Courage to challenge

Shows courage and confidence to speak up skilfully, challenging others even when confronted with resistance or unfamiliar circumstances.



Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4
Stands by own proposals in the face of difficult questions, providing supporting evidence.	Remains calm and stands by decisions in the face of opposition or resistance, addressing challenges appropriately.	Holds own position determinedly and with courage when it is the right thing to do, even when those in power have divergent views.	Takes a stand and acts on their own beliefs, despite significant opposition and personal risk.
Explores and takes into account the full range of viewpoints.	Observes, listens, questions and challenges to ensure a full discussion.	Surfaces 'the unsaid', fostering openness and honesty through own example.	Builds close partnerships with senior leaders, providing a 'safe haven' for difficult conversations around the hard issues and surfacing 'the truth'.
Adopts a questioning approach to clarify or more fully understand an issue.	Reaches a conclusion and takes an early view on an issue.	Makes own position clear in the debate early on and backs it with relevant professional knowledge.	Stands up for self and the organisation publicly when the worst happens in difficult circumstances.
Helps to uncover pertinent facts to move a debate forward.	Intervenes in lengthy process or excessive debate to draw conclusions and reach a decision.	Identifies when a quick decision will be more effective than consultation or further research, ensuring others understand and are aligned.	Takes a visible lead in progressing a disputed issue or ethical dilemma for the benefit of the organisation.
Consults others for ideas, advice and direction when facing unusual problems.	Works closely with others who are involved in and impacted by the issue, consulting for their views and involving them in developing the solution.	Explores and takes account of both the organisation's political forces and personal standing in a debate.	Skilfully navigates and copes effectively with organisation politics. Is sufficiently self-reliant to manage extended periods of isolation or unpopularity in order to do the right thing.

Contra-indicators

- Avoids difficult conversations and confrontation.
- Shows stubbornness in the face of opposition, even when proved wrong.
- 'Caves in' when challenged or questioned.
- Shows lack of confidence in own knowledge, abilities and judgements.
- Tends to apportion blame and accountability to others when things go wrong.
- Sits on the fence rather than taking a clear stand.