



Design Tool 11.2: Productive Conversations

Directions for teachers: Use this field-tested strategy to help team members discuss an issue efficiently and reach a decision. After the issue is explained or clarified ask these four questions and chart the students' responses. This can be used with teams or as a whole group activity.

- 1 **What are the facts about this issue?** Team members can share *only facts* about the issue at this point. They cannot talk about how they feel about the issue or what their suggestions are at this point.
- 2 **How do you feel about this issue?** At this time team members can share *only their feelings* about the issue.
- 3 **What implications does this issue have for...?** (our team, our project, our solution for the challenge, etc.) Students discuss *only the impact or effect* they think the issue could have on their STEM project, challenge, or on them personally.
- 4 **What decision can we make, if any?** Team members discuss what things they might be able to do about the issue and then *make a decision* about how to handle the issue. At the conclusion of the activity, team members share their decisions with the whole group/class. (*Note: Teams and groups typically feel the conversation was important when they can walk away with a decision in hand.*)