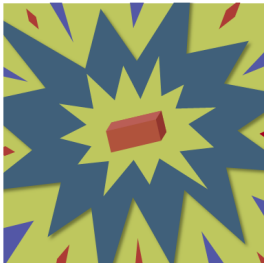


Leadership Tool: Smash the Brick



S – STOP - when you feel an uncomfortable pinch or rub in a relationship.

M – MOMENT- take a moment to breathe and observe the discomfort, recall what the other person said or did that rubbed you the wrong way.

A – ASK to ALIGN - on the intention and impact. Ask the other person what they meant by their words/actions, their intention or need, and then share the impact it had on you.

S – SUGGEST - your understanding of the intention, express what you need, and discuss how to align on each other's needs.

H – HARMONY - agree to the next steps that get each person what they need.

Smash the Brick



Description: Often, the impact of someone's words and actions are not aligned with their intention, and it rubs us the wrong way. When we ignore the rub, we place a brick in the middle of the relationship around which we form judgments, and then seek evidence to prove the judgments. We begin to treat each other differently, and before we know it, one misunderstanding has turned into a brick wall blocking communication, collaboration, and positive regard. Soon, all we can see is the wall, and it can feel impossible to break through. It may seem difficult, but it's much easier to smash a brick than tear down a wall.

Application: To clarify misunderstandings and productively eliminate conflict.

- a. Pay attention to when you feel a pinch, and acknowledge it right away.
- b. Use the "SMASH" steps to create alignment and eliminate the misunderstanding.
- c. Keep in mind that what creates the rub is often not what the other person intended. Seek to understand first before reacting.

Tips:

- a. Address the pinch when it happens. It's easier in the long run.
- b. Make an agreement with others to use the brick language and to call out a rub when you have one.
- c. Practice with less tense situations to build confidence for the bigger issues.