

Interrupt Patterns (Notice Repetition)

WHAT: Interrupt Patterns

WHY: To help the leader become aware of and shift the patterns that interfere with successful leadership

HOW: Notice Repetition

Honor Story

Listen and watch for recurring patterns of behavior that may be interfering with progress.

These might be things like routinely forgetting to thank people for their work, making jokes during serious moments, reacting instead of responding, being indecisive, doing everything herself, forming combative relationships, among many other patterned behaviors.

Be Bold and Compassionate.

- Name the pattern and the impact for the leader so she can begin to recognize it.
- Check to see if she recognizes the pattern: it's only important that she understand the origin of this pattern, it's not necessary for us to know in order for her to interrupt it.
- Acknowledge the beauty of the pattern that might have once served but now interferes with effectiveness.
- Ask if she wants to change the pattern.

Examples of declarative statements about noticing patterns:

- "I notice that you make a joke when you begin to practice having an authentic conversation with a colleague."
- "This is the third combative relationship you've had with a colleague."

Be Curious

Examples of nonjudgmental questions about patterns:

- "Are you aware that the way you describe the interaction with your colleague was reactive rather than responsive?"
- "Is this pattern familiar to you?"
- "Would you like to try to change the pattern?"
- If the leader would like to change the pattern, ask, "What would you like to substitute the behavior with?" (Replacing a behavior offers the most successful way to interrupt it.)

Potential Traps

- Wanting to fix the colleague
- Being attached to outcome
- Being judgmental
- Asking for personal information about the history of the pattern

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