

NEYSDP Insights



An opportunity for colleagues to share experiences, practice and learning from across the network

Part 1: Colleague Conversation Compass – Connect

Written by Deborah Beel,

Senior Organisation Development Manager at Durham University and [NEYSDP co-chair](#)

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[LinkedIn](#)



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The Colleague Conversation Compass was originally designed to support transformational change at Durham and was referred to as the 'Reboarding compass'. It combined the concept of a 'coaching' culture and coaching conversations, together with the recognition that whilst we are Leaders/Managers we are most certainly likely to be best placed to engage with our people/colleagues, around managing situations and looking to re-imagining the future, it was and is probably fair to say that there is a variety of experiences and capabilities amongst this.

Moving into 2020 and the year that really changed everything! We were keen to lean into the feedback we had received from use of the 'Reboarding Compass' and progressed and developed the Colleague Conversation Compass as a tool that all Leaders/Managers could use to help facilitate conversations as the world transformed overnight!

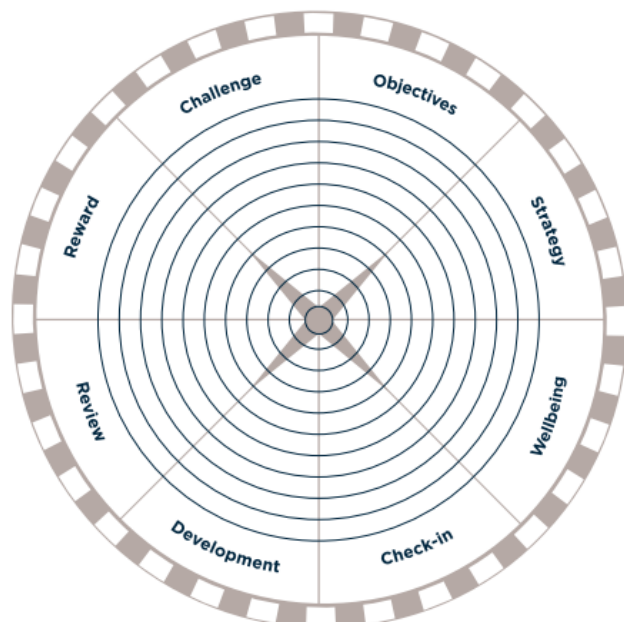
The Colleague Conversation Compass (CCC) provides a framework of key conversational points, by which we can navigate through experiences, select the focus of the interactions, and enable a tailored co-created approach to our ongoing discussions.

The eight **Conversation Points** of the compass enable you to navigate and align a specific focus to the conversations in your team and individual meetings.



Directions for use:

- 1 Complete the compass prior to meeting either by using this printed
- 2 Score each conversation point using a scale of 1 - 10, recording how much focus you would like to give to each area. (1 being the low and 10 being the high.)
This records how much focus you would like to give to each Conversation Point.
- 3 Review your highlighted Conversation Points together and identify the areas to focus upon now, along with any future Conversation Points for discussion.



Once you have identified your **Conversations Points**, you can follow a 3 step approach to your discussions. **Connect, Create, and Conclude.**

Find out more about the **Connect** step below.

Connect

Conversation Points

Central to colleague conversations is the agenda of Respect, specifically in relation to personal conduct and behaviour

All colleagues have a responsibility and accountability for their behaviour, with Leaders/Managers expected to set an example in their conduct and to promote and support good ethical behaviour.

Put simply this means asking honest questions, seeking understanding, and demonstrating empathy rather than judging those around you based on face value information. This looks to recognise that all individuals are

unique with their own background, worldview, beliefs and personal values, and that while these may not match up with your own, they are equally valid and valuable.

Respect



Purposefully and consciously selecting discussion areas together help to enable respectful and accountable outcomes. **Align, Build, Confirm, and Develop** your conversations

Align



Objectives

Personal goals and objectives, clarify expectations and help to identify what is being done, by whom and when. However, to do this to best effect they must be tangible and measurable, not just aspirational.



Strategy

Being clear about how what you do relates to the departments strategic plans, and in turn the Durham University Strategy, will support success for all in the Durham community. Explore not only individual outcomes but also provide clarity and buy-in around the vision of what you are trying to achieve

Build



Wellbeing

Overall wellbeing includes both our physical and mental health. Whilst our physical health considers the condition of our bodies including the absence of disease and fitness level. Our mental health reflects upon our positive state of mind and body, feeling of safety and ability to cope and, the relational connection with people, communities and the wider environment. We all need to, and can take action that supports our health and wellbeing at work. This starts with a conversation and can be supported with a number of different resources available.



Check-in

A regular 'Check-in' conversation is essential, both individually and for your whole team. You decide the frequency; once a fortnight, once a month or every six weeks, and how they take place; over the phone, using Teams or face to face? They provide continuity and help maintain a sense of structure, as well as facilitating the opportunity to communicate.

Confirm



Reward

Having a positive conversation about strengths can be really valuable at any point and the power of personal thanks and appreciation cannot be understated. Providing positive recognition of an accomplishment serves to raise individual self-esteem, reinforce value to the individual, team and the University.



Challenge

Communicating can sometimes present challenges, for a whole number of reasons. This can cause them to be presented in our mind, as too difficult or full of obstacles. A conversation, where challenge or disengagement is raised, could be one of the hardest conversations to start for both parties. However, if approached sensitively it can be one of the most valuable in terms of outcomes.

Develop



Development

Recognising the contribution made to our success to date, identifying specific development needs, and formulating a development plan, will continue to ensure we make the most effective use of our talents, skills and abilities and maximise the contribution we make.



Review

A Review conversation is a great opportunity to make sure things get better all the time. Review conversation will provide an opportunity to engage team members in positive changes, be they small and incremental or part of a larger transformation.

Read more -

Articles to follow:

- [Part 2: Colleague Conversation Compass – Create](#)
- [Part 3: Colleague Conversation Compass – Conclude](#)