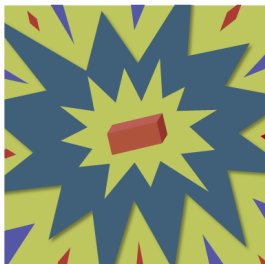


## Leadership Tool: Smash the Brick



**S – STOP** – when you feel an uncomfortable pinch or rub in a relationship.

**M – MOMENT** – take a moment to breathe and observe the discomfort, recall what the other person said or did that rubbed you the wrong way.

**A – ASK to ALIGN** on the intention and impact. Ask the other person what they meant by their words/actions, their intention or need, and then share the impact it had.

**S – SUGGEST** – your understanding of the intention, express what you need, and discuss how to align on each other's needs.

**H – HARMONY** – agree to the next steps that get each person what they need

# Smash the Brick



**Description:** Often, the impact of someone’s words and actions are not aligned with their intention, and it rubs us the wrong way. When we ignore the rub, we place a brick in the middle of the relationship, and then we form judgments, and then seek evidence to prove the judgments, and we treat each other differently, and before we know it one misunderstanding has turned into a conflict, and there is a brick wall blocking communication, collaboration, and positive regard. Soon all you can see is the wall, and it can feel impossible to break through. In the long run, it may not be easy, but it’s much better to smash the brick as soon as possible.

**Application: To clarify misunderstandings and prevent destructive conflict.**

- a. Pay attention to when you feel a pinch, and acknowledge it right away.
- b. Use the “SMASH” steps to create alignment and eliminate the brick.
- c. Keep in mind, the impact on you that creates the rub, is often not what the other person intended. Seek to understand first before reacting.

**Tips:**

- a. Address the pinch when it happens, it’s easier in the long run.
- b. Express agreements with others to use the brick language, and to call out a rub when you have one.
- c. Practice with less tense situations to build confidence for the bigger issues.