Elephant in the Room
During Our Time Together Today

Introduction

Media

Facts

Identify Elephant

Deal with Elephant

Rebuilding Morale

Closing thoughts
Difficult Discussions in the Workplace

- Gun Control
- Environment
- Sexuality
- Social Media
What does the phrase “Elephant in the room” mean?

- Sensitive
- Tension
- Important
The Role of Traditional and Social Media

Our views become more transparent
- Emotions are high
- Views divide friends and family

Evaluate the sources of information
- Tap into liberal and conservative sources
- Reliable history: Wall St Journal, New York Times

Global Perspective
- Other countries view us through media
- What are their perceptions of us?
The Impact of Office Conversation

- Workers in 18 to 34 age group more likely to...
  - Experience negative job related fallout
  - Have difficulty accomplishing tasks
  - Feel isolated from co-workers
  - Experience an increase in hostility around the office – after having conversations about politics at work
- Older workers have more experience with elections hold a more historical perspective
- Men are four times as likely to argue with a co-worker about politics

Source: Harris Poll for American Psychological Association
“Most people spend more time and energy going around problems than trying to solve them.”

Henry Ford
Founder of Ford Motor Company
Why Are Elephants Hard to Confront?

Size
Reaction
Avoidance
History
Dealing With the Elephant

- Verify and Acknowledge
- Make a Plan
- Discuss the Issue
If You’re a Manager

Be Proactive
Managing Challenging Personalities

Unreliable
Mean
Unpredictable
Negative
Demanding
Addressing the Challenging Behavior

- Describe and Outline
- Discuss Behavior
- Don’t Make it Personal
- Be Specific
- Discuss Progress
Set Boundaries

- Necessary vs Irrelevant
- Name limits
- Acknowledge differences
- Be sensitive to identities
Motivating Teams Post “Elephant” Event

- Take Action
- Team Building
- Communicate
Key Points

• Reflect back on the information presented today
  – What is the most important thing you learned?
  – What is one thing you will do to address elephants that cross your path?
  – How do you prevent elephant situations?