Leading Difficult Conversations
Facilitator Training

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ICONDA Solutions

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Inclusion process for use at the very start of the course, with all participants.

It's fast and fun, and it helps ensure that everyone's microphone and camera is working and that they can find the Zoom buttons …
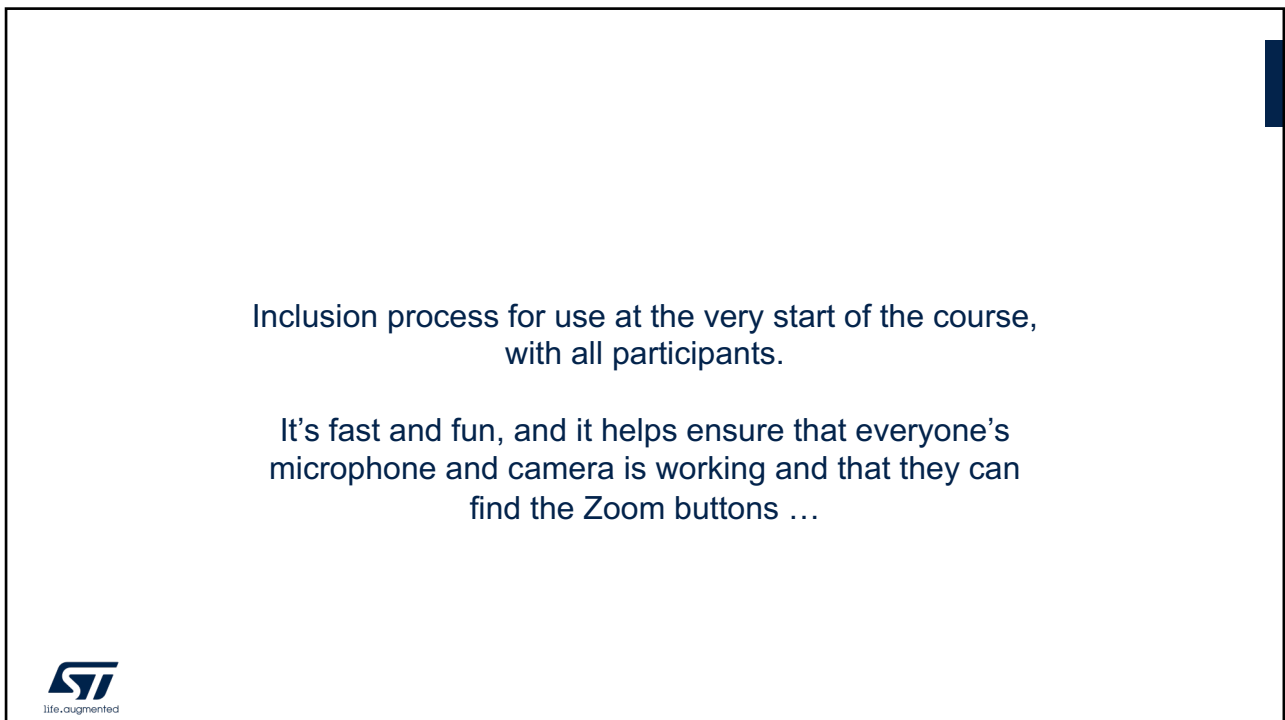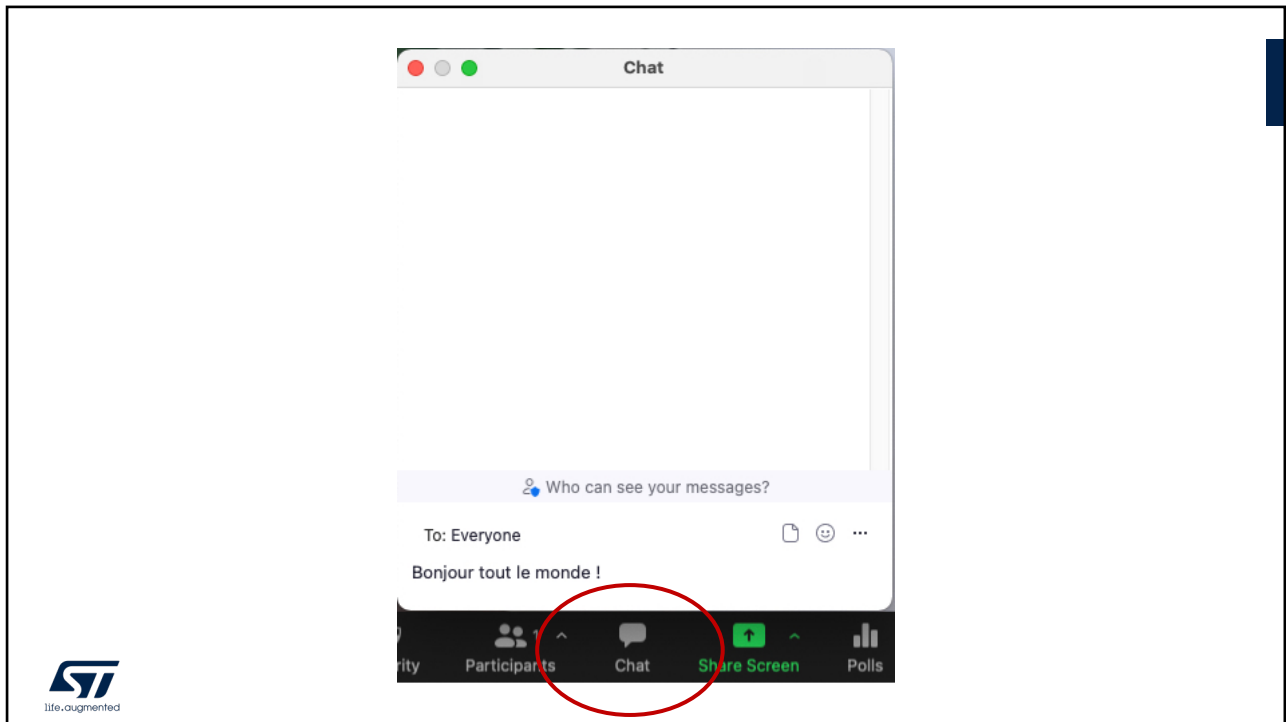
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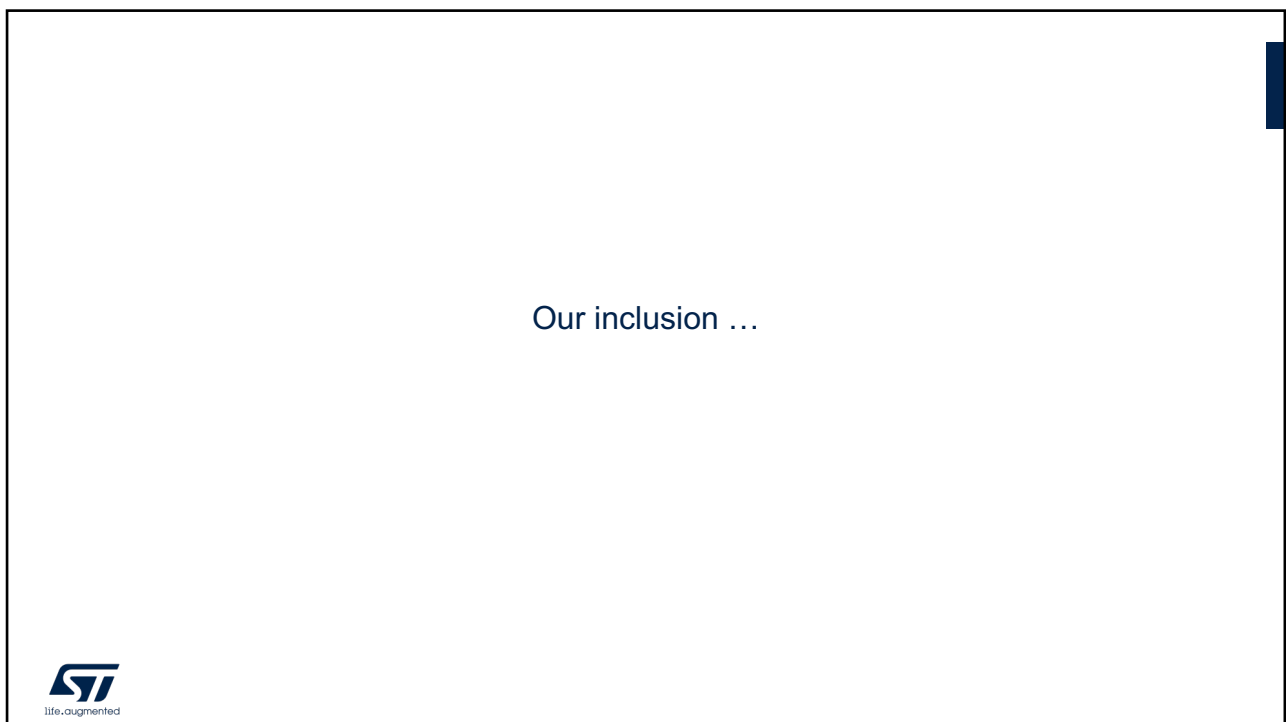I "pass the ball" to someone else

I say, "Hi everyone" (or similar !)

... and I lower my hand

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Our inclusion …

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Personal weather today
+
Memories of the course
+
Particular needs

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Agenda

- Recap of the Learning Objectives and 10 Key Points
- Program
  - Structure
  - Delivery mechanisms
  - Facilitator role and pilot course
- The Film
  - Overview
  - Practice
- Identification and treatment of remaining queries
- Actions
- Close

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Recap of the Learning Objectives and 10 main points

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Learning Objectives, v2

Ideally, by the end of the program, participants will respond positively to the following statements :

1. When a Difficult Conversation arises, I can identify and move towards the main difficulty
2. Before tackling a Difficult Conversation, I can master my intentions
3. I am conscious of my method for listening to others in order to understand facts and feelings
4. I can recognize circumstances where fight or flight are the most appropriate behaviors
5. I can reliably tell whether a statement contains an interpretation
6. I can quickly identify my feelings and personal needs
7. I recognize occasions when it is necessary to express my feelings and personal needs
8. I can express facts, feelings and personal needs clearly and benevolently
9. I can make requests that move the conversation in a positive direction
10. I am familiar with resources that can help me further develop my Difficult Conversation skills
11. I feel equipped to deal with Difficult Conversations in my personal and professional life

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Key Points / Cheat Sheets

- What we're aiming for (normal interactions)
- Summary of whole process (move->difficulty, clarify intentions, NVC for interacting)
- Intentions
- Why we start with Observations
- The observations compass
- Accuracy throughout … (facts, feelings and needs)
- … combining honesty with benevolence
- Checklist (for observing the scene improvisations)
- Permissions
- One last thing (NVC for positive feedback)

**Questions /
points to discuss
on the theory ?**

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Virtual flipchart

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The Program

Structure, delivery mechanisms, facilitator role

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The Program

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Peer Practice

Opening Workshop
(2 consecutive half-days, live online)
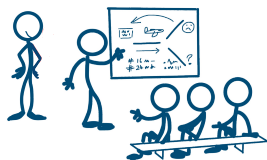
Facilitator backup

Closing Workshop
(1 half-day, live online)

4-6 weeks
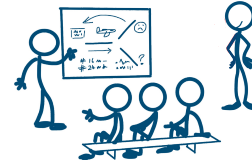
- Moving towards the difficulty with clear intentions
- NonViolent Communication and starting factually
- Taking responsibility for my feelings and needs
- Making receivable requests
- Pulling it all together
- Next steps (-> Closing Workshop)

- Recap
- Consolidate peer practice with simulations of critical situations, written by participants themselves

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Definitions

Facilitators

Trainer

Participants
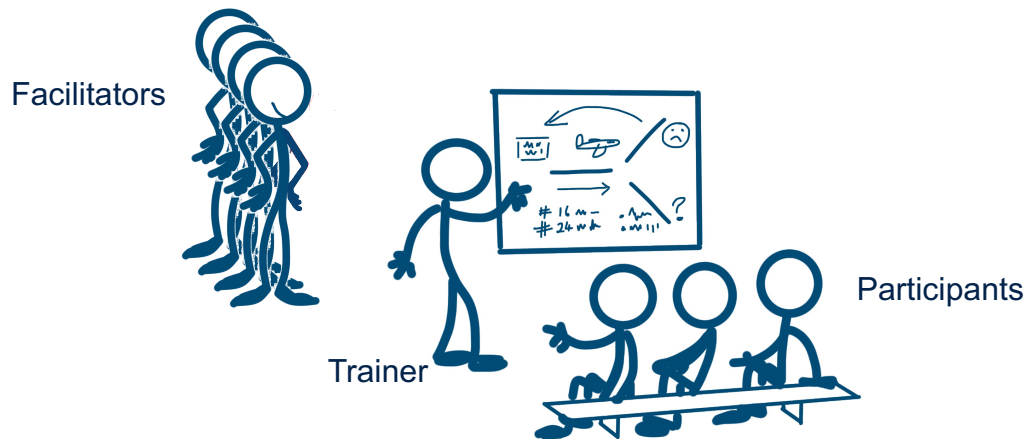
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Motivations

- Suitable for worldwide deployment
  - Sufficient flexibility to allow for regional differences
- Scalable and Low Cost
  - 1 trainer can work with multiple facilitators in large, remote classes
- Compactness
  - 1.5 days remote contact time
    - For comparison, NVC basic training normally requires 5-6 days face-to-face training
- Encourage independent work
  - Aiming for maximum participant autonomy while providing necessary backup
- Continuity
  - Planning follow-up activities and resources (a natural extension of the independent work)

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Delivery

- Zoom
  - Extensive use of Breakout Rooms (hence Teams is not suitable)
  - One facilitator to support the Trainer with Zoom management
    - Watching and relaying Chat items
    - Creating Breakout rooms
- Guidelines for the Independent Work
  - Resources
    - Exercises, articles, books, videos
  - Preparation for the Closing Workshop
    - Cheat sheets (the 10 Key Points)
    - NVC exercises, objections and clarifications
    - Program content (slide copies)
- Template for Closing Workshop submissions
  - A film scene, written by participants for testing at the workshop

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Facilitator role

- At any given time, one facilitator to support the Trainer with Zoom management
  - Watching and relaying Chat items
  - Creating Breakout rooms

- Group facilitation
  - Inclusion of group members (first breakout dedicated to this, 15 mins)
    - Facilitators choose their preferred inclusion process
  - Facilitation of the Film-based exercises
  - Organization of Independent Work (IW)
    - Decide with group on the composition of sub-groups for the IW (one or more)
    - Ensure that the first sub-group meetings happen within a reasonable time
    - Be available as a resource to sub-groups
    - Check and correct the output of the sub-groups (their new scripts) before the Closing Workshop

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Facilitation pairs

- Working as a pair allows you to
  - Complement each other when working together
    - e.g. one can lead and the be a guardian angel
      - Guardian angels watch chat, observe the audience, fix technical issues, …
  - Discuss experiences
  - Cover each other in case one person is not available

- To avoid confusion, I suggest that you explain this to your group

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Pilot

- With 5 facilitators and 18 students for the pilot, I suggest 3 groups of 6 for the exercises
  - Hence, 2 facilitator pairs and one lone facilitator
- The size of the groups may change when we know more about the participants - languages and sites, for example

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The Film

Overview and practice
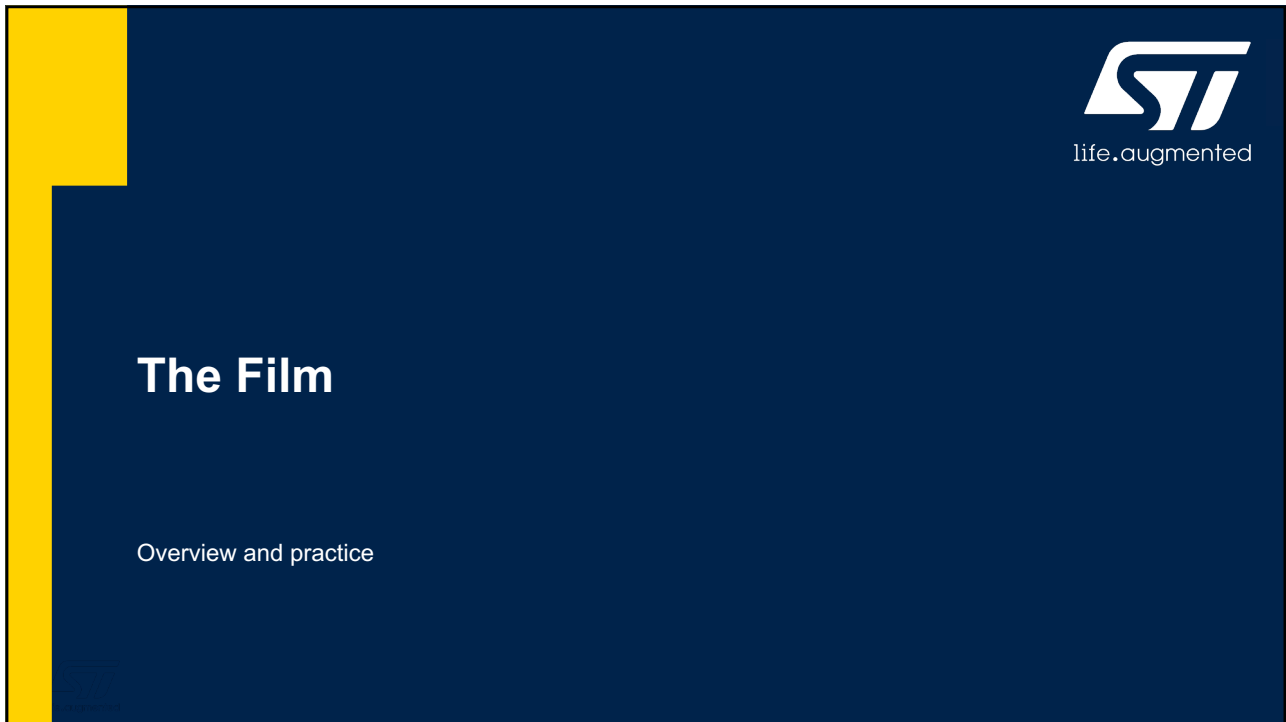
26

Purpose of the Film exercises

- Simplicity
  - A common thread for all exercises in the program
  - The basis of the Independent Work and the Closing Workshop
- A framework for **improvisations** and **full, worked examples**
  - Improvisations target **Essential Learning Points** for a scene
  - Examples illustrate both **Essential** and **Bonus Learning Points**
- Have fun

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Defined for each scene …

- Scene title
- Setting
- Characters appearing in the scene

- Main Difficulty
- Facilitation guidelines
- Direction to Star Actor
- Direction to Supporting Actors (usually just the Facilitator/Actor-Director)

See (1) facilitator copy of the film script
    (2) master spreadsheet

- Essential Learning Points
- Bonus Learning Points

See (1) the main film script

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Improvisations versus Examples

- Although they start with the same script lines, they are different !

- Purpose of the Improvisations
  1. Illustrate Essential Learning Points
     - The Facilitator helps bring the points out
       1. In their role as Actor-Director
       2. In the debriefing
  2. Sensitize participants to Difficult Conversation issues to be covered later in the program

- Purpose of the Examples
  - Provide a reference for the correct treatment of difficulties
  - Illustrate both Essential and Bonus Learning Points
    - The full scripts are not restricted to program content covered at the point where the scene appears

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Your introduction …

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The T2 Tale

- A Blockbuster Film (we hope!)
  - An extraordinary adventure, full of Difficult Conversations
  - Helping us learn through *improvisation* and *observation*

- Short film scenes
  - We'll improvise around a single storyline
  - As many scenes as we have time for
  - Each scene illustrates a different aspect of Difficult Conversations
    - But other things will certainly come up too !

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📹 The Characters

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Drew: Corporate Program Manager

Networking
Alfie
Brennan   Chris

- **The Stars**
  - They face particular difficulties I each scene
  - Alfie: a Networking Manager
  - Brennan: a Networking Individual Contributor
  - Alfie & Brennan never appear together in a scene
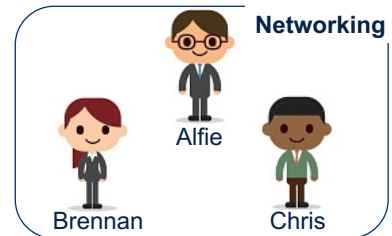- **The Supporting Characters**
  - They contribute to the difficulties seen by Alfie and Brennan !
- **The Actor-Director**
  - Your facilitator !
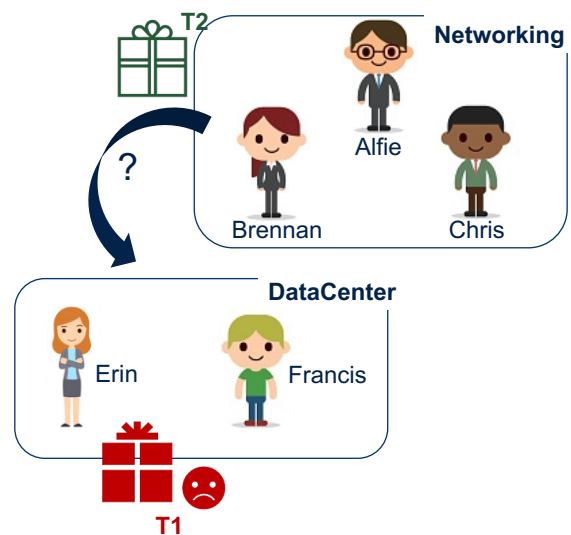
DataCenter
Erin   Francis
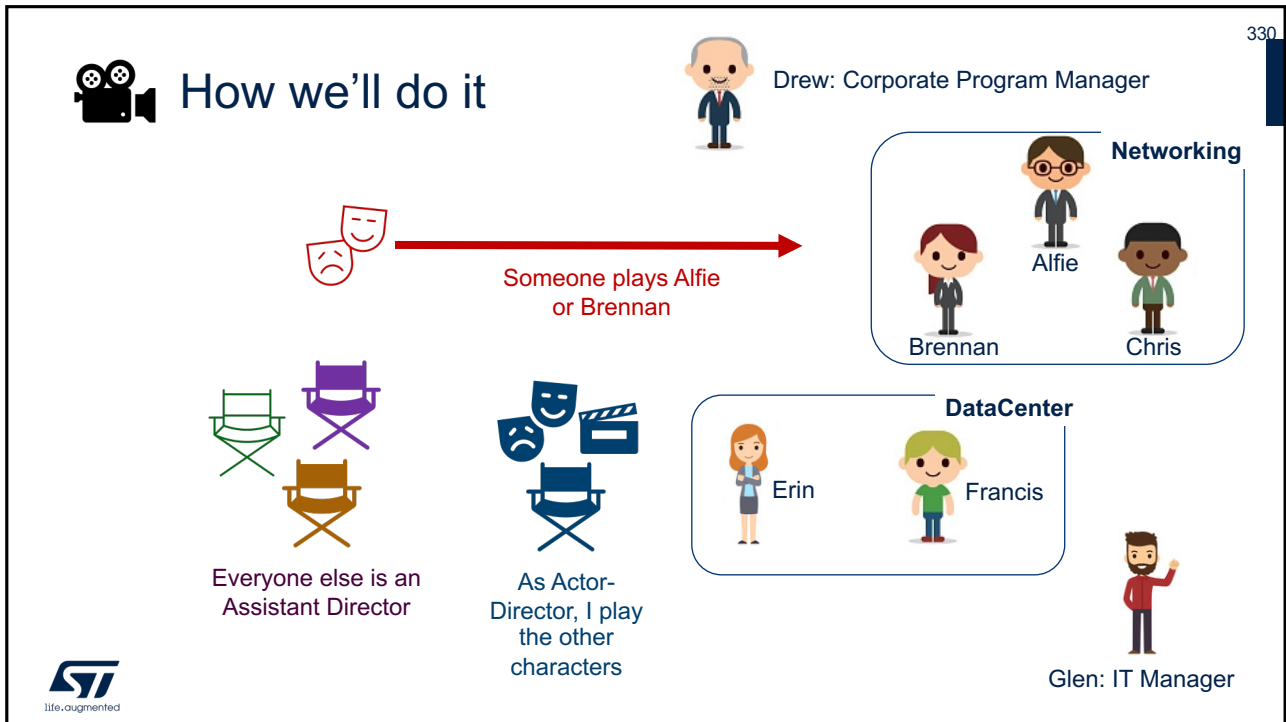
Glen: IT Manager

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📹 The Backdrop

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- The Networked Products Group **(Networking)** has developed a new, self-configuring Stack Transceiver called **T2**. They believe that it has huge potential in the Data Center market.

- The Data Center Group **(DataCenter)** is already using the **T1** Stack Transceiver from Networking in its products, though the experience of integrating it was an unhappy one.

- **Networking** hopes to persuade **DataCenter** to use **T2** in an upcoming product.

T2
?
Networking
Alfie
Brennan   Chris

DataCenter
Erin   Francis

T1

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How we'll do it

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Drew: Corporate Program Manager

Networking

Alfie

Brennan

Chris

Someone plays Alfie or Brennan

Everyone else is an Assistant Director

As Actor-Director, I play the other characters

DataCenter

Erin

Francis

Glen: IT Manager

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Assistant Directors

If I think the scene is not right, I'll say "cut!"

Then, your job is to suggest *how to improve the scene*

"Don't do that" leaves a lot of possibilities !

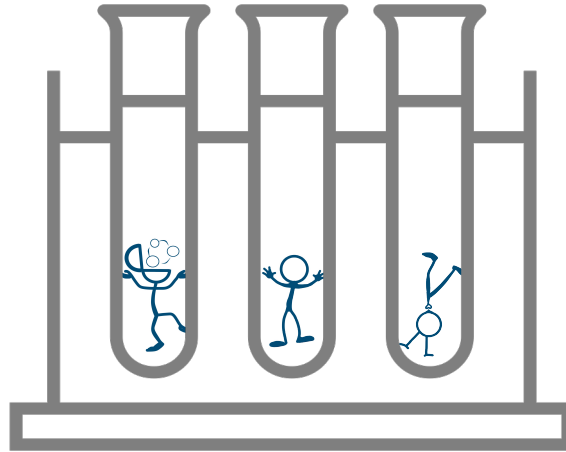"Try this!" is a lot easier to understand

iconda

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Goal: learn through experimentation

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Scene 7: Irritation and anger
The project is underway and, inevitably, there are problems.
This is a weekly operations meeting. It's routine, but Erin seems to be upset about something.
The Networking team's objectives are simply to report progress and sync up with DataCenter and IT .

Roles

Erin: your trainer

Brennan: ?

Assistant Directors : everyone else

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Scene 7: Irritation and anger
The project is underway and, inevitably, there are problems.
This is a weekly operations meeting. It's routine, but Erin seems to be upset about something.
The Networking team's objectives are simply to report progress and sync up with DataCenter and IT.

Dialog:

… the meeting is already underway as we join it …

Brennan
Hi everyone. Sorry that I'm a bit late.

Erin *(taciturn)*
Hi Brennan. Glad that you've turned up.
You're late, for sure, but it's not just a couple of minutes that I'm worried about.
Where's this release that you promised me? That's over a week now!

Brennan
There's no update since yesterday, and I think that you were copied on the mail?
Our best guess is the 17th.

Erin
BEST GUESS??! I've just about had enough of best guesses! Can't you guys do better than that?
This is a customer-facing project, I'd like to remind you. And it's our BU that's in the firing line!
IT'S NOT FRIGGING GOOD ENOUGH!

…

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Let's practice…

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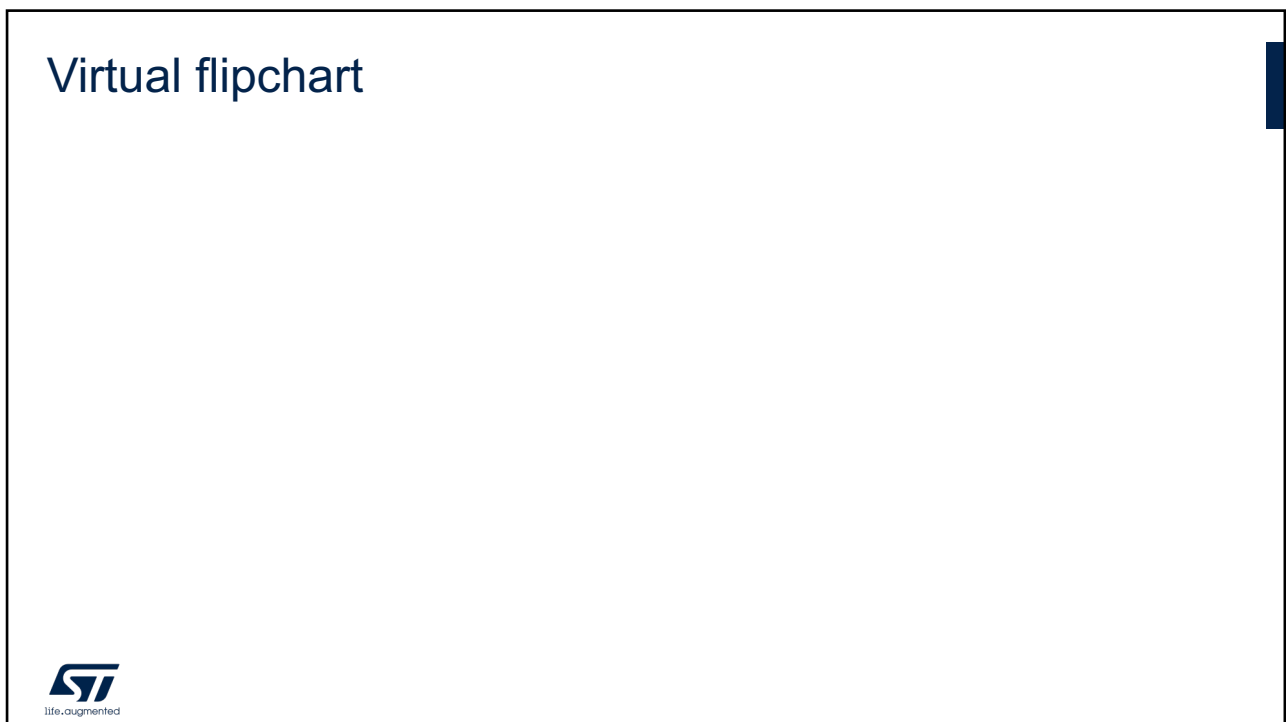# Identification and treatment of remaining queries

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Virtual flipchart

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Actions

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Virtual flipchart

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Close

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BACKUP

45

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Having achieved some inner calm …

Intent

Stop/refuse something
Direct Correct
Persuade
Energise
Amuse
Support/help
Reassure
Inform
Understand/clarify
Defend/justify oneself

… and also:

KEY

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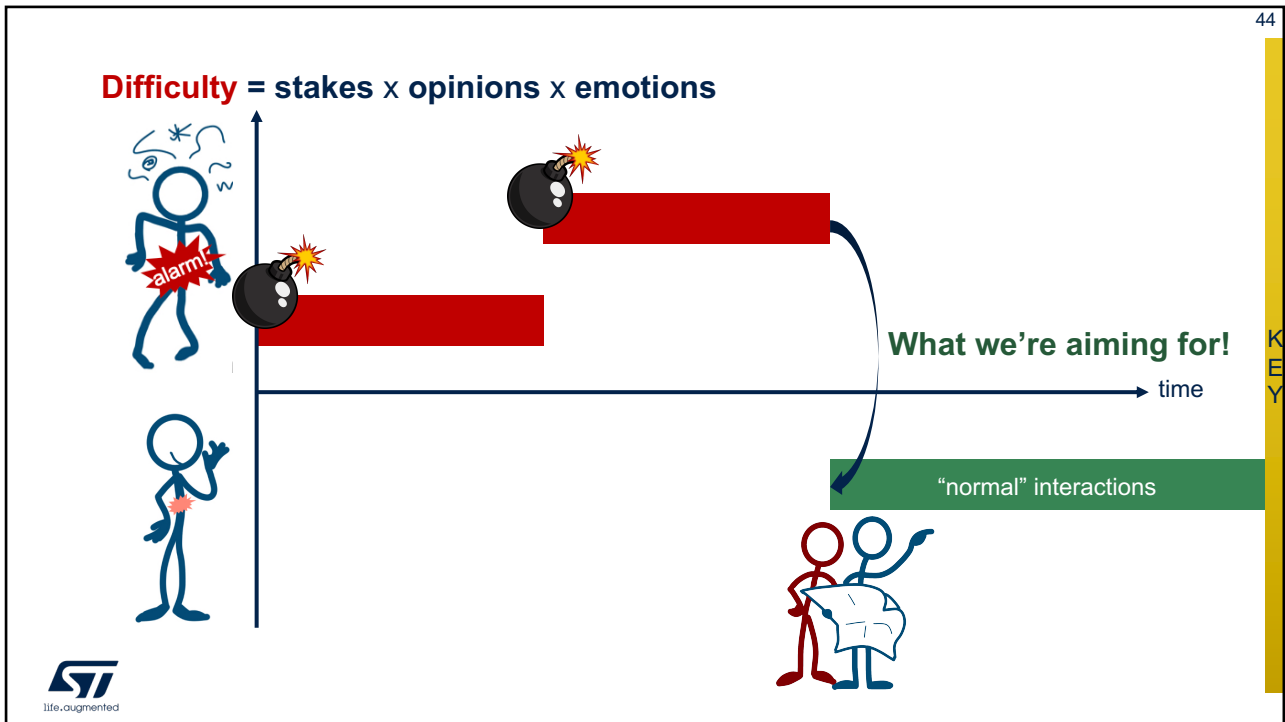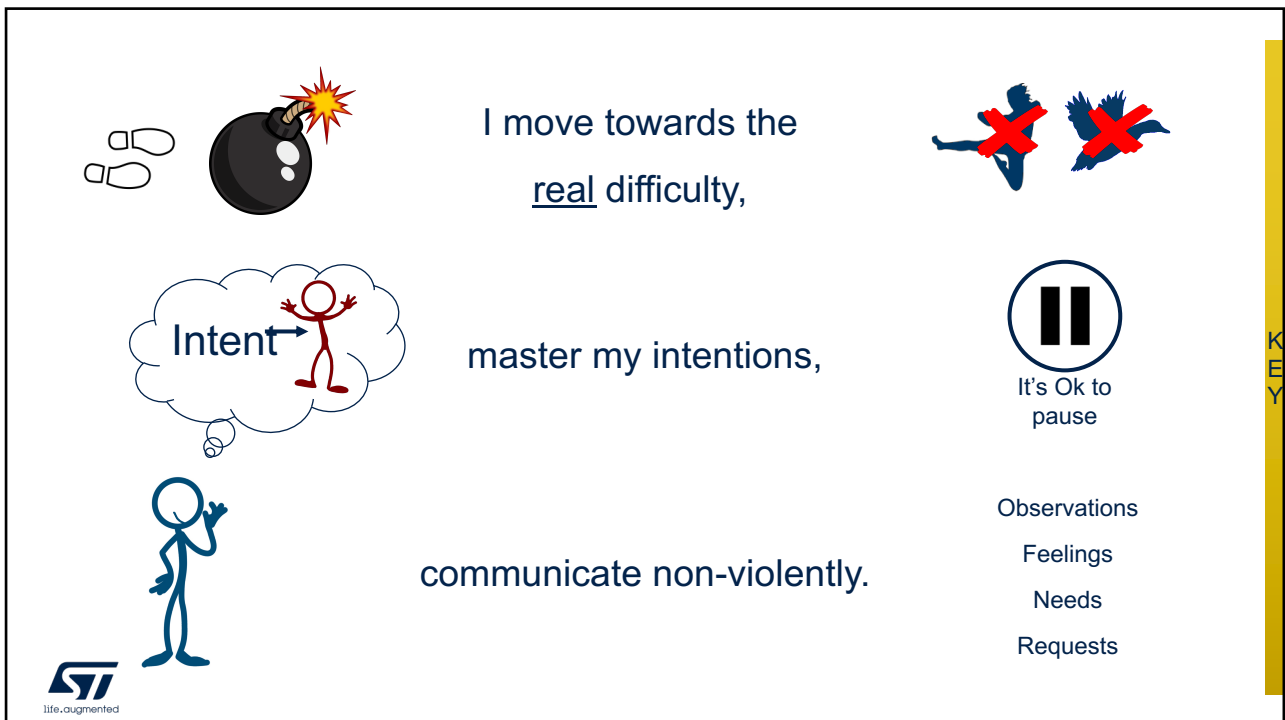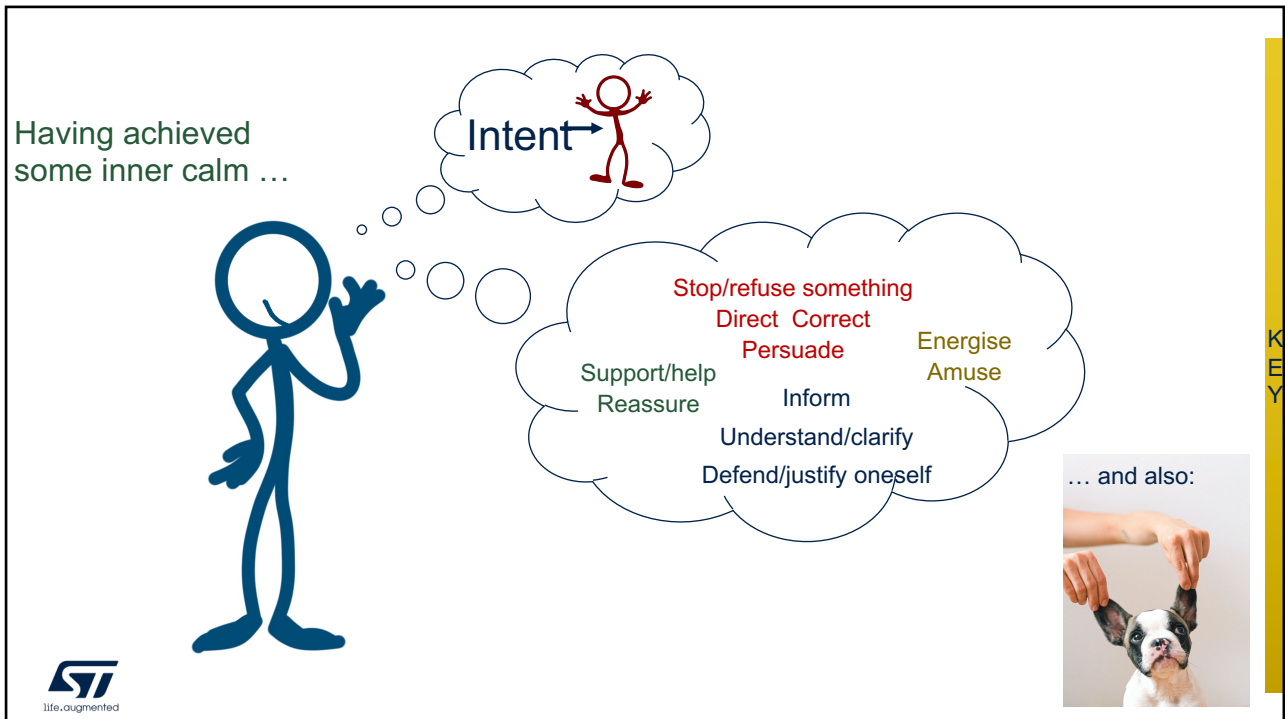## I start the dialog with Observations because …

It's <u>safer</u>!

1. **For them**

   Facts are less likely to trigger defensiveness and resistance

2. **For me**

   If the other person wishes me harm or denies facts then, recognising this, I may choose fight or flight!

KEY

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The Observations Compass

Facts, experiences
Numbers, descriptions, verifiable data

Rules
"I must…"
"It should …"
"I can't …"
"It's impossible …"

Judgements
"It's important that …"
"It took a long time …"
"They're slow …"
"It's good/bad/ugly …"
"I am …"

Suppositions
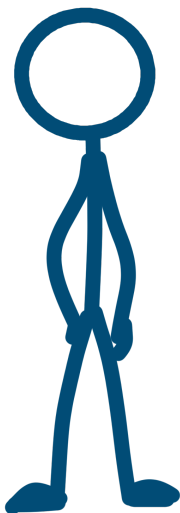Assumptions
Hypotheses
Deductions
Projections

"Meta model", John Grinder and Richard Bandler

K
E
Y

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Accuracy throughout …

True observations - the <u>objective</u> situation
"it is .., there are .., on <date> .., the email stated …"

What I'm <u>really</u> feeling
"I am annoyed, embarrassed, confused, worried …"

What I <u>genuinely</u> need
"I want, prefer, like, need, …"

<u>Exactly</u> what I'm requesting
"Please could you, I'm asking you to, would you be willing to, …"

K
E
Y

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… combining honesty with benevolence

me   them

- Well-intentioned words sometimes detonate unseen issues !

- If necessary, I clarify what I **do** intend and what I **don't** intend

KEY

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Checklist

	Ok ☺	Ko ☹	Neither	Ok-ness: did Alfie/Brennan do the following?
Intention				Objectives include listening/understanding? Expectations are for here and now?
Observations				Facts, experiences. Numbers, descriptions, verifiable data.
Feelings				What I am really feeling - "I am annoyed, embarrassed, confused, worried …"
Needs				What I truly need - "I want, prefer, like, need, …"
Request				Clear/unambiguous, positive/precise, negotiable/refusable

Honest, benevolent.

KEY

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Permissions

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1. Use your own style / vary your style
   - Questioning
     - "What do you think?"
   - Directive
     - "Tell me what you think!"
   - Playful
     - "Yoda asks, explain what thinking you are" ☺
   - Supportive / inviting
     - "Perhaps you see things differently? …"

2. Sometimes, you may keep quiet
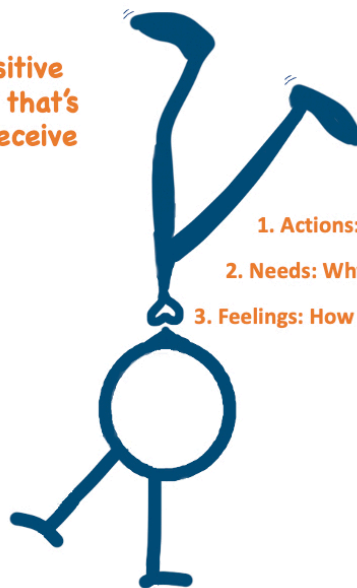   - You *cannot* **not** communicate: words are only one means

K E Y

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One Last Thing

Using NVC to Show Appreciation

750

Giving positive feedback that's easy to receive

1. Actions: What you did

2. Needs: Why it was right for me

3. Feelings: How I felt

K E Y

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Our technology starts with You

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