

Dealing with Difficult People

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5 Universal Truths

All people want to be:

- Treated with dignity and respect.
- Asked rather than told to do something.
- Told why they're being asked to do something.
- Given options rather than threats.
- Given a second chance.

Face-to-face interactions: Not so simple

- People do not say what they mean.
 - Words only constitute 7% of the message.
 - The other 93% come from voice and other non-verbal indicators
- *Everyone* is under the influence!
- We cannot adjust people's attitudes. We can only adjust how we interact.
- 2=6

$$2=6$$

- A face-to-face encounter involves multiple interactions:
- You
 - Real self
 - Self as seen by self
 - *Self as seen by others*
- Client
 - Real self
 - *Self as seen by self*
 - Self as seen by others

What People Want

- Information
 - E.g., Why did you stop me?
- Empathy
 - Understand, even if we don't agree
- Respect
 - How we want to be treated under similar circumstances

The Art of Representation

- We are only representatives; it is not about us.
- Our personal feelings and beliefs are irrelevant obstacles to effective communications.
- Amateurs are ruled by adrenaline.
- Let others have the last word; you have the last act.
- Lose the ego!
 - The first zinger that comes to mind, though satisfying, is the greatest speech you will live to regret.
 - 90% of all complaints come from tone, not actual words.

Things You Should *Never* Say

- Calm down.
- Come here.
- You wouldn't understand.
- Because those are the rules.
- It's none of your business.
- What do you want me to do about it?
- What's your problem?

Things You Should *Never* Say (cont.)

- I'm not going to say this again!
- I'm doing this for your own good.
- You never..... or, You always.....
- Why don't you be reasonable?

Some tools

- Lose the ego.
- Understand your own triggers.
- Deflective phrases
 - I understand you think this is unfair, but you still need to do x because(reason).
- Take the giant LEAPS
 - Listen
 - Empathize
 - Ask
 - Paraphrase
 - Summarize

Some Tools (cont.)

- Paraphrasing is a key tool:
 - Sword of insertion: Hold on a minute. Let me make sure I understand what you are saying.
 - Actual paraphrase: You are saying you feel (emotion) because (reason).
- Appeal to one's sense of selfishness
 - i.e., what's in it for them.

5-Step Interaction

- Ask (ethical appeal)
- Set context/explain why (reasonable appeal)
- Provide options (personal appeal)
 - Positive then negative options
- Confirm non-compliance (practical appeal)
- Act (if necessary)

Remember.....

- A verbal interaction is like a dance.
- Leadership is dependent on followership.
- Lose the ego.
- It's not about you. Know your weaknesses.
- Watch your voice (tone, pitch, pace and modulation). It's what generates complaints.
- Empathize.
- Explain.
- Have fun; enjoy the challenge of difficult people.