



# Communication Strategies for Managers

Pathstream Webinar Series

November 20, 2024

**Welcome!**



**In the chat, add your name  
and where you're dialing in from!**

# Introductions



**Caity Richards**  
Coaching



**Liz Fernandes**  
Coaching

Centene has partnered with Pathstream to help you **grow and develop your career at Centene through 1:1 career coaching, resources and certificate programs.**



# Today's Goals

**01** Review reasons why **communication can be challenging**

**02** Share strategies for **navigating difficult conversations**

?

Please add any questions you have in the Q&A feature. You can even add questions anonymously.



Difficult conversations can happen when...



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- Stakes are high



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**Example:** You have a coworker who tells jokes you find offensive at work. When you try to have a conversation about it, your coworker doesn't understand your point of view. They are just trying to make people laugh, but you feel insulted.



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- **Feelings are involved**

**Example:** There are budget cuts at your company making it necessary for you to let a team member go. A serious argument occurs because they feel it is unfair and they blame you for their hurt feelings.



# Tools for Difficult Conversations



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Proactively  
create a positive,  
solution-oriented  
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Create space  
for effective  
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even during conflict,  
using **The Net**

# Tools for Difficult Conversations



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Create space  
for effective  
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even during conflict,  
using **The Net**

Give meaningful  
feedback using the  
**AIM framework**

# Tool #1: Foster Psychological Safety



What is psychological safety  
and why does it matter?



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What is psychological safety and why does it matter?

**Psychological safety** is the belief that one is safe for interpersonal risk-taking, like sharing ideas, asking for help, and owning mistakes without fear of negative consequences.

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According to research, psychological safety at work directly supports:

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What is psychological safety and why does it matter?

**Psychological safety** is the belief that one is safe for interpersonal risk-taking, like sharing ideas, asking for help, and owning mistakes without fear of negative consequences.

According to research, psychological safety at work directly supports:

- Retention
- Employee compliance with policies and processes
- Problem-solving (both in terms of pace and quality of decisions)
- Company reputation
- Team resilience in the face of challenges

# Tool #1: Foster Psychological Safety



So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. Model vulnerability

# Tool #1: Foster Psychological Safety



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## 1. Model vulnerability

“Last time I led the budgeting meeting, I didn’t prepare as well as I could have. I’d like to open the floor for any specific feedback I can incorporate for next time.”

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

## 1. Model vulnerability

“Last time I led the budgeting meeting, I didn’t prepare as well as I could have. I’d like to open the floor for any specific feedback I can incorporate for next time.”

“I know this has been a lot of work, and I’ve felt stressed about it, too. Is there anything I could do that would help relieve stress for you?”

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. Model vulnerability
2. Practice good communication skills, like:



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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. Model vulnerability
2. Practice good communication skills, like:
  - Active listening
  - Embodying effective non-verbal communication

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“What I’m hearing  
you say is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Is that right?”

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2. Practice good communication skills, like:

**Active listening** → Can look/sound like...

“What I’m hearing  
you say is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Is that right?”

“I hear how frustrated you are. Is  
there anything more you’d like to  
share about what’s causing  
that?”

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. Model vulnerability
2. Practice good communication skills, like:

Embodying effective non-verbal communication →

**Look at the person speaking** (not at a device or something else in the room)

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

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2. Practice good communication skills, like:

Embodying effective non-verbal communication →

**Look at the person speaking** (not at a device or something else in the room)

**Maintain an appropriate, open posture** (turn toward them, give personal space)

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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. Model vulnerability
2. Practice good communication skills, like:
  - Active listening
  - Embodying attentive non-verbal communication
3. Build relationships between teammates:

# Tool #1: Foster Psychological Safety



So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. **Model vulnerability**
2. **Practice good communication skills, like:**
  - Active listening
  - Embodying attentive non-verbal communication
3. **Build relationships between teammates:**
  - Encourage open communication
  - Nurture collaboration
  - Make time for bonding as people, not only as colleagues



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So how can leaders foster psychological safety for their employees?

1. **Model vulnerability**

2. **Practice good communication skills, like:**

Active listening

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3. **Build relationships between teammates:**

Encourage open communication

Nurture collaboration

Make time for bonding as people, not only as colleagues → A little can go a long way

# Tool #1: Foster Psychological Safety



Make time for bonding as people, not only as colleagues → **A little can go a long way**

**When people mention something about their lives outside of work** (like a family member, a hobby, etc.) try to remember and ask about it later.

**If you learn that colleagues have something in common** (like a favorite sports team, an alma mater), make the connection for them.

**Start meetings with an “icebreaker” question**, which can build connections, offer moments of humor, and be a quick reminder that we are all multi-dimensional.

## Tool #2: Use The Net to Navigate Conflict



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**THE NET**

# Tool #2: Use The Net to Navigate Conflict



Me:

- ✓ My interpretation
- ✓ My feelings
- ✓ What I've noticed
- ✓ My assumptions
- ✓ My needs

.....  
These are known  
to me.



THE NET

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- ✓ What **I've** noticed
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## THE NET

## The other person:

- x **Their** interpretation
- x **Their** feelings
- x What **they've** noticed
- x **Their** assumptions
- x **Their** needs

.....  
These are **NOT**  
known to me.

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Goals of using The Net:



THE NET

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## Goals of using The Net:

- Stay as close to your “side” as possible



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## Goals of using The Net:

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**THE NET**

## AKA:

- Stick you what you've observed, done, thought, and felt.

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## Goals of using The Net:

- Stay as close to your “side” as possible
- Don’t “cross” the net



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## Goals of using The Net:

- Stay as close to your “side” as possible
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**THE NET**

## AKA:

- Stick you what you’ve observed, done, thought, and felt.
- Don’t claim to know the other person’s observations, actions, thoughts, or feelings

# Tool #2: Use The Net to Navigate Conflict



## Me (Supervisor)

- I didn't adequately train my direct reports on the new system
- Our productivity metrics are dropping and I'm concerned there might be consequences for me and my team
- I want my direct reports to feel supported and competent

---

**These are known only to me.**

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## The other person (my direct report)

- I know I'm not hitting the productivity metrics
- I want to do a good job
- I'm worried that my boss is annoyed that I ask so many questions
- I'm going to get fired.

.....  
**These are NOT known to me.**

## Tool #2: Use The Net to Navigate Conflict



Staying on my side of the net could sound like:

"I noticed that your productivity metric is falling. I'm concerned because this could lead to bigger issues if we don't discuss it. From your perspective, what might be leading to a drop in productivity?"



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Staying on my side of the net could sound like:

"I noticed that your productivity metric is falling. I'm concerned because this could lead to bigger issues if we don't discuss it. From your perspective, what might be leading to a drop in productivity?"

Crossing the net could sound like:

"Your productivity metric is falling. You're just not working hard enough and unfortunately it's starting to show."

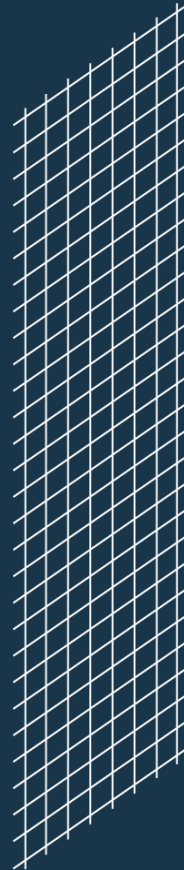
# Tool #2: Use The Net to Navigate Conflict



## Me

- ✓ I see/observed/noticed ...  
and I interpreted that to mean ...
- ✓ When you did ..., I felt ...
- ✓ I am concerned because [situation].  
Is this also concerning to you?
- ✓ I was expecting to see ...,  
but I did not see it. For example...  
What's your perspective?

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- X "You don't seem to care."
- X "You're angry because ..."
- X "You think this is good work."
- X "You're being careless."

# Tool #3: Give Feedback Using the AIM Framework



## Tool #3: Give Feedback Using the AIM Framework



# AIM

stands for:

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### Action:

Describe the specific action or behavior that needs to change (or that's going well, if delivering positive feedback)

### Impact:

Explain the impact that person's behavior or action is having.

### Move forward:

Describe what should happen next to resolve the feedback and move forward.

## Tool #3: Give Feedback Using the AIM Framework



### ***Scenario:***

For the past few weeks, an associate on your team is taking longer-than-average breaks almost every day. They are frequently away from their workstation and, even though they seem to bring a positive energy to work, their behavior is setting a bad example and affecting the team's productivity overall.

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### **A (Action):**

Taking too many long breaks and frequently being away from workstation

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**M (Move forward):** A 1:1 in two days, effort to stay at workstation more, and a follow-up in two weeks to see how it's going

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**02** Share strategies for **navigating difficult conversations**



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Questions?



**CENTENE**  
Corporation



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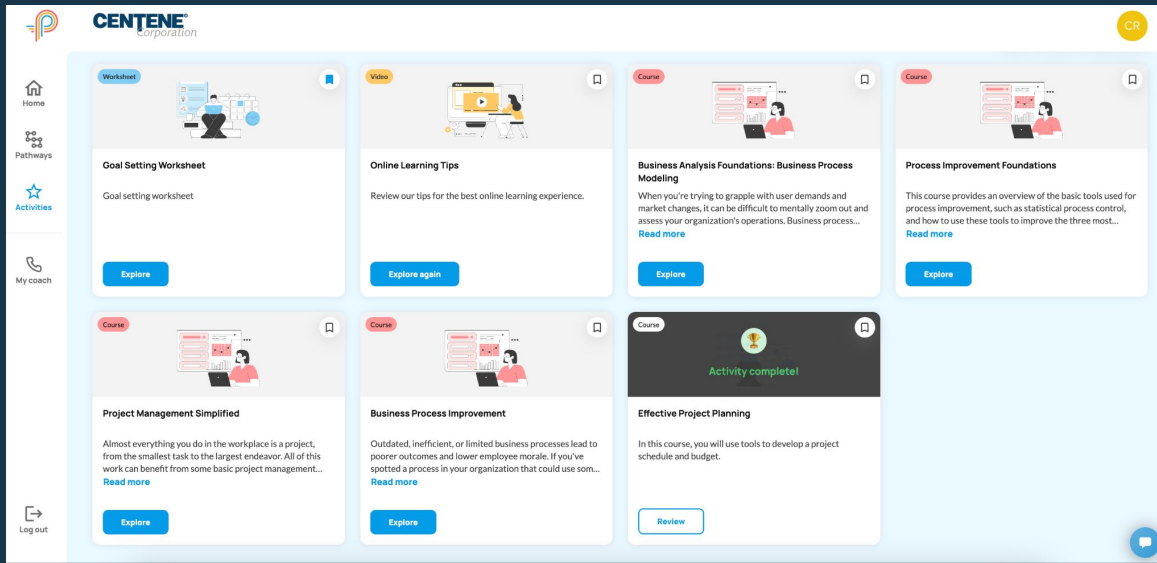
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**Step 1**

Create your profile

Log into Pathstream at  
**[centene.pathstream.com](https://centene.pathstream.com)**



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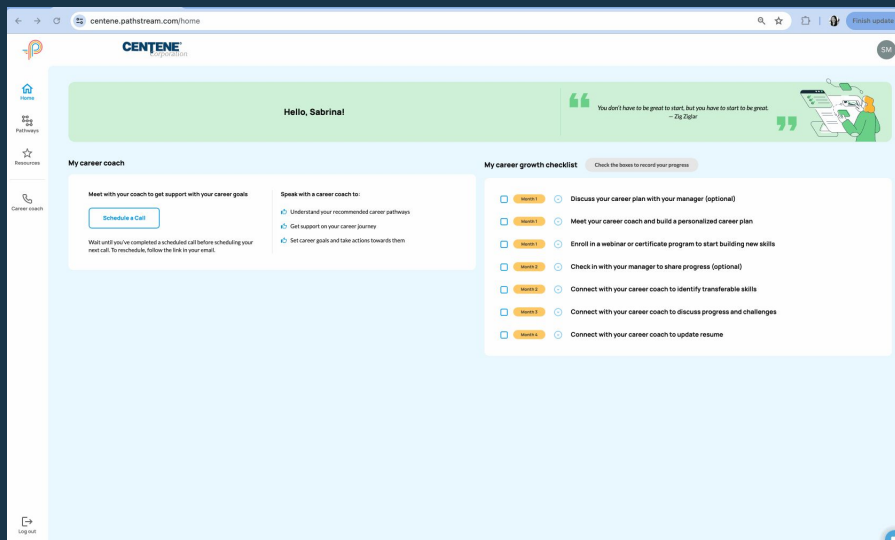
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## Step 2

Explore skill-building activities

Check out short activities on topics like growth mindset and giving feedback, and mini-courses on topics like SQL and time management.



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## Step 3

Schedule a call

**Meet with your coach.** Focus on your growth, practice transferable skills, and take steps toward your professional goals.

# Coming up:



Keep an eye out for many updates coming from Pathstream in January, 2025

**Including more webinars!**