

Case study - Facilitated conversation

The issue

- A was the line manager of B
- A was unhappy with B's work
- B felt unsupported by A
- Breakdown of trust
- Escalation of tensions
- B took sick leave due to stress
- HR tried to mediate but did not achieve resolution
- No constructive communication for a year

What we did

- We spent time individually with both parties to understand their take on the conflict
- We helped them understand what they needed to move forward
- We brought the parties together
- We helped them clarify what happened and focus on their common interests and goals

How it resolved the issue

The conflict was resolved outside of any formal HR process and without having to consider either person exiting. A and B understood their respective points of view better and agreed a way forward. They felt relieved, and could now focus on their work and collaboration.

Case study - Facilitated conversation - Founders

The issue

Two founders had decided to end their partnership. Trust had broken down between them. One felt she had essentially carried the other for the past couple of years. The other felt unfairly judged, as though nothing she did was ever good enough in the eyes of her co-founder. Communication between them was nearly impossible and yet there were a load of decisions to make over the company's assets and liabilities (would one of them take the company over or would they dissolve it? who would be able to use the IP they had created going forward? who would be responsible for which practical steps necessary for the dissolution?).

How we resolved it. We met with them separately - understanding their perspectives on the past, the issues that needed resolving, the outcome they hoped for and the one they could live with. We then brought them into a room in which we had visually presented the key outcome they wanted and all the issues we needed to resolve in this one session. We facilitated the discussion - in their dynamic one was susceptible to just reluctantly agree to anything without having really expressed her needs. So we ensured nothing was left unsaid and what was said was presented constructively. They came to an agreement.

And here was the **feedback**: *"I cannot express my gratitude for what you have done for us both. You have really made what could have been a very painful and drawn out thing into a positive experience that has lead to a mutual understanding. I am hugely relieved and positive about the results and that would not have happened without your intervention."*