BUILDING A CONFLICT
HABIT CHEAT SHEET

THE GOOD FIGHT

AVOIDING CONFLICT HINDERS productivity and erodes trust. But introducing conflict too fast will be a shock to the system. The secret is to start by adding small but meaningful dissention to your discussions. Here's a few techniques you can use to build a conflict habit on your team.

Test the Facts

Ask for evidence to validate facts people are sharing.

"You're proposing that we roll this program out to our high-end customers first based on the idea that they are more digitally savvy than other segments. What are you basing that on?"
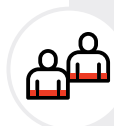
Explore a Different Side

Shed light from a different angle.

"We've done a good job at making this program simple. What could we do to make it sticky?"

Represent a Stakeholder

View the problem from a different point of view.

"I agree completely that this program is going to be a winner for our customers. How do you think it's going to land with our operations team?"

Add a Contingency

Identify alternate scenarios.

"I agree that's the way to go because I also think we're going to get our project to market first. How would the launch plan change if the competition beat us to market?"

Define the Terms

Ask people to define the words they are using.

"We all agree that we need to increase the accountability in our leadership ranks by having more consequences. What do we mean by consequences?"

Imagine the Implications

Probe about the impact of a proposed decision.

"Ok, I think this plan makes sense. If we roll that out in the summer, where do we expect peak production? How will that play out?"

Surface Tensions

Probe to identify misalignment or unspoken issues.

"I think I hear slightly different interpretations. Can we take another pass at what people think we're agreeing to?"

Highlight Assumptions

Spot the suppositions on which the plan is built.

"This whole plan seems to depend on how this plays out in Michigan. What assumptions are we making about Detroit?"

Make Room for Dissent

Make space for someone else's concerns.

"What are we missing here? What holes could someone find in this approach? If someone in Finance were to critique this plan, what would they say?"