**Common Factors**
- Shift from being a peer to a supervisor of faculty
- Participants bringing different expectations to the conversation
- Misalignment between an individual employee and the unit
- Prior history with a faculty/staff member evoking emotional response

**Prepare**
- Know the desired outcome so you can be prepared to get there.
- Take into consideration what you know about the individual involved.
- Sketch out key points in the conversation and gather any resources needed.

**Having the Conversation**
- Approach the conversation as a “learning conversation” where you and your faculty/staff member are collectively tackling a problem.
- Share a specific observation or example and explain its impact or importance.
- Suspend judgment when drawing attention to patterns.
- Listen carefully. Acknowledge what you have heard. Validate what you can.
- Ask questions to gain greater understanding and involve the individual in problem-solving.
- Give examples of others who have gone through something similar (e.g., change in teaching assignment).
- Put the issue in the context of the goals and mission of the unit and the collective good.
- Have an appropriate resource on hand to direct the individual to for help if necessary.
- Clarify expectations and next steps and confirm that the individual understands them.

**Follow Up**
- Follow up on an appropriate timeline.
- Work with faculty or a committee to create a department policy if the issue warrants it.

**Additional Resource**
- Managing Difficult Conversations: Advice for Academic Leaders