

Course title: EBMA - Dealing with Difficult People

Objectives:

- What are difficult people difficult?
 - Excessive stress
 - Personality issues
 - Triggering events
 - Unresolved conflicts
 - Communication issues
- Types of difficult people:
 - The pessimist
 - Why do they act this way?
 - They may be motivated by anxiety, a desire for power, resentment on how treated in past
 - Not listened to or valued
 - Effect on you or the team?
 - Negatively can be contagious
 - What to do?
 - Acknowledge their complaints and reframe them
 - Use their outlook as a positive tool
 - Agree to team norms
 - The passive aggressor peer
 - Why do they act this way?
 - Not truly forthcoming about true feelings
 - Failure of rejection, desire to avoid conflict, feeling of powerlessness
 - What to do?
 - Avoid labeling them as passive aggressive
 - Focus on the underlying message, not their behavior
 - Create a safe environment for a honest conversation
 - The know-it-all
 - Why do they act this way?
 - Competency without competence
 - Compensate for feelings of insecurity
 - What to do?
 - Address interruptions
 - Ask for specific facts
 - Model humility
 - The slacker
 - Why do they act this way?
 - Intentional or unintentional
 - What to do?
 - Ask them if their behavior is intentional or unintentional
 - Document responsibilities of each team member
 - Hold everyone accountable to a standard
 - The complainer

- Why do they act this way?
 - Intentional or unintentional
- What to do?
 - Redirect their perspective by acknowledge
 - Change the subject
 - Encourage to seek a solution
 - Complaining will not change anything
- The scene stealer
 - Why do they act this way?
 - Compensate for own insecurities
 - What to do?
 - Keep a record of your accomplishment and highlight with your manager
 - Toot your own horn!
- The office gossip
 - Why do they act this way?
 - Compensate for own insecurities
 - What to do?
 - Avoid engaging
 - Excuse yourself from negative conversations
 - Redirect to work conversations
- What to do in the moment
 - Listen
 - Stay calm
 - Don't judge
 - Reflect and respect dignity toward the other person
 - Look for the hidden need
 - Look for others around you who might be able to help
 - Don't demand compliance
 - Saying "I understand," usually makes things worse
 - Avoid smiling, as this may look like you are mocking the person
 - Don't act defensively
 - Don't return anger with anger
 - Don't argue or try to convince the other person of anything
 - Keep extra space between you and the other person
 - Saying "I'm sorry," or, "I'm going to try to fix this," can go a long way toward defusing many situations
 - Set limits and boundaries
 - Trust your instincts
 - One response does not fit all
 - Debrief
 - Discharge your own stress
 - Give yourself credit for getting through an uncomfortable situation

Activities:

- Think of a difficult person and write down three assumptions you have about a particular colleague.
- Active listening activity
 - Speaker talks and the listener listens without interrupting for 2 minutes, then both participants switch roles

- Compassion exercise:
 - Identify someone that is a trigger for you and causes stress in your life and reflect on the way that they impact your life.

Key Takeaways:

- 83% of people say they suffer from work-related stress.
- No matter the root cause for the behavior, experts say the key thing is not to take it personally.
- 1:3 Rule – pick your battles, choose to engage with the difficult person one out of three times.
- CALM model:
 - C - clarify the issues
 - A - address the problem
 - L - listen to the other side
 - M - manage your way to resolution
- When conflict arises ask yourself?
 - What am I upset about?
 - What emotions am I feeling?
 - Why am I feeling that way?
 - Have I contributed to the problem?
 - Am I just overacting? If so, why?
 - What are my desires for an outcome to this conflict?
 - What will successful resolution look like?
- **No workplace is without difficult co-workers!**