

FROM
CONFLICT
TO
COLLABORATION

AGC Institute
2015

Who Are
you?

Crucial Conversations

Getting to Yes

Getting Past NO

Common Sense

Is it that OBVIOUS?

Doing vs Doing Well

Individual vs the System....
Not a match made in
heaven!

Special Education Parents and Public Schools: A Dysfunctional Relationship

- The lawsuit focus that has come to dominate the process makes trust and collaboration difficult
- The outcome is largely dependent on who the players are on both sides (family and school personnel) in a given situation
- There are some situations where the best course of action is for the family to have an advocate but...
- Often the best scenarios occur when both parties step out of the box and do the right thing for the child while staying within limits of the system
- This often happens in spite of the system not because of the system

Public School and Special Needs: **Not a Match Made in Heaven**

- Parents expect school to prepare children to meet their expectations
- Parents often overwhelmed by and unprepared for the IEP/ARD process
- Parents often feel they must take an adversarial approach
- School systems have limited resources
- Schools are expected to provide individualized education to children with widely varying disorders and manifestations
- Schools legally must operate under highly regulated parameters

Public School and Special Needs: Not a Match Made in Heaven

- Reality: collaboration is needed for skills to generalize across environments
- Parents assume school staff have expertise and training
- Parents often have unrealistic expectations
- Disconnect between what school administrators value as outcomes and student outcomes
- Lack of trained staff, high staff turnover and lawsuits
- Policy makers: Lack of understanding about what is important

Public School and Special Needs: Not a Match Made in Heaven

- Large system with many layers - decisions and adjustments often *not* made quickly
- Disconnect between resource decision makers and real-world classroom and individual student needs
- System has limited flexibility for accommodating our kids, especially in the regular education environment
- Understanding of individual disabilities/unique needs often incomplete
- Expertise and experience often lacking, especially in support staff
- High staff turn-over makes consistency challenging
- Staff to student ratios not geared toward disorders requiring 1:1 for skill acquisition
- When dealing with problem behavior, knowledge on how *not* to reinforce

The best scenarios occur when both parties step out of the box and do the right thing, while staying within limits of the system.....

This often happens in spite of the system not because of the system.



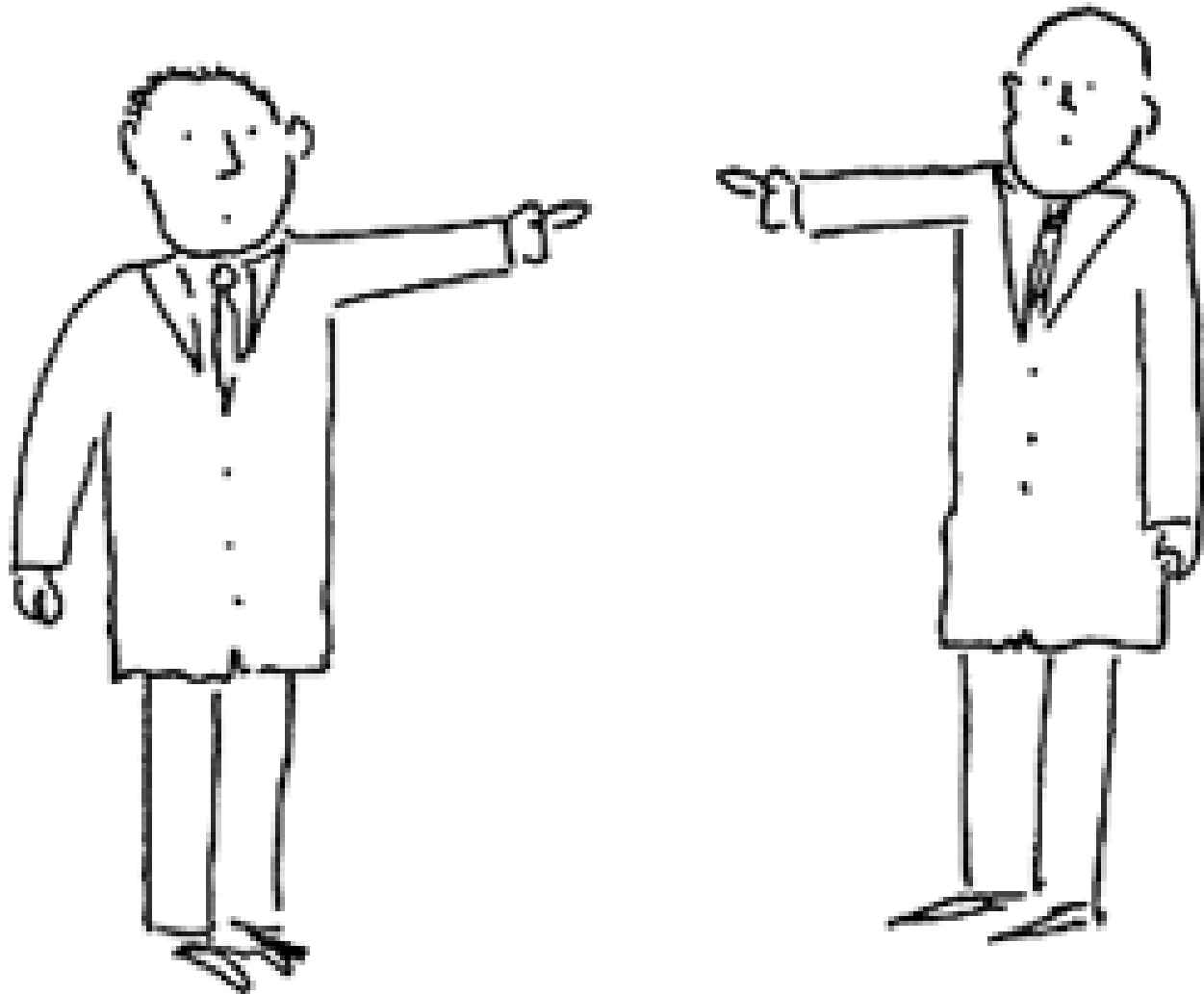
SCAPEGOAT

A Good Scapegoat Is Nearly As Welcome As A Solution To The Problem

Picture

- Picture of a goat
- Text reads Scapegoat- a good scapegoat is nearly as welcome as a good solution to the problem

WHOSE FAULT ?



Everybody take your
finger & point it at
me....

Picture

- Two men standing pointing finger blaming one another



Are You Above or Below the Line?

Ownership
Accountable
Responsible



Blame
Excuses
Denial



REQUIRES A PARADIGM SHIFT:

From seeing others as a part of the problem to seeing them as a part of the solution.

1

Own It



Picture

- Keep calm and own it

2

- How you make others *feel*.

**"People will forget what
you say, they will forget
what you do, but they will
never forget how you
made them feel"**

Carl Beuchner

www.engage4results.com

Picture

- People will forget what you say, they will forget what you do, but they will never forget how you make them feel

3

- Be a Master Perspective Taker

#4

Communication Skills

Are you a Reinforce or a Punisher?

LISTEN

Ask Questions

Crafting a Message

Pool of Information

Saving Face

Build a relationship

#5

- PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION

POSITIONAL BARGAINING VS PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION



Don't bargain over positions.
Cooperate to solve the problem.

Picture

- 2 men playing tug o war

4 ELEMENTS OF PRINCIPLED NEGOTIATION

1. People: Separate the people from the problem
2. Interests: Focus on interests, not positions
3. Options: Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do.
4. Criteria: Insist on objective standards of measurement

PEOPLE: SEPARATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE PROBLEM

- Emotions
- Perceptions
- Communication

Emotions



Picture

- Several emotiocons with varying emotions

Perceptions



Picture

- Man driving car fast and recklessly

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Group activity
What do parents want?
How might a parent
feel in a meeting?



Exercise

- Take your “opponent’s” perspective

PEOPLE:
SEPARATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE PROBLEM

Face the problem not the person
Partnership for Problem-Solving

Listen first to understand, then speak to be understood

Paradigm Shift to Joint Problem Solving!!!

INTERESTS: FOCUS ON INTERESTS, NOT POSITIONS

- Listening for Interests (over positions)
- Ask Questions
- Reflective Listening

Person Centered Planning THE IMPORTANCE OF SHARED GOALS

- MAPS/PATHS/Etc
- Convergence of Parent/teacher concerns



OPTIONS:
GENERATE A VARIETY OF POSSIBILITIES BEFORE
DECIDING WHAT TO DO.

Ineffective

- Premature Judgement
- Searching for a Single Answer
- Fixed Pie
- Thinking solving the problem is the problem

Effective

- Broaden Options:
 - Separate creativity and judgement
- Search for Mutual Gains:
 - Stand in their shoes
 - Shared interests are opportunities
- Make the decision easy

CRITERIA: INSIST ON OBJECTIVE STANDARDS OF MEASUREMENT



Picture

- Tape measure

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WHEN THINGS ARE BROKEN



Picture

- Band-Aid
- Text reads “The relationship repair kit”

TAKE A SELFIE



- What bias' do you and your team have?
- Are there things you legitimately should be doing differently?

Picture

- Man holding Selfie stick taking a selfie



**KEEP
CALM
AND
OWN
IT**

Picture

- Keep calm and own it

GO TO THE BALCONY

- Take a deep breath
- Suspend your reaction. Regain Balance
- Re-visit your interests

STEP TO THEIR SIDE

- Help them regain their balance.
- Give the other side a hearing: paraphrase and ask for correction
- Acknowledge their points, their feelings
- Agree whenever you can without conceding, accumulate "yesses" for yourself and the other party
- Acknowledge the person: their authority and competence to build a working relationship
- Express your views without provoking
- Don't use "but" statements, use "yes...and" statements
- Make "I" statements not "you" statements - stand for yourself
- Acknowledge differences with optimism

DON'T REJECT: REFRAME

- Don't attack a position, look behind it- I want ALL the IEEs
- Reframe an attack
- Tell me more
- Help me understand

BUILD A BRIDGE

- Build Momentum
- Incorporate their ideas
- Saving Face
- Third Party
- Reframe based on their interests
- Make them the Victor

EDUCATE: DON'T ESCALATE

Pre-meet & Table Topics
Don't get sucked in
Know the BATNA- but don't
threaten it.



“ For the sake of the kids, for the sake of the family, for the sake of the community, for the sake of the future, let's stop fighting for a moment and start talking.”

-William Ury

Thank you!

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