

How to Interact with Difficult People

At some point in your career, you may encounter an individual who you perceive to be a difficult person. In an effort to remain professional and resolve a potential conflict, try these tips

Tip	Practical Application
Be honest and direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● State your concern from your perspective. For Example,● "I have a hard time concentrating when..."● "I can't meet my deadlines if..."● "It's hard for me to be positive when..."
Listen Carefully	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Listen to what the other person is saying instead of getting ready to react● Avoid interrupting the other person● After the other person finishes speaking rephrase what was said to make sure you understand it
Avoid Blaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Focus on the facts● Finding fault can prevent problem-solving
Stay Focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Discuss the specific situation, avoid generalizing● Avoid getting sidetracked into discussing other problems● Keep bringing the conversation back to the concern you've stated
Say Less	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● After you state the problem, allow silence until the other person responds

(Portions of this material are adapted, with permission, from UC Riverside's Human Resources Web Site.)