

Supportive Conversation Cue Cards

A Practical Guide for Everyday Conversations

Supportive conversations do not require expertise or specialist training.

Often, the most helpful thing you can do is create space for someone to feel heard, understood and supported.

Notice

What Have I Noticed?

Focus on:

- Changes in behaviour
- Changes in mood
- Reduced engagement
- Changes in attendance
- Signs of stress or overwhelm

Helpful Reminder:

Focus on what you have noticed rather than what you think might be wrong.

Open

Simple Conversation Starters

Try:

- “I've noticed you don't seem yourself lately.”
- “I just wanted to check in.”
- “How have things been recently?”
- “Is there anything you'd like to talk about?”
- “How are you doing?”

Helpful Reminder:

Simple is usually best.

Listen

Helpful Questions

- “Would you like to tell me more?”
- “How has that been affecting you?”
- “What has been the biggest challenge?”
- “What would be most helpful right now?”
- “What do you think you need?”

While Listening:

- *Stay curious*
- *Listen without judgement*
- *Allow pauses*
- *Reflect back what you've heard*
- *Resist the urge to immediately solve the problem*

Respond

Helpful Responses

- “Thank you for sharing that.”
- “That sounds difficult.”
- “I'm glad you told me.”
- “It sounds like that's been hard.”
- “Let's think about what might help.”

Less Helpful Responses

Avoid:

- “At least...”
- “You'll be fine.”
- “Everyone feels like that.”
- “You should...”
- “I know exactly how you feel.”

Signpost

Additional Support May Include

- Manager support
- HR or People Services
- Occupational Health
- Employee Assistance Programmes
- Focus Connect
- GP or healthcare services

Remember:

*NOTICE
CHECK IN
LISTEN
RESPOND
SIGNPOST*