



RESPECTING EVERYONE EARLY RESOLUTION

A guide to the early resolution of workplace issues

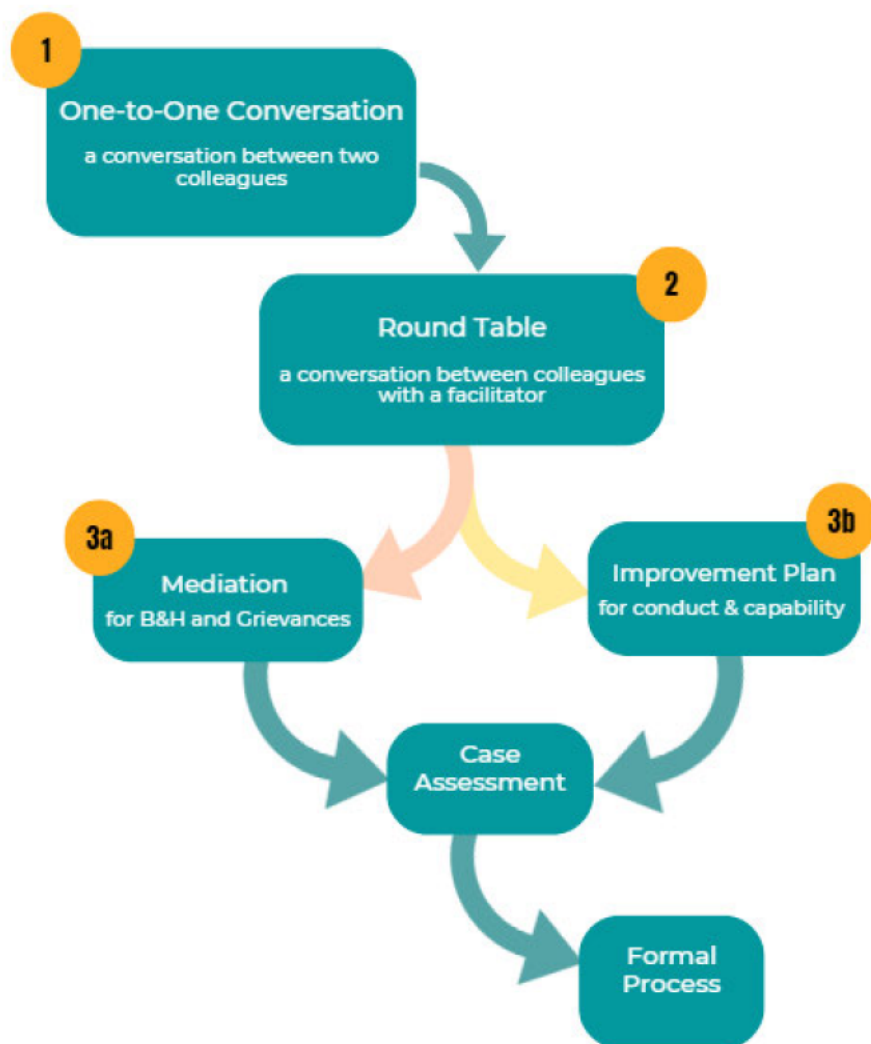
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Introduction

This is a guide to the early resolution of workplace issues. We strive for all colleagues to have a positive workplace experience within a culture of fairness, openness and respect in line with Trust values.



Step 1: One-to-One Conversation

(What to do first)

What is it?

Although you may have multiple One-to-One Conversations with someone, it is important to recognise when you might need to switch to another Early Resolution Step.

A One-to-One Conversation is an informal and private conversation between colleagues to discuss a situation or behaviours and move forward in a positive and sustainable way. It is an open, honest, and collaborative exploration of workplace issues with potential outcomes including agreed actions and signposting of available support such as wellbeing; training, [\[redacted\]](#) or an Occupational Health referral.

It's an informal and timely discussion to raise awareness of an issue/s. Early Resolution action applies equally to us all, whether peer-to-peer, a colleague informing a manager, or a manager liaising with a team member.

The One-to-One Conversation enables you to address conduct/capability, grievances and behavioural issues, to understand the perspectives of those involved and to agree improvements for the future. An informal early conversation provides a respectful and supportive environment for the individual to reflect on their behaviour or performance and try to identify the cause, for example work pressures, cultural differences, misunderstandings.

Who is Involved?

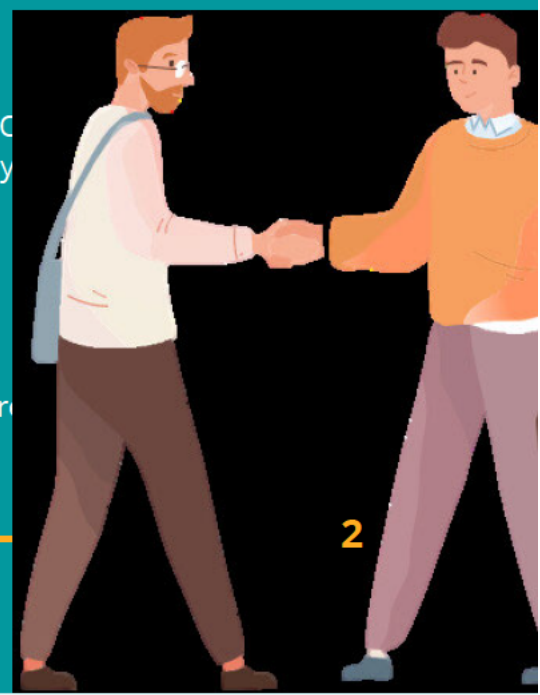
A One-to-One Conversation can happen between colleagues at any level - not necessarily just between a manager and a team member, it is useful between peers and other colleagues too. Usually, one colleague will suggest a conversation because they want to discuss a concern or issue with another colleague.

When & Where?

A One-to-One Conversation should occur as soon as possible after you witness or learn of a behaviour or action that is not consistent with our values or become aware of the issue. One-to-One Conversations should always take place in a private setting, ideally in person, where confidentiality can be maintained.

Colleagues are encouraged to share information of any support they may need.

For information on how to prepare for conversations of this nature or giving feedback, please see our [\[redacted\]](#)



Step 2: Round-table Conversation

(What to do if One-to-One Conversation hasn't helped or support is needed)

A Round-Table Conversation is an informal conversation that enables colleagues to resolve issues that may otherwise affect their ability to work together effectively.

A round-table conversation is used where there is conflict between two people; for example:

- Relationship breakdown.
- Personality clashes.
- Communication problems.
- Where an individual perceives that they are experiencing bullying and harassment or inappropriate behaviour.
- To address conduct or capability concerns.

The conversation is overseen by a facilitator, this would usually be a line manager, however, it could also be an independent manager or a member of HR. What is shared remains confidential, allowing greater honesty and disclosure. The round-table conversation provides a safe space for apologies and disclosures and can build empathy and understanding between colleagues. There may be written or verbal agreements on how to work together going forward.

Ground rules for Round-table Conversations:

- Confidentiality during and after the meetings.
- Respectful language – no swearing/talking over each other.
- Good timekeeping, mobile phones off and out of sight.
- Break outs can be requested by anyone at any time.

The participants will be asked to prepare a WIG (What happened, Impact, Goal) statement, which each person will read out when they meet. Support in the preparation of this will be provided by the facilitator. This statement should be submitted to the facilitator prior to the meeting.



What happened/Impact/Goal (WIG) statement

Please write your WIG statement, you will be supported to read this out in the joint meeting.

You may wish to start your WIG statement with the following:
In the hope of us finding some solutions and resolutions to work together; this is an honest and thoughtful description of what happened from my perspective, how this made me feel and how I would like things to work between us for the future.

What happened? Please give a brief description. Explain what happened and what you would like to share with the other person.

Impact - Please jot down your thoughts about how this situation/issue has made you feel emotionally and/or physically? Explain how this has affected your work and/or home life.

Goal. What do you need to work together in the future? How would you like things to be between you at work? Please reflect and write down your future goals, i.e., how you would prefer to work/interact with this person at work. An opportunity for hope and future focused goal setting – for participants to reach a common understanding and/or agree on how best to work/interact with each other for the future.

Round-Table Conversation structure:

- The facilitator meets with the first participant, who will be then asked to write their own WIG statement and reflect.
- The facilitator meets with the second participant, who will be then asked to write their own WIG statement and reflect.
- Both participants meet with the facilitator. Each participant reads out their WIG statement with the aim of resolving issues and with support to create future.

Key Considerations for Conduct or Capability Concerns

Once the Round-Table Conversation is complete and the need has been identified, the manager and colleague should work together to agree an improvement plan. This should be discussed and recorded informally. For conduct use this [REDACTED]. For capability use this [REDACTED]. Be sure to include support, adjustments or training required in achieving and sustaining improvements.

The agreed plan should include the actions required by the colleague, the timescales that these should be achieved within and any training, development, [REDACTED] or Occupational Health support that is needed.

While the colleague is working to achieve the agreed actions, it is recommended that frequent One-to-One Conversations take place to ensure full support is given and open communication maintained.

Step 3: What to do if there is no improvement

Where One-to-One Conversations and Round-Table Conversation have not achieved the desired outcome, step 3 should be used. Step 3 requires different approaches depending on the subject that is being addressed – if it is Bullying and Harassment or Grievances, it is 3a, or Conduct and Capability Concerns is 3b.

3a Bullying and Harassment or Grievances

The aim of step 3a is to support colleagues to talk to each other through mediation. Mediation is a completely confidential voluntary process where an impartial third person facilitates communication between two colleagues to enable them to discuss their differences so that they can work together to reach their own acceptable solutions.

The mediator talks to both sides separately and together. Mediators do not make judgments or determine outcomes - they ask questions that help to uncover underlying problems, to understand the issues and help clarify the options for resolving the issue. It can be particularly helpful where communication has broken down due to issues regarding behaviours, personality clashes and complex relationships and where colleagues want to improve their working relationships and for things to 'get back to normal'.

Mediation gives colleagues the opportunity to air issues in a safe environment, but it cannot work if you have differing expectations and are not entering into it with good faith. The overriding aim of workplace mediation is to restore and maintain the working relationship wherever possible. This means the focus is on working together to go forward, not determining who was right or wrong in the past.

The Mediation Process

Stage 1- Separate meetings

The mediator will meet you both individually to explain the role of the mediator and the process of mediation. The aim is to define the core issues and identify possible ways forward and check that both of you agree to mediation.

Stage 2- Hearing the issues

At the joint meeting a mediator will set the scene by welcoming you both and setting ground rules for the meeting. Ground rules include, not interrupting each other, one person talking at a time, to be patient with each other with an understanding that everyone's view is important and ensuring confidentiality. The mediator will then allow uninterrupted time for each of you and will then clarify and summarise the agreed areas of conflict.

Stage 3 – Exploring the issues

The mediator will then explore the issues with you and encourage communication with each other. They will encourage a mutual understanding of the issues and a change of focus from the past to the future. It is the mediator's role to manage any conflict during the discussion and summarise areas of consensus and disagreement.

Stage 4 – Building agreements

The mediator will work towards ideas and options for resolution. Areas to explore include what needs to change and how? They will explore your suggestions to facilitate the change. It may be appropriate to construct agreements or identify what is to happen next if no agreement can be reached.

Stage 5 – Closure and follow up

The session will be concluded when you both agree that you have reached a mutual agreement with a clear understanding of what has been agreed. Any mediation agreement or action plan developed during the mediation process will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone else without agreement of the participants unless there is a duty of care for the participants requiring disclosure. HR Services will record that the mediation has taken place.



3b Conduct or Capability Concerns

The aim of step 3b is to understand the facts of the situation and the colleague's perspective before agreeing improvements for the future. The manager and colleague should work together to agree a further improvement plan and review period for this plan to be undertaken in. This should be discussed and recorded informally. For conduct use this [redacted]. For capability use this [redacted]. Be sure to include support, adjustments or training required in achieving and sustaining improvements.

The agreed plan should include the actions required by the colleague, the timescales that these should be achieved within and any training, development, adjustments or Occupational Health support that is needed.

While the colleague is working to achieve the agreed actions, it is recommended that frequent one-to-one conversations take place to ensure full support is given and open communication maintained.

Key Early Resolution Considerations

The considerations highlighted below are important to keep in mind for all colleagues throughout the Early Resolution steps.

Non-Violent Communication (NVC)

NVC is a way to express yourself without the risk of hurting and upsetting the other person. Its goal is to create empathy in the conversation. Once there is empathy between people it will be much easier to talk about a solution which satisfies both people's needs. It is a way of saying things using observations, feelings, needs, and requests.

- Observations: The facts of what has happened. Without any judgment, observe what others are doing that you like or do not like.
- Feelings: Say how you feel when you observe this action.
- Needs: State the important needs that are connected to those feelings.
- Requests: Make a specific request that might help attend to those needs.

Gill and Tom

Tom often comments on what Gill is wearing and tells her that he finds her attractive despite Gill having asked him not to in the past.

Observation: Tom yesterday you commented on my appearance again. This makes me feel uncomfortable. I need to feel that our workplace is respectful, please do not comment on my appearance.

Sunil and Dora

Sunil and Dora have been colleagues for 6 months, Dora calls him Sunny. Sunil is offended that despite correcting her a few times Dora still doesn't call him by his name.

Observation: Dora, I've noticed you call me Sunny. I don't like it when you do this as I feel it undermines my identity. I need to know that you respect that. Please can you call me Sunil from now on.

Your manager

Your manager is here to support you to do the best job you can and should be your first point of contact. If this is not an option, consider a colleague or friend who you can talk to.

HR Team

Our HR team is available to hear your concerns and discuss the options available to you. Please call us on 25000.

Workplace Wellbeing

Please [redacted] or email the Wellbeing Team at [redacted]

Union representative

Supporting members and working in partnership to resolve workplace concerns as quickly as possible. Contact at: [redacted]

Freedom to Speak Up team

The Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Advocates will give independent and impartial advice and support on how to raise a concern. More information can be found [redacted]

Staff Network colleagues

Staff networks offer a safe place for under-represented individuals or groups to come together and share experiences. More information can be found [redacted]

Training

Our offer can be found [redacted]



[redacted] out more by visiting our [redacted] by scanning the QR code below.



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