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Seeing my side

By Kristy Grant-Hart

How many times have you thought, “If you could just see it from my point of view, you’d understand!” When you’re struggling with diametrically opposed views, frustrations can mount quickly. Egos get involved. Opinions get entrenched. Stalemates begin—or worse.

When you’re faced with this situation, there are questions that can help.

What would have to happen . . .

When you’re stuck, think of your ideal outcome, then add it to the end of this sentence, “What would have to happen to (insert outcome)?” By asking this question, the other person will mentally take themselves to a place where the outcome you want has occurred. They will reveal the circumstances under which your outcome is possible.

This question has the benefit of exposing the real obstacles. For instance, let’s say you need a new policy management system. If your boss won’t approve it, you can ask, “What would have to happen for us to buy the system?” The answer might be to free up the budget. If that’s the case, you can negotiate to move budget items around. If the answer is that IT vetoed the last vendor, then you could call the department and ask for the security requirements, then identify a vendor that could be approved.

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