

Tactics

Deborah Kolb and Judith Williams (2000) suggest that we can shape culture by redirecting conversations from unhealthy topics, like gossip, or other forms of destructive comments, by using communication maneuvers they call responsive turns. Responsive turns are communication tactics we can use to redirect potential unhealthy conversations. Four responsive turns suggested by Kolb and Williams, along with my definitions and some examples, are listed below:

Tactic	What Is It?	Example
Interrupt	Cutting off the negative conversation before it begins	“Oh crap, I’m late; I’ve gotta go.”
Name	Describing what’s going on so everyone can see it	“I just feel that if we keep complaining about kids, we’re never going to come up with anything useful.”
Correct	Clarifying a statement that is not true	“I was at the meeting, and Mr. Smith was actually opposed to the plan.”
Divert	Moving the conversation in a different direction	“Speaking of Tom, when does the basketball season start this year?”