Radical Candor
Radical Candor is the sweet spot for feedback interactions, characterized by a high degree of both caring personally and challenging directly.
Note: these are labels for behavior, NOT for people
Let’s discuss **Obnoxious Aggression**

- **Critique** feels like a slap in the face or punch in the gut.
- **Praise** comes in the form of backhanded compliments.

- Have you experienced this?
  - As a receiver? As a giver?
- What happened?
- How did it feel?
- What were the results?
Let’s discuss **Obnoxious Aggression**

**Problems with obnoxiously aggressive feedback?**

- People become defensive
- Lack of trust and respect
- People stop listening and responding
- People withhold valuable feedback from you out of fear of your reaction or retaliation

**Why do you think people tend to find themselves operating from this quadrant?**
Let’s discuss **Manipulative Insincerity**

**Critique:** passive aggression, gossip, or backstabbing

**Praise:** flattery for personal gain

- Have you experienced this?  
  As a receiver? As a giver?  
- What happened?  
- How did it feel?  
- What were the results?
Let’s discuss Manipulative Insincerity

Problems with feedback that is manipulatively insincere?
- Complete lack of trust or collaboration
- Detrimental to morale and motivation
- People withhold valuable feedback from you because “why bother?”

Why do you think people tend to find themselves operating from this quadrant?
Let’s discuss Ruinous Empathy

Critique: replaced by covering up or fixing mistakes of others

Praise: false reassurances

- Have you experienced this? As a receiver? As a giver?
- What happened?
- How did it feel?
- What were the results?
Let’s discuss Ruinous Empathy

Problems with ruinously empathic feedback interactions?
- Lack of accountability → decreased morale and quality of work
- Feelings of shock and betrayal when action finally becomes unavoidable
- People will withhold valuable feedback for fear of hurting your feelings

Why do you think people tend to find themselves operating from this quadrant?
Let’s discuss Radical Candor

**Constructive Critique:** humble and helpful

**Authentic Praise:** genuine, specific, and sincere

Radically Candid Feedback is **ALWAYS HIP**
- **Always** directed at behavior rather than identity
- **Humble & Helpful**
- **Immediate & In Person**
- **Private, if criticism & Public, if praise**
Let’s discuss **Radical Candor**

- Have you experienced this? As a receiver? As a giver?
- What happened?
- How did it feel?
- What were the results?
In your breakout rooms...

Take a look at the last page of your radical candor handout and discuss these questions as a group.

What Insights did you gain from talking with your group?
Tips

If challenging directly is uncomfortable
  • Reframe challenging directly to align with your strengths
  • Increasing directness
  • Kind > Nice

If caring personally seems unnecessary
  • Reframe relationship building as a pivotal component of managing
  • Focus on people you deal with directly and let that ripple out

In general
  • Consider power dynamics at play
  • Investigate assumptions, worldviews, and biases that make up our “lens” and inform our assessment of a situation and therefore our feedback
  • Accept that all feedback is subjective (biased)
Bonus Tip

Remember that Radical Candor is a Moving Target

Consider...

- Individual personality
- Cultural differences
- Organizational culture and composition
- Power dynamics

Ask people to gauge your interactions!
***Radical Candor is measured not at your mouth, but at the other person’s ear.
**GIVING** radically candid feedback is only half the story

**GETTING** radically candid feedback is part two
Create a Culture of Radical Candor

A culture where giving and receiving feedback is the norm for all members of the team, not just from the top down.
Create a Culture of Radical Candor

• Create a shared language
• Ask for feedback
• Ensure the foundations are in place
  • Psychological Safety
  • Relational Trust
  • Recognition of power
• Be mindful of what your response communicates and own the impact of that response
Could your response have communicated to the giver that their perspective is...

| Unwanted                  | Highly emotional responses  
|                          | Defensiveness               
|                          | Engaging in retaliatory behaviors  |
| Invalid                  | Telling or implying that the person is out of line, off base, or flat out wrong  |
| Irrelevant               | Nothing changes as a result of the feedback  |
Create a culture WITH radically candid feedback

A culture of radical candor is a useful tool in building other essential aspects of your organizational culture
Equity Minded Radical Candor

• As a leader, it is your responsibility to provide radically candid feedback when you see inequity and injustice or a lack of inclusivity in your organization

• As a leader, it is also your responsibility to create an environment truly welcoming to radically candid feedback on your own privilege and unavoidable bias

• Radical Candor holds a mirror in front of our own leadership roles in advancing equity and fostering belonging at our universities
What’s so “radical” about Radical Candor?
“What would your daily life be like if you could simply give us [people with power and privilege] feedback when we step in it (which we inevitably will) and have us receive that with grace, reflect, and seek to do something different?”

“It would be REVOLUTIONARY!”