection point in a conversation, when something more real and authentic emerges.
- A chance to see the world through a new lens.
- An opportunity to invent a new narrative and to make choices for more freedom and power.

Some Moments of Truth

- Close the gap between intention and action (walk the talk).
- Let go of the past and make a choice for the future.
- Interrupt an unproductive cycle of thinking and action.
- Refocus on what is truly important.
- Tap into a deeper level of connection and commitment to something larger than themselves.
- Call forth more authenticity than is normally revealed.
- Step up to a bigger game.

Stages of a Powerful Conversation

Move from Intention to Action

Invent a New Point of View

Generate Fresh Insights

Get to What Really Matters

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- Set a strong intention to play large vs. small.
- Connect with what they really care about.
- Establish clear boundaries.
- Demonstrate value within 10 minutes.

Stages of a Powerful Conversation

Move from Intention to Action

Invent a New Point of View

Generate Fresh Insights

- Interrupt the coherency of unproductive thinking.
- Challenge assumptions and beliefs that keep them stuck.
- Explore gaps in logic and hot or dead spots in feeling.
- Reconnect with what is truly authentic.

Get to What Really Matters

Stages of a Powerful Conversation

Move from Intention to Action

Invent a New Point of View

- Shift identity from “victim” to “owner”.
- Evoke a bold stand for what is possible.
- Develop the expression of the authentic self.
- Make and get commitments to take action.

Generate Fresh Insights

Get to What Really Matters

Stages of a Powerful Conversation

Move from Intention to Action

- Choose a course of committed action.
- Experiment with new behaviors.
- Reinforce the benefits of accomplishment.
- Set up structures for support.

Invent a New Point of View

Generate Fresh Insights

Get to What Really Matters

When to Create a Moment of Truth?

Moment of Truth

Move from Intention to Action

Moment of Truth

Invent a New Point of View

Generate Fresh Insights

Get to What Really Matters

Moment of Truth

Moment of Truth

Benefits & Risks

Benefits

- Likely bigger impact
- Journey of co-creation, thought partnership
- Bigger offer
- No boring conversations

Risks

- Need to build trust first?
- They aren't ready?
- Don't have permission?
- I might get in over my head?

Overview:

How to Create a Moment of Truth

1. Prepare yourself

- Take a stand for yourself and for them.

2. Pay attention

- Listen for the opportunity for a MOT intervention.

3. Step forward

- Address the gap with clear intention.

4. Explore new possibilities

- Move from new awareness to new action.

Step 1. Prepare Yourself

Take a Stand for Yourself and for Them

- Take a Stand for Yourself
 - What do I stand for?
 - When I operate on behalf of a purpose larger than myself, then I can claim more authority.
 - “For the sake of what...” do I do this?
- Take a Stand for Others
 - I see your limitations as mere distractions from your positive purpose.
 - I see your possibilities for greatness, even if you don't.

Step 2. Pay Attention

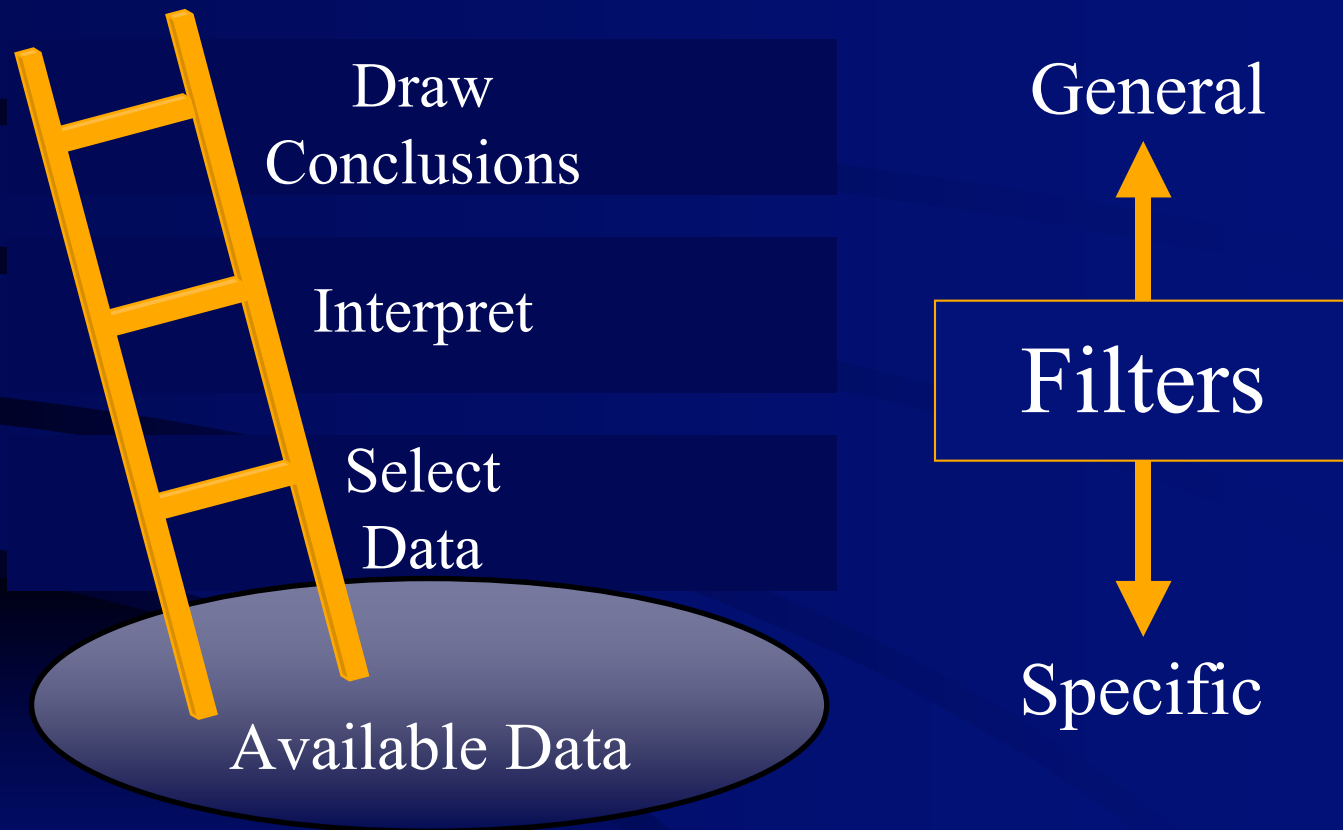
Listen for the opportunity for a MOT intervention.

- Get to the good stuff
- Inquire into an episode
- Listen at multiple levels
- Notice Moment of Truth opportunities

Get to the Good Stuff

- Fast forward past the known and comfortable
- “You have been thinking about this for a while. What conclusions have you already reached?”
- “What insights do you already have about...?”

Inquire into an Episode

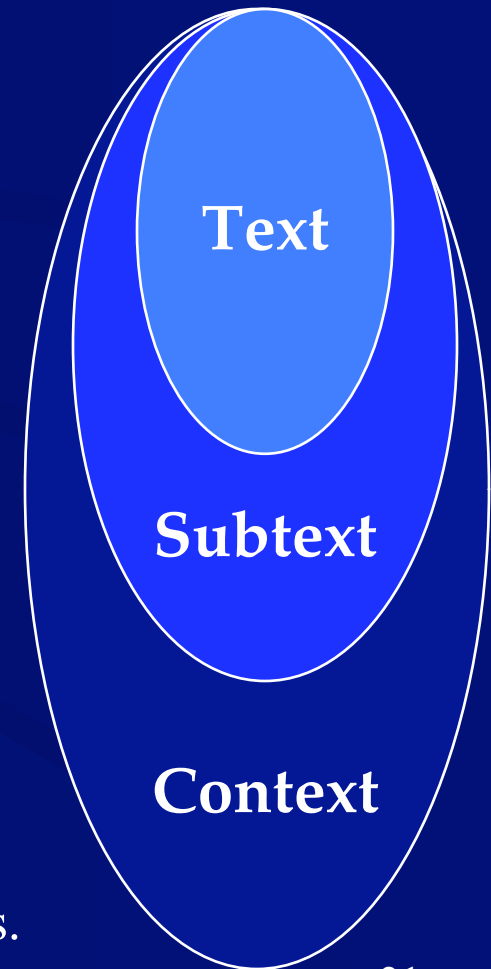


How to Elicit an Episode

- Tell me of an episode that illustrates X.
- What happened first? Then what?
- What did you do/say then? What were you thinking and feeling as you said that?
- What did he say in response? What were you thinking then? What did you say?
- [Persist until the crux of the episode is revealed.]

Listen at Multiple Levels

- Text (the story)
 - What happened and what didn't.
 - The problems and solutions they see.
 - The action steps they undertake.
- Subtext (the underlying story)
 - Their assessments and feelings.
 - Their hopes and fears.
 - What they value and the standards they hold.
- Context (the meaning behind the story)
 - Where they are coming from (history).
 - The underlying intention that is revealed.
 - Identity: How they relate to themselves and others.



Notice MOT Opportunities

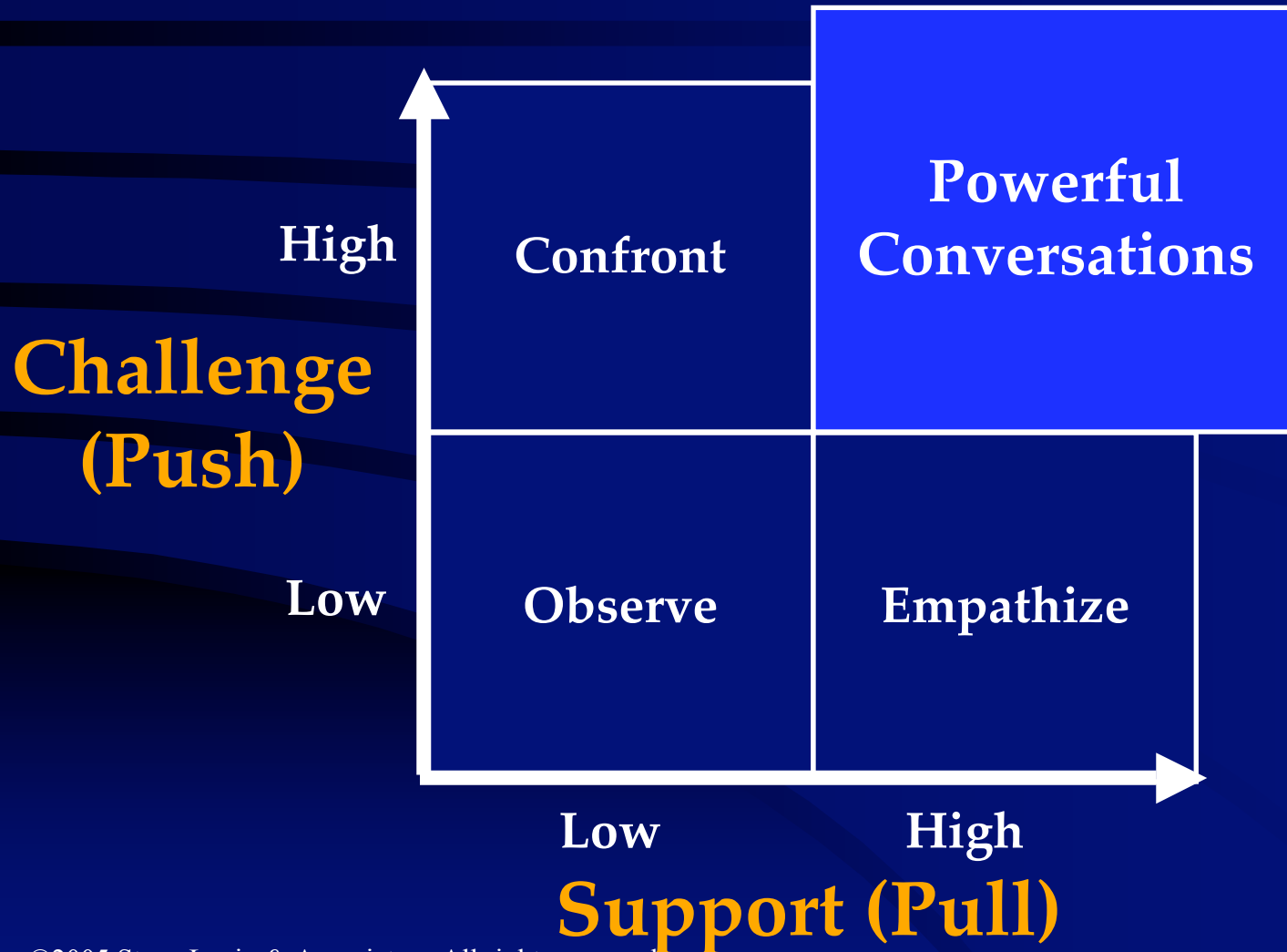
- Gaps in logic
- Labels and absolutes
- Something avoided or dismissed
- Changes in energy (up or down)
- Physical “truth responses” (body language)
- Flat affect (you are bored)
- Something doesn’t “feel right” to you

Step 3: Step Forward

Address the gap with clear intention.

- Blend challenge with support
- Speak your truth with dignity
- Combine curiosity with appreciation

Blend Challenge with Support



Examples of Challenge

- Confront a break in sincerity (walk \neq talk).
- Show the limits of assumptions and beliefs.
- Push on labels and absolutes.
- Take “the other guy’s” side while continuing to connect with your client.
- Showcase the unintended impact of client’s actions.
- Insist on clarifying implicit choices and values.
- Call a bluff.

Speak Your Truth with Dignity

- Set your intention.
 - “For the sake of what” am I speaking? (To build a better future.)
- Assess their context
 - Where are they coming from (history)?
 - What values and standards do they hold?
 - How are they listening?
- Clarify your thinking.
 - Say aloud (to yourself) your blunt message (X).
 - Say aloud (to yourself) the risk to dignity you want to avoid (Y).
 - Invent: How can I speak about X without compromising Y?
How can I take care of their dignity and mine, too?
- Speak cleanly, listen generously.

Exercise:

Speak Your Truth with Dignity

- Create two versions of “your truth”:
 - Make one too soft, supportive and safe.
 - Make the other too tough, confronting, and risky..
- Give full expression to each - and exaggerate.
- Experiment to see how you can strike the best blend of both.

Step 4: Explore New Possibilities

Move from new awareness to new action

- From this new point of view, what changes?
- How does the old problem look different?
- Which new possibilities have opened, and which have closed?
- What new choices are available to make?