

TIPS for CURBING THE COSTS OF CONFLICT AVOIDANCE

- **Confront the right problem.** The biggest mistake people make is to confront the most painful or immediate issue and not the one that gets them the results they really need. Before speaking up, stop and ask yourself, “What do I really want here? What problem do I want to resolve?”
- **Rein in emotions.** We often tell ourselves a story about others’ real intent. These stories determine our emotional response. Master communicators manage their emotions by examining, questioning, and rewriting their story before speaking.
- **Master the first thirty seconds.** Most people do everything wrong in the first “hazardous half-minute”—like diving into the content and attacking the other person. Instead, show you care about the other person and his or her interests to disarm defensiveness and open up dialogue.
- **Reveal natural consequences.** The best way to get someone’s attention is to change their perspective. In a safe and nonthreatening manner, give them a complete view of the consequences their behavior is creating.

ABOUT THE RESEARCH. The study collected responses via an online survey tool of 656 individuals in March of 2010. Margin of error is approximately 3%.

LEARN NEW SKILLS. To learn how Crucial Accountability™ can help you curb the costs of conflict avoidance, visit www.vital-smarts.com or call 1.800.449.5989.

According to our study of more than 650 people, employees waste an average of \$1,500 and an eight-hour workday for every crucial conversation they avoid.

According to the research, 95 percent of a company’s workforce struggles to speak up to their colleagues about their concerns. As a result, they engage in resource-sapping avoidance tactics including ruminating excessively about crucial issues, complaining, getting angry, doing unnecessary work, and avoiding the other person altogether.

In extreme cases of avoidance, the organization’s bottom line is hit especially hard. A shocking 8 percent of employees estimate their avoidance has cost their organization more than \$10,000. And one in twenty estimate that over the course of a drawn-out silent conflict, they waste time ruminating about the problem for more than six months.

The research confirms people who are skilled at discussing crucial issues waste significantly less time complaining, feeling sorry for themselves, avoiding problems, and getting angry. The few who know how to speak up don’t waste time avoiding crucial issues because they have the confidence and skills to raise them in a way that leads to productive dialogue.

An innovator in corporate training and leadership development, VitalSmarts combines three decades of original research with 50 years of the best social science thinking to help leaders and organizations change human behavior and achieve new levels of performance. VitalSmarts has identified four high-leverage skill sets that, when used in combination, create healthy corporate cultures. These skills are taught in the Company’s award-winning training programs and *New York Times* bestselling books of the same titles: *Crucial Conversations*, *Crucial Accountability*, *Influencer*, and *Change Anything*. VitalSmarts has consulted with more than 300 of the Fortune 500 companies and trained more than one million people worldwide. www.vital-smarts.com

KEY RESULTS

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95% struggle to speak up about concerns

8% estimate their avoidance has cost their organization more than \$10,000