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..Dealing with.. Interpersonal Conflict

> Seek First to Understand

1. Separate the person from the behavior.
2. Be sensitive to timing.
3. When initiating a discussion, acknowledge the conflict.
4. Setup a time-line to communicate directly with the person(s).
5. Ask directly, but sensitively, for other people's ideas and emphasize positive intentions.
6. Reflect back to the other person what you're hearing to make sure you understand.
7. Listen empathetically.

> Then to be Understood

1. Use "I" language.
2. Focus on underlying common interests, avoid taking positions.
3. Build consensus.
4. Brainstorm options - SYNERGIZE!

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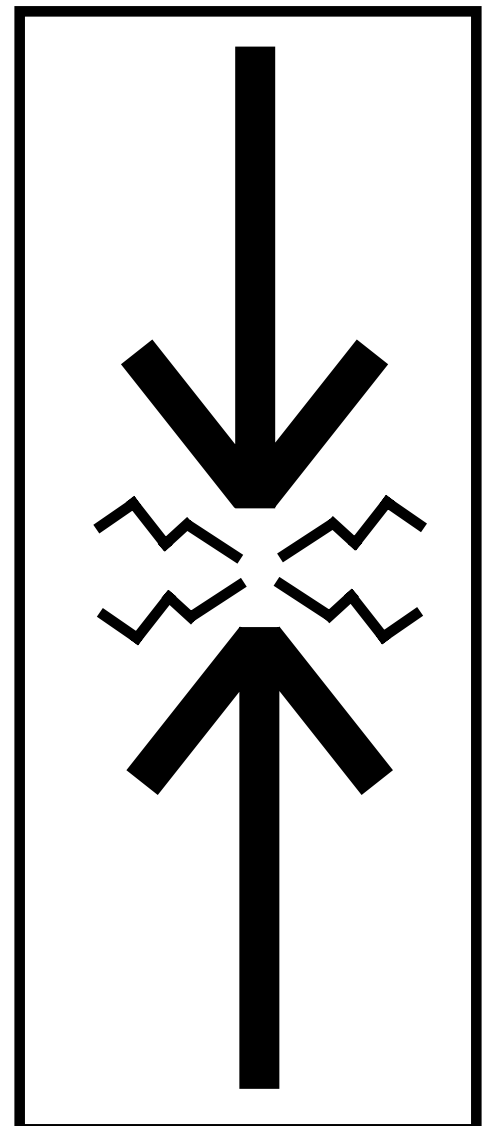
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>> Managing << Difficult People

Difficult people are everywhere. They can be negative, irritating, seemingly impossible to manage, and create stress for everyone around them.

Sometimes it seems easier to avoid or “work around” difficult people, but this is never a good long-term solution. If you learn to assess the person’s behavior and listen with genuine interest, it is possible to effectively manage every difficult person. Good leaders never avoid difficult management situations.

To help you learn how to manage difficult people, the following are seven difficult personality types. In all seven cases, the behavior of each type is described first, followed by effective action you can take to handle each type of behavior.

"Never ascribe to an
opponent's motives meaner
than your own."
- John M. Barrie

>> Seven Difficult Personality Types

1. Attackers

Behavior: Attackers assert their viewpoint forcefully. They require people to listen to what they say. They need room and time to blow off steam.

Your Action: Address the attacker by name and quietly, but firmly ask him or her to sit. Then listen carefully to what the attacker has to say. Once calmed, the attacker usually becomes reasonable and may suggest valuable solutions. The worst coping behavior on your part would be to return the attack.

2. Egotists

Behavior: Egotists also assert themselves, but unlike attackers, they may be subject experts.

Your Action: Show honest respect for their knowledge, but do not become intimidated by it. Instead, capitalize on what they know by asking questions. Compliment them when they provide helpful information but make sure they know you are the leader.

3. Sneaks

Behavior: Sneaks take “potshots” and often use sarcasm as a weapon.

Your Action: Confront sneaks with direct questions and let them know you do not appreciate their sarcasm. Use positive reinforcement when possible to steer them toward becoming more of a team player.

4. Victims

Behavior: Victims see everything negatively. They act powerless and defeated, often whining about everyone and everything.

Your Action: Ask them for suggestions to improve the situation. Have them state the negatives and address each logically and positively.

5. Negators

Behavior: Negators are usually suspicious of those in authority and believe that their way of doing things is the only way.

Your Action: Let negators use their negative “ammunition” in a group meeting, then let co-workers express their views about positive solutions. They will usually try to “enlighten” negators that better solutions exist.

6. Super-Agreeable People

Behavior: Super-agreeable people have such a strong need to be liked that they do whatever you request at the expense of their own needs. They will overcommit and often disappoint and frustrate everyone.

Your Action: Monitor assignments to make sure they are not overworked.

7. Unresponsive People

Behavior: Unresponsive people are the most difficult to manage. They are seemingly impossible to draw out.

Your Action: Specifically ask them for their opinion when getting group feedback. Try to include them when assigning tasks, so they can feel apart of the of the organization.

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