

At BaptistCare, we embarked using Crucial Conversations as a training program in 2019 – commencing with the 2-day face to face format. Feedback from our managers, HR and our staff surveys all pointed to difficulties in effectively managing some of the hard conversations that needed to be had – particularly in the areas of managing poor performance and demonstrating our values. We also recognised the impact of this on our culture, and that we needed strategies to address this.

The Crucial Conversations training provided our managers and teams leaders with a practical toolkit and framework to build their skills in managing these high stakes, emotionally charged discussions – leading to positive results and better relationships.

However, we also realised it is often hard for our regional team leaders and managers to access our face-to-face workshops due to the time away. As a state-based organisation, we would have staff travel from all over the state to participate in the 2-day workshop.

COVID-19 focused us on this issue as well as re-evaluating how we might deliver training in an environment that stopped a lot of travel. In speaking with VitalSmarts we discovered that:

1. We could continue to deliver the content and skills online
2. Our regional staff would have access to this platform
3. Those working at home, who still needed the skills, could access the training.
4. For busy managers, they could fit the five lots of two-hour sessions into their routine.

We have just finished our first virtual series for this. The registrations filled in 90 minutes of being launched and two subsequent online series have also filled quickly. Most importantly, we saw some great outcomes from our first online series. In the feedback we collected, 100% of respondents said the content was very good (Poor, Ok, good and very good). They loved the clarity of presentation, mix of activities, the timing of the sessions and the platform for delivery.

*“I love that I can do the course, it doesn't really take too much time out of my normal work routine and gives us time to process what we have learnt on previous days and time to ask questions in the next session.” Participant*

*“The training was so relevant, I did not lose 2 days travelling and the expense of travelling, accommodation and productivity.” Participant*

Crucial Conversations in a virtual classroom has helped us to continue to equip and resource our staff all over the state, in a way that works for them. We intend to continue to offer both virtual and face to face options in the ‘post COVID-19 world’.