Communication:
The art of consultation

Created by: Ros Woodhouse & Mazen Hamadeh
Edited by: Ana Cuciureanu
Presented by: Andrei Mouraviev and Vina Mohabir
Consultation

What is a consultation?
What do ideal peer consultants do?
As peer leaders seek to support the development of their mentees, the following sequence of questions can serve as a useful guide:

What?
So what?
Now what?

By applying these questions, the emphasis is placed on prompting students to actively guide their own processes of discovery.
Consultation Framework

1. What?
   Clarify the question

2. So what?
   Present options
   (negotiate boundaries)

3. Now what?
   Closure
Active Listening:

- Body language
- Paraphrase key points
- Ask open ended questions
- Frame questions in a positive, non-threatening manner
- Maintain eye contact
1. What? Clarify the Question

Sometimes the question is not clear.

Scenarios:

- I don’t understand this student’s accent
- The question is confusing
- The question is ‘too big’
  - I missed class will you please teach me everything
  - I have no idea what’s going on and the test is tomorrow
2. So what?  
Negotiate Boundaries

- As a peer consultant, what kind of questions do you expect to answer in a consultation?

- Do you have to answer every question?
2. So what?
Negotiate Boundaries

• What do I do when I don’t know the answer?

• What do I do with the student who is in a panic because she/he is behind and the assignment / test / deadline is coming up?

• What do I do with the student who just doesn’t ‘get it’ or is not into your explanation?
2. So what?

Negotiate Boundaries

- What if a student is coming on to me?

- What if a student is really angry about losing marks ‘because of what you told them’?

- What if the student failed a midterm and is asking you whether they should drop the course or keep it?

- What if a student is asking for information regarding petitions because they failed a course and they want it to disappear from their transcript?
2. So what?

Present Options

- Refer to the Resources Module
  (Familiarize yourself with all resources available on campus!)

- If you refer to your personal experiences, put a disclaimer forward and offer a lot of detail as to why your experience was the way it was

- Provide multiple options
2. So what? Present Options

- If needed, then refer student to another PL or an organization within York
- If the student is dealing with a personal issue, refer them to the Academic Coordinator or CDS (i.e. Tanya Da Sylva)
- Allow the student to come to their own decision
3. Closure

• How would you like to feel when you walk away from a consultation?

• How do we make that happen?
Consultation Framework

- Clarify the question
- Negotiate boundaries
- Explain
- Closure
Peer Leaders and students share responsibility for setting the agenda.

Students remain the decision makers.

When it comes to information, opinions, suggestions, activities etc., leaders and students remain free to “take it or leave it” without the fear of reprisal or the diminishment of the relationship.
Reflecting on your relationship

• When they work well, student-peer leader relationships foster a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in both parties.

• When they don’t work well, it is important not to take it personally; sometimes a prospective leader and student just aren’t a good “fit”. Be ready to move on if need be.

• Don’t give up easily!
SCENARIOS!
What did you learn?

Please jot down 4 things that you learned from this presentation
Thank You!

Any questions, comments or feedback?