



# COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

## The Mulvaney Group, Inc.

When you need to fix the unfixable. When you worried that a lawsuit is just around the corner or you are looking at a discrimination complaint. When you need an OD intervention to solve the behavioral issues quickly, effectively and efficiently.

Tim Mulvaney's 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
- Cambridge University Press
- 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



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## “Why is she crying at work?”

August 1, 2007

**Courageous Conversations:** to fix the unfixable

### August 1, 2007 Coffee Conversations Lessons Learned

*Topic:* Karl has been receiving complaints about his new employee Sandra. She transferred from Germany about 6 months ago. In some cases, she seems to be unfriendly, even rude and offending sometimes. One colleague came to Karl in tears. Karl has experienced situations himself where Sandra showed a lack in diplomacy and acted close to being “offensive”.

- ***Acknowledge the cultural differences***

- Different languages, different social cultures, different office cultures, all are playing a part in the current situation. Raise this as a possibility early on, e.g., “there may be a cultural difference here.”

- ***Raise the issue sooner***

- The first step of the Relate Model is to build Rapport. Karl did a good job on that, but could have done two other things: raise the issue sooner and ask about the downside too. The shift from the Rapport-building to the next topic felt “abrupt.” And he could have asked questions about what wasn’t working in Sandra’s transition.

- ***Include the employee in the solution***

- Karl gave a lot of the answers and solutions to Sandra. Even though it didn’t quite seem like they had an agreement on the issues or whether Sandra even understood the problem. Ask the employee for solutions, ideas, insights into what she could, or would be willing to, do differently.

- ***Reaffirm the relationship***

- A universal aspect of an effective Courageous Conversation is to reaffirm the employee, her contribution, and her value to the organization. Because another universal aspect of a situation like this is that the employee immediately thinks her job is on the line the moment feedback begins, so the manager must let the employee know that the reason he/she is getting this feedback is because he/she is valued. (Which hints at the idea that effective, ongoing feedback is so rare, that if it does happen, the behavior must be job-threatening.)