

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Kim Scott | Care Personally, Challenge Directly with Radical Candor (Episode 225)

Maybe you've heard of a concept called "radical honesty," where you basically tell people what you're thinking no matter what, make no apologies, and say you're being "authentic" — even though it usually makes you look like a jerk. Today, we'll find a better balance between honesty and authenticity in our discussion with Kim Scott, author of [Radical Candor: Be a Kick-Ass Boss Without Losing Your Humanity](#).

In this episode, we'll hear about how Kim found out what her boss *really* thought of her and her work when he accidentally CQed her on an email to her colleagues and how her response to this professional gaffe can help us in our own careers. We'll also learn why most of us actually resist being honest with others around us — and why this is actually a disservice to the company, to that person, and to ourselves. We'll also discover how we can be radically candid with people who are not only our subordinates, but also those who might be above us in the hierarchy. The formula and techniques we'll hear about today will help us view honesty, candor, and empathy in a totally different way.

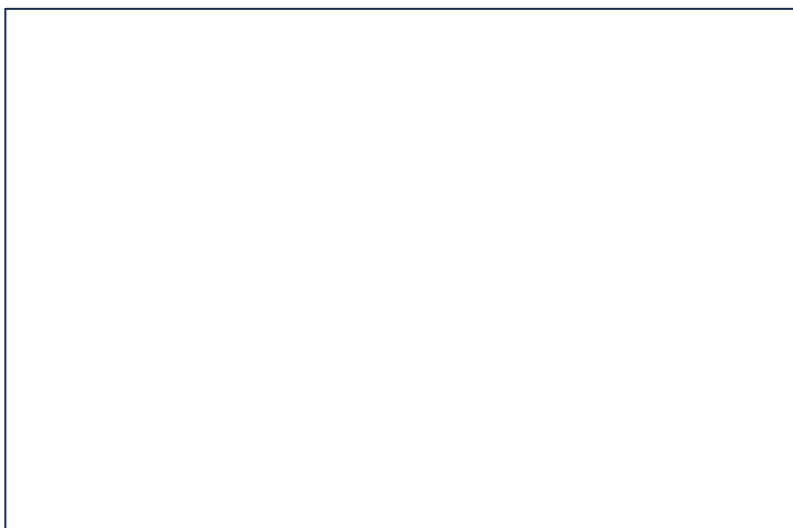
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What *Is* Radical Candor?

When Sheryl Sandberg was Kim's boss, she pulled her aside after a presentation and told her she said "um" every third word — a problem that could be easily corrected if Kim visited a speech coach on Google's dime. When Kim brushed this suggestion away as not that big of a deal, Sheryl took a more direct approach and said, "When you say 'um' every third word, it makes you sound stupid."

Kim took this stronger hint and visited the speech coach, discovering with embarrassment that Sheryl's statement wasn't an exaggeration. But what was it about Sheryl that made it easy for her to be so honest, and why had no one else been this honest before? Two things: Sheryl cared about Kim as an employee, but also as a human being. This was radical candor. This was caring personally *and* challenging directly.

When you're in a position to give honest feedback to someone you care about, are you able to challenge them directly with this level of radical candor? If not, what's holding you back?



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The Four Quadrants

If you find delivering **radical candor** to be a daunting challenge currently beyond your capacity, consider these alternatives that happen when you fall short on caring personally or challenging directly.

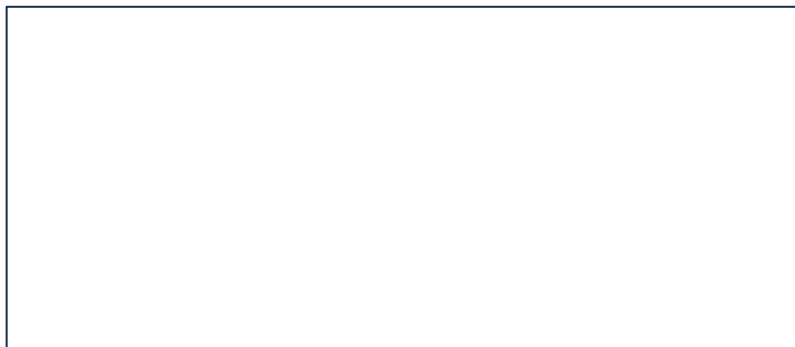
Ruinous Empathy happens when you care personally but don't challenge directly. You want to spare someone's short-term feelings, so you don't tell them something they need to know — which at best is unhelpful; at worst, it's harmful in the long run.

Manipulative Insincerity happens when you don't care personally or challenge directly. This can be praise to the person's face and harsh criticism behind their back. It's backstabbing.

Obnoxious Aggression happens when you don't care personally, but challenge directly. This might be brutally honest criticism dished out without pity, and it can feel like an attack to the recipient. It's frontstabbing.

Your first exercise in radical candor is to figure out which quadrant is your usual default when faced with an opportunity to provide feedback to someone.

Remember: the goal is to care personally and challenge directly; if you're not able to do this, try to dig deep and discover how you're falling short — and why.



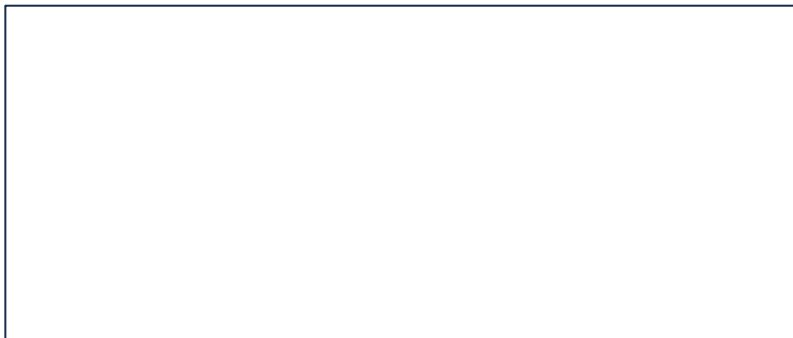
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Your Fly Is Down

“One of the things that’s hard in the moment about offering radical candor or soliciting it is that the topic can be very emotional, and that can sort of paralyze you,” says Kim. “But if you try to think of a simpler situation — like if you have a really hard math problem and you can’t figure out how to solve it, it can be much easier to solve it if you think of a similar math problem, but an easier one.”

For instance, if you want to give someone feedback about their strong body odor, you might hesitate because you feel like you’re being cruel in the moment. But if you relate it to doing the person a service — like telling them they have spinach in their teeth or their fly is down so they don’t get embarrassed when they go to their next appointment — you can figure out a way to deliver the news in a way that shows you care personally enough to challenge directly.

Over the course of the week ahead, try to deliver unpleasant but important feedback to the people you care about — the kind of things nobody else has the courage to tell them. Do it in private — not in public — and be there to help them cope with the emotions this might provoke. The long-term benefits will outweigh the short-term discomfort.



Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here](#).

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About



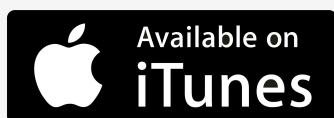
Join us as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers — from legendary creators to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth — and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these valuable insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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