

2025 CONFERENCE FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS



Canadian Nuclear
Laboratories | Laboratoires Nucléaires
Canadiens

Conflict Resolution

Building Trust and Engagement in Challenging R&D Project Transitions

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Building Bridges: Effective Communication in R&D Project Management



Slide 2

ML0 would it be possible to change 'agenda' to outline?

I would remove "questions" box

Matei, Lidia, 2025-04-15T18:48:18.916

MP0 0 changed agenda to outline. Removed questions box

Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T19:13:53.683

LS1 [@Merchant, Pruthal] [@Matei, Lidia] With your presentation, the CLC would like you to discuss a specific case study. Is this the plan? Should the slides be updated so they contain some details on the case you will be discussing (research scope, actual challenge)? The goal would be for the audience to get a demonstrated example rather than theoretical approaches.

Laroche, Sherry, 2025-04-16T15:28:32.045

MP1 0 Hi Sherry, Slide 3 contains the case. In the script which I will be preparing it will contain the specifics and details of the case. For presentation slides we tried to avoid adding too many words. The case are there and we need a theoretical background to support the actions.

Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-16T16:05:45.615

Case Study

Expert's Resistance During R&D Project Transition

Project:

- A multi-phase 3 year R&D project focused on biological effects of low dose radiation

Scope:

- Balancing the cross functional collaboration among various stakeholders (anyone involved and impacted), scientists and newly appointed Project Leaders

Challenge:

- A new project management framework was introduced to provide structure, visibility and stakeholder alignment.

Person A: Project Manager



Background: SME in Project Management
Collaborative Mindset

Reaction: open to discuss different perspectives
to reach a consensus

Committed to the final resolution

Person B: The uncooperative Expert



Background: Deeply experienced, highly respected
in the industry

Reaction: Viewed the new PM processes as
bureaucratic: resisted meetings and conflictual

Felt ownership was being taken

Impact



- Team collaboration stalled
- Siloed progress
- High emotional tension and risk of derailments



Slide 3

- dA0** [@Merchant, Pruthal] I would use "Opportunities" instead of issues
de Lima Pardini, Andrea, 2025-04-15T16:32:07.264
- MP0 0** done
Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T16:43:16.570
- dA1** [@Merchant, Pruthal] I removed authority to a lighter word - "Role"
de Lima Pardini, Andrea, 2025-04-15T16:37:37.454
- MP1 0** thank you
Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T16:43:23.320
- ML2** I would keep the title consistent with the previous slide "Case Study" instead of "Case - challenges faced"
Matei, Lidia, 2025-04-15T18:49:15.371
- MP2 0** done
Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T19:14:14.917
- ML3** I am not sure what is the opportunity. Is the person A a leader or another person at the same level? Are there two persons A?
Matei, Lidia, 2025-04-15T18:50:34.029
- MP3 0** It is supposed to be person B. Updated it.
Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T19:15:09.153
- ML4** I would avoid labelling a person as "uncooperative" would like to emphasize as conservative or not open minded
Matei, Lidia, 2025-04-15T19:03:53.875
- MP4 0** Updated to conservative
Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T19:14:42.480
- dA5** [@Merchant, Pruthal] I would put a happier guy here. :)
de Lima Pardini, Andrea, 2025-04-17T18:17:30.659

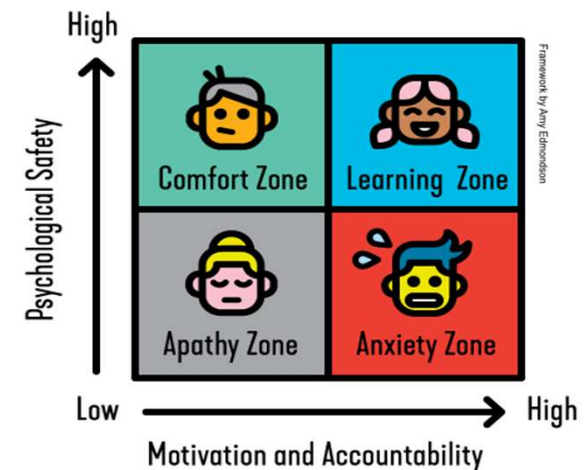
The Approach

Actions

Building Trust Through Psychological Safety

Approach:

- **Relationship Building:**
 - Established consistent 1:1 check-ins with technical leader to foster open communication
 - Active listening and validated concerns and frustrations
- **Psychological Safety:**
 - Facilitated open forums for concerns to be shared without judgement
 - Encouraged vulnerability by leading with empathy and transparency
- **Leadership Style:**
 - Applied servant leadership principles to support rather than direct
 - Reframed resistance as emotional signals; not opposition
- **Adaption and Learning:**
 - Tailored communication style based on emotional cues
 - Celebrated small wins to build momentum and mutual respect



Outcomes & Reflections

Person A - Outcome

- Optimized conversations
- Optimized cooperation
- Showed appreciation
- Asked for feedback



Person B - Outcome

- Acknowledged project management's value
- Provided constructive input
- Constructively participated in project management planning and monitoring processes

- Trust builds over time
- Safety enables growth
- People resist process not people



Slide 5

MLO I would change the design of patience. too many images distract the audience from the main concept; avoid too cartoony designs

Matei, Lidia, 2025-04-15T19:06:30.987

MPO 0 is it okay now?

Merchant, Pruthal, 2025-04-15T19:20:06.221



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