

# SIMPLE responses for DIFFICULT conversations

## 1. ACKNOWLEDGE

Respond with empathy



I'M SO SORRY YOU FEEL THIS WAY.  
THIS SOUNDS LIKE A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION FOR YOU.  
I'M SORRY THAT THIS HAS HAPPENED.



Express gratitude

## 2. APPRECIATE

THANK YOU FOR HAVING THIS CONVERSATION WITH ME, I'M GLAD YOU DID.  
I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS MUST HAVE BEEN A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION TO HAVE, THANK YOU.  
THANK YOU FOR BRINGING THIS STRAIGHT TO ME.

Point people forward

## 4. AFFIRM

I'M SURE THERE IS SOMETHING WE CAN DO ABOUT THIS.  
LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO FIND A SOLUTION MOVING FORWARD.  
WE CAN CERTAINLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS, WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST WE DO NEXT?



Listen more than you speak

## 3. ASK

TELL ME MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU MEANT WHEN YOU SAID.....  
HOW CAN I BEST SUPPORT YOU RIGHT NOW?  
WHAT ARE YOU FINDING MOST DIFFICULT ABOUT THIS SITUATION?



Action what you say

## 5. ACT

LET'S TALK ABOUT OUR NEXT STEPS FROM HERE.  
WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT FROM EACH OTHER AFTER THIS CONVERSATION?  
HOW ABOUT WE ORGANISE A TIME TO MEET LATER THIS WEEK AND DISCUSS OUR NEXT STEPS FROM HERE?

