Social Intelligence

Tone	Maintain tone of curiosity. Remind yourself that you can learn from this person.
Pace	One question at a time - adjust if you sense misunderstanding or anxiety.
Preamble	Use short phrases that explain intent and awareness of difficult terrain.

Focus | Maximise Opportunity

Partic-ipation	Participating be best use of time/energy? Which stakeh-olders should be involved? Who should be notified or included?
Commun-ication Channel	Can discuss over email instead of meeting time? Would be better face to face/via video? Can we mitigate downsides of video call?
Discussion Direction	What is desired outcome? What is big picture? Getting to heart of matter? Too deep into details?
Motivation	Consistent with our mission? Align with strategic prios? Importance, given other tasks? Passionate about this?
Mental Ecology	Clear headed enough for right now? Attention focused? Need break?

Evidence | Assess Strength or Credibility of Data

Credibility of Source	Area of expertise? experts agree? bias seen in the past? benefit financially, or other way?
Weighing Reasons	strongest reasons, pro and con? reasoning consistent?
Sampling	sample size? representation?
Data Collection	Method? When? Is typical qualitative research design? Control group?
Data Analysis	What does this mean? Standard Deviation? Normal Distribution? Outliers? Sample size significant for meaningful conclusion?

Effect | Explore Outcomes

Stakeh-olders	Impact on stakeholders (clients, customers, vendors, colleagues, other projects, community)
Time Span	Short/Medium/Long term effects
Multiple Scenarios	best/worst/most likely case?
Unintended Conseq-uences	unexpected downsides/up-sides? Range of side effects - desirable/undesirable?
Indicators	leading indicator/first sign of change? Lagging indicator-s/late signs of change? small wins to watch for and celebrate?

Effect | Explore Outcomes (cont)

Risk Assessment	Possibility of something -ve happening? If occurs, what is the harm?

Communication Lifecycle

Listen	Hear the whole question. Note key points. Paraphrase.
Align	Core Answer First. [Yes OR No, Number OR Date], I don't know and..., # of bullets].
Distill	Pause (up to 5 sec before speaking). Keep it essential to vital points.
Qualify	Do not oversimplify. [Currently..., Most reliable data shows..., Best answer right now...]

Assumption | Surface what we've taken for granted

Existence	Safe to assume there actually is a problem to the solution?
Uniqueness	Are we assuming there is only one process
Measur-ement	Safe to assume we can know that we've solved the problem?
Possibility	Assuming we have enough time?
Value	Assuming problem is worth solving?
Audience	Assuming we share the same pers[ective?
Category	Assume we grouped things correctly?
Similarity	Assuming these are more alike than different?
Time Constancy	Assuming situation hasn't changed since we started?

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Action | Plan or Manage Activity

Accountability	Who is accountable/managing? Who signs-off? Who should be reviewer?
Containment vs Prevention	Intent to contain problem? Intent to fix root cause?
Goal Analysis	What are goals? Measurable? Consistent? Feasible, given constraints?
Planning	Strategy? Tactical plan? Next steps? Timeframe?
Risk Assessment	HMW reduce probability of event happening? If event happens, HMW minimise -ve impact?

Preambles

YES	Right, Absolutely, Definitely, Sure, I like that, I'm with you, that rocks, that's great, excellent, nice, keep going, for sure, I'm onboard
NO	No way, not now, I don't think so, that feels like a stretch, I have concerns with that, the data doesn't support that, that doesn't sync with my experience, I don't see it that way
I Don't Know +	we don't know, no one knows, we haven't decided yet, the data is unclear, we aren't sure
Difficult Terrain	I'm thinking of...

Clarification | clarify meaning

Ambiguity	Do you mean X or Y?
Vagueness	To what extend? At what rate? In what percentage of cases? Over what timeframe?
Slippery Terms	For term X, do you and I mean the same thing?
Mental Graph	Units of measurement? Baseline? Change over time? Current level/rate?
Mental Pivot Table	Can we break that down by X? What does it look like broken out by X? (age, location, type, time, period, market etc).
Difficult Concepts	Definition? Example? Types?

Cause | Why something happened

Sequence of Events	Order? What else was happening at the time?
Trigger / Condition	Tigger event? Background conditions in place?
Mechanism	How does it work? Parts? Interaction of parts?
Root Cause	Root cause? More than one root cause?
Driver / Inhibitor	Forces in action? Drivers? Inhibitors?
Non-linear causality	interdependencies in system? Adaptive capabilities? Main feedback loops? Tipping point?

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