



Reframing unpleasant and difficult situations

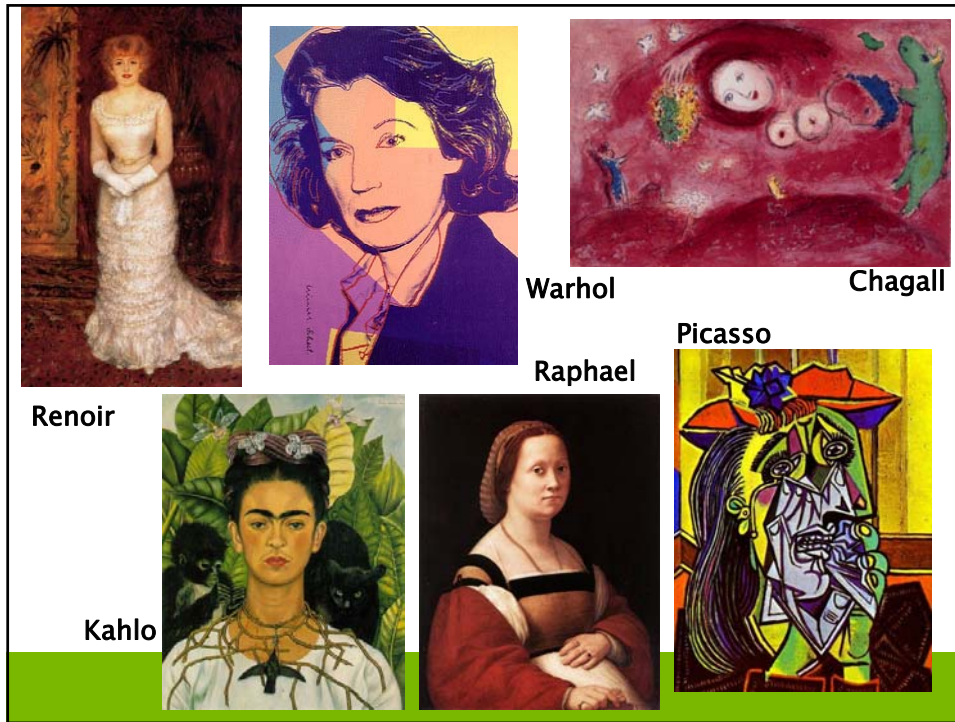
Women and Leadership Series

Presented by the Organisational Development Unit



Introductions

- If you were a portrait who would paint you?
 - Renoir
 - Picasso
 - Raphael
 - Warhol
 - Chagal
 - Kahlo
 - Someone else?



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Our view of the world
Frames are like paintings:

- An ugly frame can make any painting look bad
- A beautiful frame can make an ordinary painting look better

Why are frames important?

- Tied to our information processing:
- How we see our
 - Options
 - Risk
 - Loss/gain
 - Power
- How we see others'
 - Identity
 - Characteristics
 - Power

Who is this person?


 A collage of five photographs of Queen Elizabeth II in different contexts:

- Top left: A black and white photograph of a young Queen Elizabeth II in a military-style uniform and cap, standing against a plain background.
- Top right: A black and white photograph of a young girl (Princess Elizabeth) sitting and holding a dog, with a vertical text label 'THE ROYAL COLLECTION' on the right edge.
- Bottom left: A color photograph of Queen Elizabeth II wearing a bright blue coat and hat, holding a clear umbrella, standing in front of a wooden building.
- Center: A color photograph of Queen Elizabeth II in full royal regalia, including a crown and a white ermine-trimmed cape, holding a document.
- Bottom right: A color photograph of a woman in a dark, hooded coat walking a black dog in a grassy area.



Why worry about frames?

- How you frame life can
 - Empower, or
 - Restrict you
- There's not much that's all good or all bad in life
- It's how you perceive it
- How you perceive something often determines the result



What are frames?

- What you see and the way you see it
- Mental shortcuts to
 - Make sense of complex information
 - Interpret the world around us
 - Represent that interpretation to others
- Provide meaning through simplification
 - Perceptions - filters
 - Field of vision



But they

- Are built on a persons beliefs, values and experiences
- Are unconscious
- Can pre-empt conscious decision-making
- Multiply and distort in group situations - especially work



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Different Perspectives

- 2 people can perceive the same event in totally different ways
- The same goes for fish!
- How you frame the event determines the outcome



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What is reframing?

- Finding other ways to look at a situation that is
 - Unpleasant
 - Difficult
 - Maybe even frightening
- And making it into something that
 - Empowers you
 - Supports you, your goals and objectives
- It doesn't deny or overlook the situation
- It provides options, paths of action, solutions that couldn't be seen before



Reframing situations

What gets in the way?

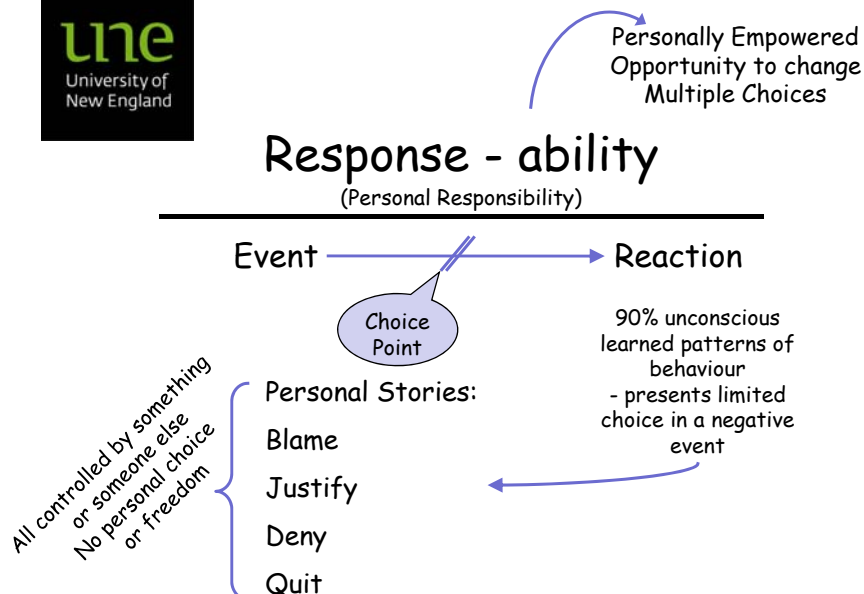
- Time
- Being caught on the hop
- Energy
- Over-reacting
- Taking things personally

Reframing situations – What helps?

- Managing your time
- Leaving responsibility where it belongs – who owns the problem?
- Distract – change the focus
- Standing back and starting over
- Deciding what's important
- Empathy – put yourself in their shoes
- Realise what they think of you isn't your business
- Being prepared to go outside your comfort zone
- Change the tone of your voice
- Speak slowly and quietly
- Staying calm and in control
- Sharing with others
- Being prepared for anything

Response - ability

(Personal Responsibility)





How?

- Context reframing
 - Take a negative situation
 - Make it positive in another context
- Content reframing
 - Changing what a situation means to you
 - Look at the bigger picture
 - Look at it from a different angle



How would you reframe this?

- You can't afford a flight to Sydney for an appointment, so you have to catch the train
 - Our team of participants suggested:
 - Use the time on the train to benefit yourself:
 - Read a book, catch up on work, sleep
 - Cheaper option - you can use the money you saved for yourself
 - Think of it as an adventure
 - See the countryside
 - You can have a few drinks on the train
 - There are lots of things you can do on a train you can't do on a plane
 - No seatbelts!
 - You can take more luggage
 - Trains feel safer, don't get cancelled and there's less processing
 - More luxury for cheaper - you can go 1st class but who can afford to fly 1st class?



How would you reframe this?

- You've planned a hot date/family picnic/night at the movies, but the car won't start

Our team of participants suggested:

- Catch a taxi to your 'hot date'
- Ask your date to come to your place
- Have a picnic in the backyard with your family
- Watch a DVD instead
- The car not starting could be a good excuse if:
 - Your date wasn't all you thought they were
 - You don't really get on with your family!!



How would you reframe this?

- You missed out on a position you applied for

Our team of participants suggested:

- Don't give up - it's not the end of the world!
- Ask for feedback on your application & interview
- Make a plan of action - what else can you do?
- Think of other options - write a list



CRITWATNF

Currently Residing In The Where Are They Now File

- Examples?
- What's important, even crucial, one day becomes insignificant
- Influences on what seems important
 - Emotions
 - Media
 - 'Flavour of the month'
- What if we could all be more objective and see things more clearly all the time?



Reframing conflict

- First 30 seconds
 - How the conversation is initiated is important
- Listen on a deeper level
 - Underlying interests - what do they really want?
- Conversation not confrontation
 - Disclose something about yourself
 - Look at problem together
- Creatively explore options
- Say what you mean - don't play games
- Nobody's perfect - it still might not work



Changing your perspective

- Talk to a trusted friend
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Go for a coffee
- Go for a walk
- Recognise your issues – why are you reacting that way?
- And theirs – what makes them act like that?
- Distance yourself, sleep on it
- Get it down on paper so you can see it more clearly
- Pick your battles – how important is this issue?
- Set boundaries – be clear on your role eg ‘I can only advise...’
- Accept letting go of what you can’t control
- Don’t shoot the messenger
- Be professional – don’t let them drag you down!



Tools for reframing

- Communicate
 - Be clear communicating who’s responsible for what
 - Build in opportunities for feedback and communication
 - Emails:
 - Don’t respond to an email straight away – think before writing, or save it in *drafts* while you think
 - Phone:
 - Let them vent first, listen to what they want, then you can talk calmly
- Set aside time to think and plan
 - Book time in your diary
 - Put it in the top 3 of your to-do list:
 - ‘I will today.....’