# MANAGING DIFFICULT MEETINGS



#### Starting the Meeting

- The way you commence a meeting sets the tone and potential outcome.
- Before starting, clearly define the purpose of the meeting: informing, consulting, or negotiating.

## **INFORM**

Is the meeting simply to share information?

# **CONSULT**

Are you seeking feedback before <u>you</u> make a decision?

# PURPOSE for MEETING

### **NEGOTIATE**

Are all parties' committed to reaching an agreed outcome?

This requires the other parties' agreement.



#### Strategies for Managing Difficult Conversations

- 1. Go hard on the issue, easy on the people.
- 2. Use silence to encourage all parties to have their say and to defuse tension.
- 3. Listen more than you speak listening carefully is critical. Clarify that you have heard and understand their point of view.
- 4. Paraphrase what has been said to show that you have listened and understood.
- 5. Use 'I' statements. Avoid 'you' statements
- 6. Remind everyone what the purpose of the meeting is if it goes 'off-track'.
- 7. End the meeting with a summary and next steps, reiterating any action points resulting from the meeting.



