



THE QUOTABLE DISCONNECT PRINCIPLE

Eliminate difficult conversations
with clarity and empathy

Ann Latham

The Quotable Disconnect Principle by Ann Latham

To really learn something, you must practice it. The best way to practice it is to practice with others. So take one or two at a time, refer back to *The Disconnect Principle* book as needed, and really try to incorporate them into your thinking. As you learn, share them with your team and coworkers so you can all practice together. Check the boxes to help you track your progress.

The Disconnect Principle:

When something doesn't go the way you expected, all you know for certain is that something didn't go the way you expected.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

When your expectations aren't met, it doesn't matter whether you are dealing with a boss, a coworker, or a direct report. Your best response is, "We have a disconnect."

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

The way we traditionally think about feedback, accountability, and performance management prevents us from being the kind of human beings we want to be.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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No matter how carefully you script your language,
your thoughts will betray you.
Your body language, tone of voice, and
any impromptu words will make your true thoughts
obvious to your employee.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

The Disconnect Principle puts the focus on
the situation, not a person. Your goal is to
fix the situation, not a person.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

All feedback is constructive AND positive
because that's how we learn!

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

We can't see "lazy."
We can't see "unreliable."
We can't see "ambitious."
Those are assumptions about invisible personal attributes.
When we make them, we damage our ability
to treat people fairly and with an open mind.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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Fix the situation, *not* the person.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

When you try to do something TO someone, you will likely fail. When you try to do something WITH someone, you are far more likely to succeed.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

When someone tries to control us, manipulate us, pressure us, or just tell us what to do, they are clearly trying to do something TO us and we rarely respond well.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

There are really only four WITH activities. You can listen, ask questions, answer questions, and offer to help.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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The difference between doing TO and doing WITH
can be as simple as gaining permission.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

Do WITH not TO, by listening, asking questions, and
offering to help, and you will be more successful
in setting expectations, providing feedback, coaching,
teaching, advising, etc.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

When someone is helpful and working WITH us,
we feel supported and valued.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

Accountability is about collectively establishing
commitments and delivering on those commitments
so that the individuals can accomplish something no
one could do alone.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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If you question whether you are being fair,
you are probably about to do something TO someone.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

It's actually quite hard to be unfair when you are
truly doing your best to work WITH someone else.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

The minute you consider "fixing" others,
you have likely lost their respect,
the opportunity to help,
and a piece of your own humanity.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

In setting expectations, be specific!
Both parties must be able to explain exactly
what will be different when they are done
and how it will unleash next steps.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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Clarity is essential to *what* expectations are set;
collaboration is essential to *how* they are set.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

A mismatch between what the organization needs
and what an employee is willing and able to offer is
the ultimate disconnect – the mother of all disconnects.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

I often say that the #1 responsibility of a manager is to
create clarity.
Nowhere is this more true than the
clarity needed to match employees to organizational needs.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

Just as you can talk about disconnects
without getting into personal attributes, failures, or blame,
you can talk about a mismatch (the ultimate disconnect) between employee and position
without getting into personal attributes, failures, or blame.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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Focus on the match, not on the person.
Fix the match, not the person.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

The more ingrained in your culture the idea of
disconnects, matchmaking, and the dual responsibilities for the match,
the better for all.

Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

The power of the Disconnect Principle is that it frees
you from enervating emotions and preconceived judgments.
It puts the focus on the situation, not the other person.
It treats all parties as equals deserving of respect and fair treatment.

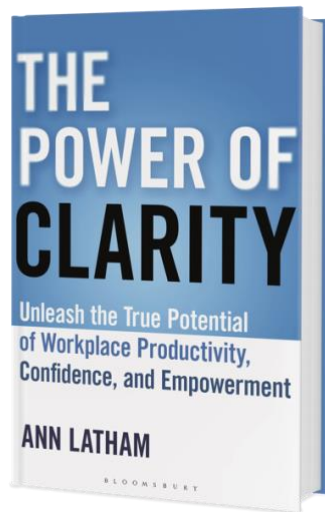
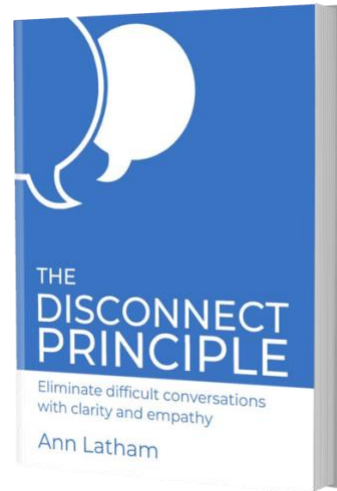
Love it!

Learned it!

Shared it!

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If you found *The Disconnect Principle* to be of value,
you will love [The Power of Clarity!](#)

If you've read *The Power of Clarity*,
please [review it as well](#).

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