

## How to Handle Difficult People

- Define “difficult person.” What is the behavior of a “difficult person”?
- Assess the situation. Are you dealing with a “difficult person” or with a situation that is temporarily bringing out the worst in an ordinarily normal person?
- The key to handling difficult people is changing your attitude. Your attitude will determine how successful you are.
- The only person’s behavior you can control is your own.
- It’s not your aptitude, but your attitude that determines your altitude.

### Types of Difficult People

1. Sherman Tank (insensitive to anyone’s feelings except their own; can be mean and vicious)
2. Snipers (takes potshots with innuendo, digs and non-playful teasing)
3. Exploders (suddenly explodes and breaks into temper tantrums)
4. Balloons (know-it-alls who are full of hot air; pontificates on everything)
5. Clams (closes down and becomes quiet; uses silence as a weapon; pouts)

*Coping With Difficult People*, Robert M. Bransom, 1981

### Communication Principles in Dealing with Difficult People

1. Conflict is inevitable.
2. Learn to appreciate and celebrate diversity.
3. Beware of “reflexive communication” in confrontational settings.
4. Paralysis of Certainty-Don’t be paralyzed by the certainty of your own rightness. Learn to develop tolerance. It will earn you respect.
5. Agree to disagree in an agreeable way.
6. Don’t allow yourself to become too emotional. Don’t cry. Don’t lose control.
7. Wishing a person would change is a waste of time. Concentrate on how to react to the person’s behavior.
8. Be assertive, not aggressive.
9. Don’t take the behavior of the difficult person personally. They usually are angry with the situation.

### Strategies for Handling Difficult People

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully; listening diffuses and dissipates anger.
3. Maintain eye contact; eye contact helps put you in control and portrays confidence.
4. Maintain a friendly, open facial expression.
5. If possible, sit down; people are less aggressive when seated.
6. Try to exude confidence.
7. Empathize with the complainant.
8. Ask for confirmation of what you hear the complainant saying; paraphrase what you hear. ("If I understand you correctly,...")
9. Don't be afraid to apologize if necessary.
10. Attempt to alleviate or solve the problem with a win-win approach; concentrate on solving the problem and meeting needs.
11. Try to have a civil, productive conversation; pause and listen more if necessary.
12. Don't allow yourself to become argumentative which creates loss of control and escalates the conflict. Stay calm. Don't allow yourself to be drawn into a verbal fight. Arguments set up win-lose situations.
13. Respond to the problem; ask what you can do to alleviate or solve the problem. ("Let's see what I can do to help you...")
14. Ask, "What would you like me to do?"
15. Kill them with kindness.
16. Politely terminate the conversation.

## SPEECH EVALUATION FORM

Speaker: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction**

- ☐ Gained attention and interest
- ☐ Introduced purpose clearly
- ☐ Previewed body speech

20 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Body**

- ☐ Main points clear
- ☐ Main points fully supported
- ☐ Organization well planned
- ☐ Language accurate
- ☐ Language clear, concise
- ☐ Language appropriate
- ☐ Connective & sign posts effective
- ☐ Sources cited

30 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion**

- ☐ Prepared audience for ending
- ☐ Reinforced central idea
- ☐ Strong clencher

10 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Delivery**

- ☐ Maintained eye contact
- ☐ Used voice effectively
- ☐ Used nonverbal communication effectively

15 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Visual Aids**

- ☐ Visual aid was appropriate
- ☐ Presented visual aids well

15 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Overall Evaluation**

- ☐ Topic challenging
- ☐ Specific purpose well chosen
- ☐ Speech adapted to audience
- ☐ Speech completed in time limit

10 pts. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

## Theatre Review of an Amarillo College Theatre Production

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class Hour \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Play \_\_\_\_\_

Attach your ticket stub to your critique.

Discuss each of the following questions in 3-5 sentences: Please substantiate your opinions with specific examples.

1. What is your impression of the play itself? (Consider universality, organization, characterization, dialogue, theme, unity, balance, variety, etc.)
2. Discuss the Acting. (believability, voice, body, emotions, relationships, etc.)
3. Discuss the Directing: (stage composition, tempo, unity, aesthetic distance, etc.)
4. Discuss the Staging (set, lights, costumes, makeup, mechanics, etc.)
5. Audience Response (attention, appreciation, discussion, etc.)

## Theatre Review of an Amarillo College Theatre Production

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class Hour \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Play \_\_\_\_\_

Attach your ticket stub to your critique.

Discuss each of the following questions in 3-5 sentences: Please substantiate your opinions with specific examples.

6. What is your impression of the play itself? (Consider universality, organization, characterization, dialogue, theme, unity, balance, variety, etc.)
7. Discuss the Acting. (believability, voice, body, emotions, relationships, etc.)
8. Discuss the Directing: (stage composition, tempo, unity, aesthetic distance, etc.)
9. Discuss the Staging (set, lights, costumes, makeup, mechanics, etc.)
10. Audience Response (attention, appreciation, discussion, etc.)

## Conspiracy Visual Aid Speech

### I. Introduction

#### A. Attention Getter

1. Who killed Kennedy? Did NASA really land on the moon? Did ancient royalties really interbreed to protect their extraterrestrial bloodline? These are all conspiracy theories.

#### B. Purpose

1. Today I'll present a few conspiracy theories to you and attempt to show you there is substance to some conspiracy theories.

#### C. Preview

1. I chose three conspiracies to discuss: the Face of Cydonia, the Bohemian Grove Club, and the Frost Bank Building

### II. Body

#### A. The Face of Cydonia

1. Discovery of face (Visual aid; picture of face)
2. Pic of new face
3. City on Mars (Visual aid; picture of city, Cite 1)

#### B. Bohemian Grove Club

1. Location/Members of club (Visual aid pic of members)
2. Exposed/sacrificial ritual (Cite 2)
3. Owl ritual (Visual aid picture of ritual, Cite 3)

#### C. Frost Bank Building

1. Location
2. Owl in building (Visual aid picture of Owl from perspective)
3. Story of Rice University graduate.

### III. Conclusion

#### A. Review

1. I have discussed the Face of Cydonia, Bohemian Grove Club, and Frost Bank Building conspiracies with you.

#### B. Clincher

1. I hope you won't be so quick to judge when you hear the word conspiracy.

### Cites:

1. Graham Hancock, *The Mars Mystery* (Three Rivers Press, New York, 1998) 69.
2. National Geographic Website [http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/bestvintage/photogallery\\_02.html](http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/bestvintage/photogallery_02.html)
3. David Icke, *The Biggest Secret* (Bridge of Love Publications, MO, 1999), 335.

SAMPLE OUTLINE

- I. Introduction
  - A. Enjoy about food at restaurant?  
Smell? Taste? Presentation?
  - B. Today...demonstrate fruit monster-(cite) Family Fun May-Oct '96  
Kids love it. I do too.
  - C. I will list supplies, describe the process, and show you a finished product.
- II. Body
  - A. Supplies
    - 1. Fruit-apple, bananas, carrot, raisins
    - 2. Plate, knife, toothpicks
  - B. Process
    - 1. Cut bananas
    - 2. Hole in apple
    - 3. Carrot head
      - a. Angle cut
      - b. Toothpick together
      - c. Raisin eyes
    - 4. Hole for carrot head
  - C. Finished product- (cite) Grady Jacob, Joy of Cooking, 100 cal.
    - 1. Stand in center
    - 2. Surround with fruit
- III. Conclusion
  - A. Review
  - B. You can create your own fruit monster. The little people in your life will eat it up!