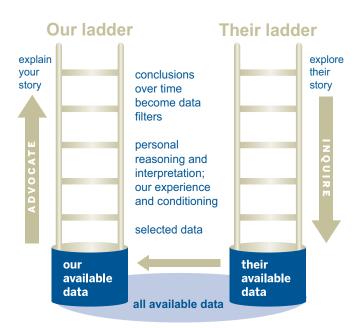
LEARNING CONVERSATION LEADERSHIP

THE LADDER



[&]quot;The Ladder of Inference" is adapted from Argyris and Schon, 1974

Balance Advocacy with Inquiry

- 1. Understand
- 2. Be Understood
- 3. Accept, Reject, Persuade, or Problem-Solve together Even when we agree, we see things differently



LEARNING CONVERSATION LEADERSHIP

SKILLED INQUIRY GUIDE

Step I: Cultivate True Curiosity

Understanding others does not require agreement - what is their story? How could a resonable person see the world that way?

Step II: Earn The Right to Inquire

- Fill the intentions vacuum: Explain our purposes: to understand, to help, to problem-solve (not-blame), etc.
- Demonstrate your understanding (to their satisfaction)

Strategic Inquiry Examples

- Testing questions: "So do I understand you to be saying...?" "Why?" "How?"
- "Vertical" Inquiry. The interests, experiences, standards, and frames of reference beneath conclusions.
- "Lateral" Inquiry. Other conclusions or issues on their mind.
- Purposes questions: "What are we trying to achieve today? In the year ahead?" "How would you define the issue(s)?" "Why?"
- **Options questions:** "How might we address this together?" What else have you considered?" "What have others done in this situation?"
- Cost/Benefit questions: "If we do/do not address this issue, how could that help/hurt you?" "How does that make you feel?" "How could we make this better?"

SKILLED ADVOCACY GUIDE

Step I: Seek Their Understanding

- We can persuade after, better.
- Offer them a face-saving "role" in the conversation. They do not need to agree to understand you.
- Offer appreciation of their differing views. Even when disagreeing.

Step II: Persuade

- Start where they are. And where you may agree.
- Share your Ladder: Advocate from the bottom to the top.
- **Help them hear:** Frame advocacy within their story their perceptions, values, needs, goals, etc.
- Use their Ladder (data and reasoning) in our Advocacy.

Make Advocacy "Testable"

- As you persuade, be open to learning and persuasion yourself. "Does that make sense to you?"
- Test their understanding as your persuade, not just after. Let them help you persuade.

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