**Crucial (Courageous) Conversations**

**Every organization will experience conflict, particularly when the organization is engaged in significant change. Also, nothing will destroy the credibility of a leader faster than unwillingness to address an obvious violation of what the organization contends is vital. A leader must not remain silent: he or she must be willing to act when people disregard the purpose and priorities of the organization.**

**Some of the strategies offered in *Crucial Conversations* (by Patterson, Grenny, McMillian, and Switzler, 2002) for engaging in honest and respectful dialogue include:**

1. **Clarify what you want and what you do not want to result from the conversation.**
2. **Attempt to find mutual purpose.**
3. **Create a safe environment for honest dialogue.**
4. **Use facts because “gathering facts is the homework required for crucial conversations.”**
5. **Share your thought process that has led to the conversation.**
6. **Encourage recipients to share their facts and thought process.**

**Source: *Learning by Doing, Second Edition.* DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many. Solution Tree, 2010. p. 230.**

**Three Scenarios**

1. **Your PLC meetings have become a “Gripe” session. Christine dominates the conversation with her criticism of the administration and the way things are “run around here.” It’s keeping the team from getting work done.**
2. **Robert is a veteran member of the teaching staff who regularly communicates low expectations about…Everything!!! He’s consistently bringing up the “way it used to be” stories. This time he’s talking about special education. He’s referred several kids that he knows belong in special education and “they” just keep delaying placement because “they” say he needs to try some different strategies in his classroom.**
3. **In the last team meeting Sally Sue became unglued. She yelled and screamed at Bob because he just goes along with everything! She is fed up with his “happy-go-lucky” approach to the world and his “whatever it takes attitude.” It’s her opinion that he gives kids too many chances to get their work done and too many opportunities to earn a good grade in his class. Consequently, his failure rate is much lower than her failure rate. It was an awkward meeting to say the least.**