

The Mulvaney Group, Inc.

The Mulvaney Group helps individuals and organizations have Courageous Conversations™. This means to engage in dialogue with people we don't normally speak to about things we don't normally speak about. Or with those we speak to all the time about topics we would rather avoid.

TMG's 15 years of experience has shown to reduce employee attrition (by 50% for one client), to increase revenues (25% for another), and to reduce turnover costs (\$500,000 for one retained executive).

Some clients include:

- Altria Corporate Services
- Best Buy Company
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota
- Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center
- Carat USA
- Cargill
- Citigroup
- Collegiate Church Corporation
- Consumers Union, publisher of Consumer Reports
- Fairview Health Services
- Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis
- International Truck and Engine Corporation
- Lutheran Services of Iowa
- Medtronic, Inc.
- Methodist Hospital
- Prudential Financial Services
- RBC Dain Rauscher
- United Auto Workers – GM
- United States Tennis Association
- Volunteers of America

“Did you just say what I think you said?”

Courageous Conversations to engage in dialogue with people we don't normally speak to about things we don't normally speak about (race, gender, orientation). Or with those we speak to all the time about topics we would rather avoid (inappropriate behavior, job performance, money).

April 19, 2007 Coffee Conversations Lessons Learned

Topic: You and your colleague, Don, are having your usual morning conversation on the results of the weekend's football, baseball, basketball, hockey, and soccer games. One of the teams he was rooting for lost its championship game. Out-of-the-blue, he uses a racial slur to describe the players. What do you do? What do you say?

- **Take a breath**

- The goal is to respond to this comment. Maybe you can't do it right this second, because maybe it was just too outrageous or caught you too off-guard. But take a breath and change the topic of the conversation from the sporting events to what is happening right now in the conversation.

- **It's about what you need**

- The conversation you are going to now engage in is not about what Don did or didn't say or even what it means. It is now about, how do you want these conversations to go and what is OK and not OK for you.

- **Keep it simple**

- Don't try to convince him that the comments are racist, or sexist, or homophobic, or whatever. It doesn't matter. What matters is what you want the tone of these conversations to be.

- **Reaffirm the relationship**

- You like talking to Don about the games. Reaffirm to him, probably more than once, that you want that to continue. Let's just not use racial slurs while we do it.

- **Multiple conversations**

- Be willing to revisit this dialogue. Don may need time to think about what you just said, so leave room for future conversations.