

Dealing with Difficult People

To deal with difficult people create a win-win situation. "Win-win" a phrase from Stephen Covey's *7 Steps to Highly Effective People*. It simply means a situation where both parties "win," and neither loses. To do this you must consider where the other person is coming from, what they want, and how to fit that in with what you want.

When dealing with others, you must first know what you want. This might be the hard part if you're like most people, who seldom know what they want. They usually know what they don't want. For example they don't want to be angry, or upset. What you want is usually influenced by these factors

- Where you are
- What's going on.
- The relationship you have with the person you're dealing with

To plan your strategy, recognize behavior types and work in terms of them. Remember that you're dealing with behavior, not personality, and behavior changes often. See if you recognize these behaviors. Suggestions are given for how to deal with them, assuming your boss is the difficult person.

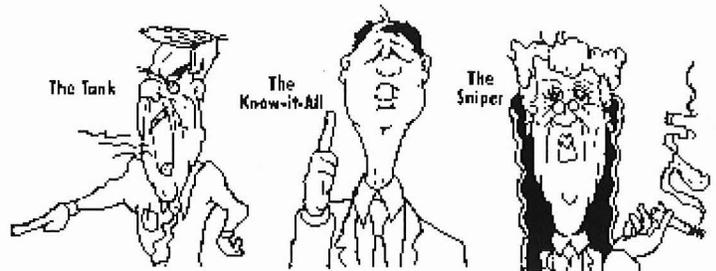
Before starting a conversation with a difficult person, analyze your attitude. Are you doing anything to contribute to the problem?

Tanks. They demand action. A tank won't waste time trying to impress you. They could care less how you think or feel. They want action.

To deal with tanks effectively, understand their need for urgency and show them you are on the same side. Try repeating their exact words. Assertiveness is important because they are assertive. They appreciate assertive behavior if it is directed towards their goal.

Know-It-Alls. These people are not focused, but they are controlling. When faced with a know-it-all, know your facts but don't be confrontational.

Self-appointed Experts. They are dangerous because think they know it all. Be certain of your facts when dealing with them and avoid confrontation over facts. Gently, steer the conversation where you want it to go.



Snipers. They make cutting remarks under the guise of humor, or sabotage you behind your back. They should be confronted, particularly if this occurs during a business meeting. But be respectful.

No People. These folks are dismal and discouraging. Their motto is that every silver cloud has a dark lining. Present options to them to allow them to see that all is not dark and dreary.

Yes People. Yes People seek approval and agree to do everything asked of them. They leave a trail of broken promises. They need deadlines. Check up on them often. Present all sides of each promise so they won't be as quick to say yes.

Nothing People. These people give no feedback, either verbal or non-verbal. Ask them questions that require more than a "yes" or "no," and encourage them to express themselves.

Maybe People. They put off decisions until it's too late. Present options and firmly push for decisions.

To be successful, try to reduce the difference between you and the other person so you can both win in any given situation. Remember to tailor your approach to the specific behavior type and think of the long-term benefits to your action. Control immediate discomfort you might feel. Avoid being emotional about situations. Review your results and learn from them.

Source:

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