

# DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE

## A Few Rules of Conflict Competence

- Stay Centred ;do not polarise
- Stay creative: do not negativise
- Stay calm; tolerate ambivalence

## Some Slogans

- Stay cool
- Stay objective
- Stay positive
- Stay confident

## Some Empathy

- Show concern
- Acknowledge their POV
- Press your own non-provocatively
- Agree where possible

## Very briefly

1. Open lines of communication and keep them open
2. Be objective
3. Take their side
4. Bridge the differences
5. Make it hard for them to say no
6. Enlist their support
7. Convince rather than threaten
8. Keep choices open
9. Don't get emotional ie. have better control over your emotions

## Remain objective

- Stay focused on your goals
- Recognise the other person's tactics
- Be aware of your emotional reactions
- Be aware of the other person's emotional reactions
- Stop before you speak

## Taking their side

- Actively listen
- Paraphrase/reflect
- Express your thoughts/viewpoint in a non-provocative manner
- Use open questions
- Use "I" to express your feelings, and "We" to indicate common purpose
- Acknowledge their feelings
- Acknowledge their viewpoint
- Agree where possible
- Apologise if necessary/where warranted (a sign of strength and confidence)
- Project confidence

## **A Few Rules for Managing Unease about Change**

### **1. First Rule...Stay Cool**

Calm, calm...

If others are a bit hot under the collar, it will not help if you lose our cool too.

And try to see things from the others' point of view.

Hasten slowly...

### **2. Second Rule...Be Upbeat and Positive**

Thank your colleagues for their comments

Endeavour to answer their questions as swiftly and concisely as possible.

Nothing confuses more than vagueness and uncertainty.

Show concern and acknowledge their feelings. Old habits will not change overnight.

Encourage a positive approach. Convince them that it will be worthwhile.

### **3. Third Rule...Be Collaborative and Inclusive**

Lots of "we's", few "I's".

Thank them for their comments and for their support.

"We are all in this together, so let us help each other..."

### **4. Fourth Rule... Invite Contributions**

Ask open questions that invite contributions.

Obtain constant feedback, particularly as people become more familiar with things.

"What do you think?"

"I value your opinion"

"What would you find helpful in this situation?"

"What do you think is the best way forward from here?"

### **5. Fifth Rule... Be Decisive**

Act swiftly to solve problems: try not to let things drift.

Delay in resolving issues that arise will only breed cynicism and negativity.