

SPARKING IDEAS AND ACTION IN YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS
HARMONY COACHING & CONSULTING

Top 10 Tips for Working with Difficult People

Dealing with difficult people is ...well, difficult for most of us.

Hostile and aggressive people put us on the defensive, cause us anxiety, frustrate our coping skills, and take us out of our comfort zones. Here are 10 tips for diffusing aggressive behavior and getting your needs met.

1. **Set strong boundaries.** Let the aggressor know that there are certain types of behaviors and actions that are unacceptable to you. For example, let them know that you will not accept/allow profanity in your conversations.
2. **Defer discussions.** When a situation is escalating and both parties are upset with each other is not a good time to reach resolution of a conflict or difference of opinion. Agree to talk at a later time when the emotional charge has dissipated.

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Addressing personal improvement is an essential part of professional development

Personal Development

The missing link in professional training & development

By Peter LaChance

To develop professionally, one must also develop personally. When people enroll in a training program, most of them ask, *what's in it for me?* If you are their boss, that question may seem selfish, but actually, it's a fair one. Often, "personal gain" isn't monetary in nature – it can mean recognition,

trust and respect – basic aspects of human dignity that we all crave. If there isn't anything to gain personally from a training program, people lose interest in it, attending only to satisfy someone else's wishes. The result: they don't retain what they learned, so no improvement is realized and your organization's training dollars are wasted.

Most training programs are intended to achieve professional improvement. At best, they pay lip service to personal improvement. Yet, in many areas of professional improvement, addressing personal improvement is essential to achieving the objective. For example, to develop into a terrific people leader, one first has to develop great self-leadership skills.

Training entails practicing new skills and learning new knowledge. Personal Development entails making positive behavioral change, by changing attitudes and instilling a permanent commitment to goal-achievement. Of course, new habits of thought – that is, new attitudes – and new lifelong goal-setting and achievement habits, aren't accomplished over a few days!

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3. Confront the aggressive behavior. Allowing someone to consistently abuse you either verbally or physically is to become an enabler. Confronting lets the person know that you are aware of the behavior and that it is "not ok" with you. Communicate your boundaries.

4. When confronting the unacceptable behavior, be charge-neutral. This may require that you defer to a later time so both of you can cool off and speak rationally in mutual respect.

5. Communicate your observations and feelings in a nonthreatening way. Stating "I feel that..." is better than "when you..." because it does not put the aggressor on the defensive. When people are in defensive mode, they stop listening.

6. Practice the "broken record" technique. Repeat your comments over and over regardless of what the other person is throwing at you that may place you on the defensive. Continue this process until you are acknowledged and you can move forward in the conversation toward resolution.

7. Watch your verbal tone, speed and pitch, body language, and posture. Maintain eye contact. Talking too fast gives away your nervousness when confronting the situation. High pitch and tone comes across as hysteria and emotional, not rational. Eye contact lets the person know that you are expecting resolution.

8. Ignore counter-attacks. This goes along with the broken record technique. Avoid responding to the attacks, focus on your message.

9. Avoid "feeding into" the accusations. You don't need to respond or explain your position, you only need to state it as fact. You want to state your boundaries without having to defend or explain them.

10. Take responsibility for your part in the conflict. Acknowledge your wrongdoing (if appropriate) without excusing or taking blame for the other person's actions/behavior.

Submitted by Carmen Stine, PhD(c), who can be reached at coach@welcometoyourlife.com, or visited on the web at <http://www.welcometoyourlife.com>. Copyright 1997-2004 by Coach U, all rights reserved

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(This explains why most traditional training & development programs aren't successful.) It may take time, but personal development is absolutely essential to generating the internal motivational forces required to achieve personal and professional success.

Combining training with personal development is a powerful way to capture and maintain the interest of trainees, which in turn results in higher levels of trainee commitment to improvement and better retention of skills and knowledge. Equally important, when goal-achievement and attitude development methods are properly understood and facilitated, training and development programs will result in positive behavioral change, leading to improved job performance. When the constructive behavioral talents of well-developed employees are funneled into alignment with organizational goals, your organization will operate in the "high performance zone!"

— Written for Sorrell Associates by Peter LaChance, President, *The Quintessence Corporation*. 215-321-8914. © 2003-2004.

Do You Have Leadership Traits?

Find out if you're a true leader by seeing if you possess these qualities:

- **Leaders start** projects by asking "What has to be done?" instead of "What do I need?"
- **Leaders next** ask "What do I have to do to make a real contribution?" The answer best suits the leader's strengths and the needs of the project.
- **Leaders continually** ask "What are my organization's purposes and objectives?" and "What qualifies as acceptable performance and adds to the bottom line?"
- **Leaders don't** want clones of themselves as employees. They never ask "Do I like or dislike this employee?" But they won't tolerate poor performance.
- **Leaders aren't** threatened by others who have strengths they lack.

Source: Peter Drucker, cited in *Forbes ASAP*, 60 5th Ave., New York, NY 10011.

Productivity Boost!

Goal Setting - "The Savvy 16"

"If everybody was satisfied with himself, there would be no heroes." — Mark Twain

1. What are your top five business goals?
2. What are your top five personal goals?
3. Do these goals coincide with each other?
4. What rewards do each of these goals give to you?
5. What are the consequences of not achieving each of these goals?
6. What is standing in your way from accomplishing these goals?
7. What are the solutions for each obstacle?
8. What action steps must you take to overcome each obstacle?
9. What are the targeted completion dates for each obstacle?
10. What is the targeted completion date for each goal?
11. What has worked for you in the past for achieving goals?
12. What has not worked for you in the past for achieving your goals?
13. Has procrastination kept you from achieving your goals?
14. If so, how will you overcome your tendency to procrastinate?
15. Do any of your goals, when completed; have the power to transform your personal and/or professional life?
16. If so, when will you start?

These are just a few of the areas in which you will need specific answers in order to be prepared for opportunities, the future, and success.

We will have additional questions and information in future articles to help you "Boost Productivity"

Source: Gary Sorrell, Sorrell Associates. Copyright 2004-05. All rights reserved.

"Take the most difficult challenge you are now facing and turn it into the greatest opportunity to grow simply by changing how you see it.

Dead ends then become turning points."

— Bob Perks



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Hiring Challenges? The Lack of Desire Impact

Explanation: Candidates who lack desire tend to set the bar very low for themselves. While some of them are committed to their success, their idea of success is not very impressive. In most cases, candidates with lack of desire just don't want success badly enough at this point in time.

Impact: This candidate will avoid doing the things that don't seem comfortable or important and will focus on those activities and behaviors that are enjoyable and comfortable. This person will take the path of least resistance.

An individual with *lack of desire* is never recommended for hiring.

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November – Election Time



Some interesting and notable events in American history to ponder in this Presidential election month!

Illinois Democrat Carol Moseley-Braun becomes the first black woman elected to the U.S. Senate – Nov 3, 1992

Strom Thurmond of South Carolina becomes the first senator to be elected as a write-in candidate – Nov 3, 1954

Americans observe the first uniform Election Day – Nov 4, 1845

Suffragist Susan B. Anthony is fined \$100 for attempting to vote in a presidential election – Nov 5, 1872

President John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Lyndon B. Johnson is sworn in as his successor – Nov 22, 1963

Presidential Election Turnout

Year	Total Votes Cast	Turnout (%)
1960	68,838,204	63.06
1964	70,644,592	61.92
1968	73,211,875	60.84
1972	77,718,554	55.21
1976	81,555,789	53.55
1980	86,515,221	52.56
1984	92,652,680	53.11
1988	91,594,693	50.11
1992	104,405,155	55.09
1996	96,456,345	49.08
2000	106,913,005	51.12

Source: Federal Election Commission

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MAXIMIZING HUMAN TALENT

