

1. Introduction to Difficult People

What makes people difficult?

1. It is behaviour, not people
2. It is often used as self-defence
3. It may be context specific
4. It may be due to lack of skills
5. It may be stress induced

 7 Types of Difficult Behaviour

 Difficult People at Life and Work

2. Preparing Yourself

4 things to know about ourselves

1. How do you **listen**?
 How to Listen Well.pdf
2. How do you ask **questions**?
3. What do you **expect** from the interaction?
4. Knowing when to **end**

The 3 Cs

 The Three Cs.pdf

The Three 'C's

What is the **Context**?

What is the **Cost**?

Have you the **Commitment**?

5 Guiding Principles

1. Maintain dignity and self-respect
2. Seek first to understand
3. Remember - people can't be changed
4. Express your own point of view
5. Go for outcome, not triumph or victory

 Five Guiding Principles.pdf

Controlling Your Emotions

 7 Reasons Why Difficult People Are Not a Threat.pdf

Over the years, a lot of people have told me that one of the hardest parts of dealing with difficult behavior is managing your own emotions in order to be effective as communicators, we need to understand ourselves well enough to

manage our emotions. So we need to be able to stay cool. To do that, we need to develop the self-awareness so that we can actually monitor our emotions. And when we can do that, we need to be able to manage them.



Learning to separate your thinking from your feelings will enable you to get greater control over the feelings. One thing's for sure, a feeling is very hard to control, but you can control the thinking that lies behind it.

3. Techniques and Tactics

Think 'how' not 'what'

We come now to what I call the process, the how do you go about it rather than the what do you do if you're dealing with difficult behavior, if you have to have a conversation or you're applying a strategy to work around the behavior or to change your behavior in some way, it's important to step back a little and think, how do I go about this? And in extreme cases, it'll be important to discuss the how with the other person as well.

68 percent of arguments actually have no solution. But we keep coming back to them. We keep coming back to the same old topics. **The way to break that pattern is to think about how you're going about arguing.** There's nothing wrong with it, per say. But it's the **how** that makes the difference, not the why or the where. To think about **how the two of you are interacting.** Is it respectful? Do you listen to each other? Is it polite and so forth?

Think about how you express yourselves.

How do you approach issues, how do you bring issues up?

It does happen in some relationships that issues become such hot topics that you can't even breathe a word of it without causing an argument.

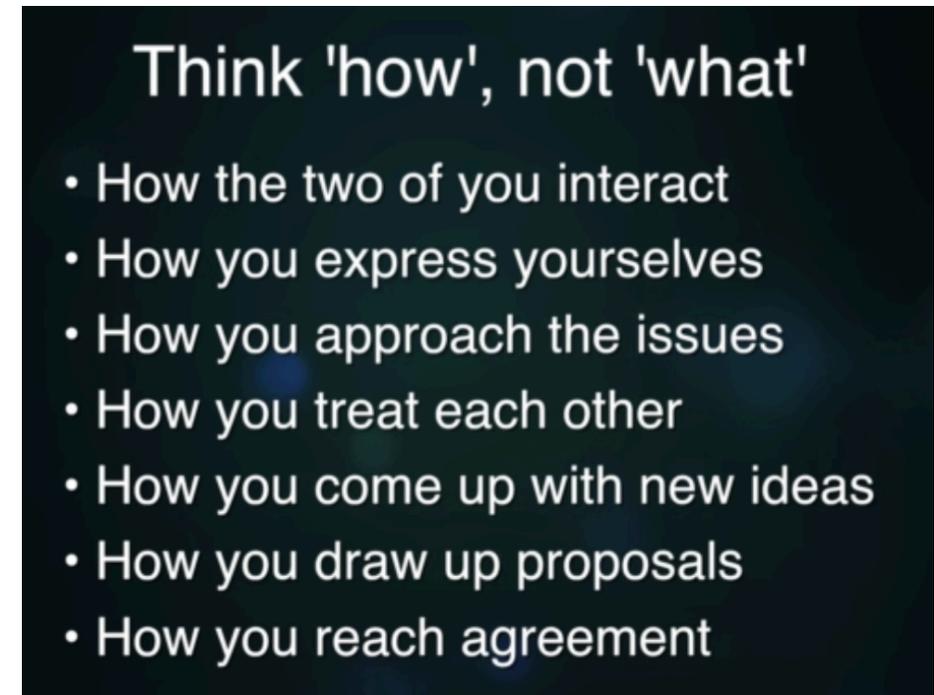
So the **how to** becomes very, very important because you probably need to **change the how in order to get a different result.**

How do you treat each other? Are you respectful? What's the underlying belief? Do you value each other's relationship?

Have you told the other person that "I am where you are" Are you working together? or discussing constructively together?

How do you come up with new ideas?

Because two people are greater than the sum of their parts and when two people are genuinely in what's being called dialogue, in a collaborative conversation, you come up with more ideas. So if you're trying to tackle some behavior that you don't like, it's much better to collaborate to discuss it.



The ASSUME strategy

Assess the situation
Step back, listen and learn
Stop wishing they were different
Understand their point of view
Master the situation
Expect to have to do it again

The SALVAGE strategy

SMILE openly
ANTICIPATE their hostility
LISTEN actively
VERIFY their precise grievance
AGREE with the true parts
GUARANTEE action will be taken
ENCOURAGE them to alter course

Conclusion: What do good communicators do?

pdf Conclusion.pdf

Remember good communicators:

- Listen well
- Lead the conversation
- Stick to the central message
- Make appropriate eye contact
- Consider before answering questions
- Summarise regularly

Quiz



Good job!

We are generally more receptive to requests to change how we behave than we are to suggestions that we should change our character.

Question 1:

When dealing with a difficult person, you need to help them:

- Stop being difficult
- Change their character
- Change their behaviour
- Understand your needs



Good job!

Well done! The three Cs is what we talked about on this course.

Question 2:

Before you tackle difficult behaviour it is useful to consider:

- Their influence over your future prospects
- How their behaviour is affecting work productivity
- How and where the behaviour happens, the effect on you, and the likely medium to long-term commitment you'll need to tackle it.**
- Bribery as a way of getting your needs met.



Good job!

Bingo! Maybe they have never learned to behave differently in a given situation.

Question 3:

There are many possible reasons why someone might be acting in a way we find difficult. In 'What makes people difficult' we suggested five possible causes, one of which is included in the list below. Which is it?

- Poor upbringing
- An unrelated health problem
- A flaw in their character
- Lack of skills**
- An intentional attempt to get their own way.
- An underlying psychological problem.



Good job!

That's right! Congruence means that you believe what you are saying, and that your body language is consistent with your verbal message.

Question 4:

In the final element of this course the term 'congruence' was used. What is meant by this term?

- The ability to get your point across no matter what.
- Coming together with another person in a meaningful way.
- Sincere and coherent matching of verbal and non-verbal behaviour.**
- Planning ahead and preparing for a conversation.
- Congruence means the coming together of two people to solve a problem.



Good job!

Correct! These seven 'types' are used here for learning purposes only. The intention is not to label people, but to identify some working examples.

Question 5:

Difficult behaviour is categorised into seven 'types' on this course. The purpose of this is to:

- Name and shame the culprit.
- Provide labels for easy identification and avoidance of that type of character in future.
- Demonstrate some common clusters of behaviours, and to suggest some ways of responding.**
- To validate your experience when you are making progress.



Good job!

Yay! You got it right. First agree on 'how' your interactions take place, rather than all the usual detail that gets in the way. Agreeing a mutually acceptable way of discussing things will provide a platform for patching up the relationship.

Question 6:

Your strategy for a productive conversation should focus on:

- Understanding the history of the problem between you.
- Deciding who is to blame for the troubles in the relationship.
- How matters are discussed and responded to, rather than the 'what' of content, history and the rest.**
- Getting your point across and making them listen to you.



Good job!

Congratulations! That's the right answer.

This was discussed in [Lecture 6: Five guiding principles](#) >

Question 7:

What is the FIRST of the five guiding principles covered in Lecture 6?

- Always work to maintain dignity and self-respect**
- Express your own point of view.
- Listen well and with empathy
- You should aim to win the day, not the fight.
- You should remember that people can't be changed.