



# The 3-Step Courageous Conversation Framework



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*This simple framework helps leaders and veterinary professionals prepare for and engage in difficult conversations with clarity, courage, and respect. Use it to structure your approach and reduce the fear of conflict.*

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## Step 1: Clarify Intent and Outcome

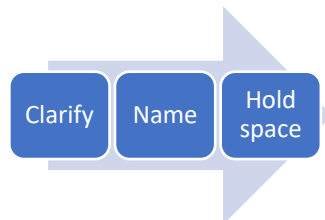
- ◆ Ask yourself: Why am I having this conversation? What outcome do I want—for me, them, and the team?
- ◆ Purpose: Ground your message in growth, not reactivity.
- ◆ Example: “I want to address this scheduling conflict in a way that honors your needs while protecting the clinic’s operations.”

## Step 2: Name the Issue Clearly and Respectfully

- ◆ Be specific and neutral—describe the behavior, not the person.  
Keep it simple: Avoid long justifications, say what’s important directly.
- ◆ Example: “I’ve noticed you’ve been late to morning rounds three times this week, and it impacts the team’s ability to start on time.”

## Step 3: Hold Space for Response and Dialogue

- ◆ Invite their perspective: Allow silence and listen actively.
- ◆ Acknowledge emotions: Naming what’s in the room builds trust.
- ◆ Collaborate on next steps: Aim for alignment, even if not full agreement.
- ◆ Example: “How do you see it? What’s getting in the way? Let’s figure out together how we can prevent this moving forward.”



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*The heart of this framework: Start with clarity, communicate directly, and then connect through listening.*

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