

QUICK NOTES

Tips for Dealing with Difficult People

1. **Diffuse.** *Immediately set a positive intention when dealing with difficult people.*
2. **Remain focused on the problem and not the person.** *Do not allow yourself to be triggered. It takes two to argue – take the high road. You are the leader.*
3. **Ask how you can help.** *This goes a long way to diffusing a negative situation.*
4. **Express your interest in hearing the person speak.** *Make the individual comfortable; offer a glass of water if it is available.*
5. **Listen and demonstrate care.** *People need to feel heard. Allow the person to let off some steam.*
6. **Treat the person with respect.** *It is important and it is your responsibility as a leader.*
7. **Hold no resentment.** *Often, the person who is difficult will show remorse later.*
8. **If the situation is causing a disruption, move to another location, if possible.**
9. **If the situation is out of control or escalating, get professional help from law enforcement.** *If there is any type of physical abuse or sexual harassment, let this be dealt with by the legal professionals.*
10. **Some social rules are a cultural knowing.** *For example, most people know not to shout in a public building. There are no signs which tell us this, yet most are aware of this rule. The act of reminding an upset individual of the need to lower the voice – in a friendly and non-overbearing manner – may be enough to solve the problem.*
11. **Keep things discrete.** *Do not make a private problem public. This maintains trust.*
12. **Always later reflect on what happened during this situation.** *Could you have done anything differently? Did you allow yourself to be pulled into the negative dynamics?*
13. **Set boundaries.** *Although you should respect others, they should also respect you. Our own attitudes and actions have a significant bearing on how others view us and respond.*
14. **Intention is the key.** *Dealing with difficult people can be an opportunity for growth for ourselves.*