

# Employee Enhancement Newsletter

Helpful Resources from your Employee Assistance Program

June 2013

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## 10 Tips for Dealing With Difficult People



The vast majority of people will do anything to avoid conflict in both their professional and personal lives. However, there comes a time when it falls to you to deal with a difficult co-worker, employee, supplier or customer. Approached the right way, dealing with a “difficult” person can be quite rewarding. Chances are nobody wants to deal with them in the first place so you could really help make a positive change in the workplace.

The following are some tips to help you:

- 1. Change their title:** When you think of the person in question, refer to them as “challenging” and not “difficult”. You will find that very few people are deliberately poor communicators. Have faith in your own communicative skills and realize that not everybody will be easy to deal with.
- 2. Take a step back:** It’s easy to make quick assumptions that a person is “difficult” without finding out the reasons why. An example could be a customer calling to complain loudly that a delivery is one day late. This seems slightly irrational but further examination could reveal they are waiting for a replacement for a defective model.
- 3. Practice Your Response:** If you can step back from the situation, try to practice your response and put yourself in the other person’s position. Think about their likely responses and plan for them.
- 4. Try for an agreement:** It will help your situation if you are able to agree with the other person. You might not agree with their opinion of version of events, but you should be able to agree that a problem exists. Once you agree upon something it helps build rapport and provides a base for solving the overall problem. Use positive terms and let them know what you are able to do rather than cannot do.
- 5. Ask for and explore alternatives:** Never enter a situation thinking there is no hope for a resolution. Don’t be afraid of asking “What is it you would like to see happen?” or “Tell me, what can I do to improve the situation?” Try to have a few alternative solutions planned. Even if the person rejects them, it provides a starting point.

### Chat Reminder

#### Dealing with Difficult People

Connect with Deer Oaks and a counselor for a live confidential chat.

**When:**

June 19, 2013

**Where:**

[www.deeroaks.com](http://www.deeroaks.com)

**Session Times (CT):**

- 12:15 PM to 12:45 PM

- 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM





## 10 Tips for Dealing With Difficult People continued...

6. **Speak in Private:** If you are dealing with a challenging person, it might be better to deal with them in private. The very fact a problem is being discussed in front of others could be one of the reasons that make them hard to deal with in the first place. Some people have a completely different personality when you get them on their own.
7. **Use "I" Phrases:** Using I phrases allows people to try and understand the impact of their actions on you. For example, "You should...", "You must..." "You could..." will likely make them defensive. Better alternatives are: "I feel you should...", "I think it's better if you..." and are more likely to help reach an agreement.
8. **Don't Take Things Personally:** It might be difficult, but try not to take the conflict personally. Try to separate yourself from the issue. More often than not, there are other factors (such as problems at home, previous bad experiences, and sometimes office politics) affecting the situation.
9. **Take a Breather:** If tempers are becoming frayed suggest taking a breather for 20 minutes or so in order to collect thoughts and re-approach the problem with a cooler head.
10. **Check for Understanding:** Always ask questions of the other person, listen to their response, (briefly) paraphrase their answers and check for understanding. If you engage the other person it is far more likely you can both work out a successful resolution to the problem or conflict. It is amazing how many problems in the workplace are caused by simple misunderstandings.



So whether it is the area of people management or customer care we have to apply the above tips in each given situation.

Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/6370291>

## Aerobic exercise trumps resistance training for weight and fat loss



Aerobic training is the best mode of exercise for burning fat, according to Duke researchers who compared aerobic training, resistance training (weight lifting), and a combination of the two. The study in the *Journal of Applied Physiology* is the largest to analyze changes in body composition from the 3 modes of exercise in overweight or obese adults without diabetes.

Aerobic exercise—including walking, running, and swimming—has been proven to be an effective way to lose weight. However, recent guidelines have suggested that resistance training, which includes weight lifting to build and maintain muscle mass, may also help with weight loss by increasing a person's resting metabolic rate.

Research has demonstrated health benefits for resistance training, such as improving glucose control, but studies on the effects of resistance training on fat mass have been inconclusive.

The study participants assigned to aerobic training and aerobic plus resistance training lost more weight than those who did just resistance training. The resistance training group actually gained weight due to an increase in lean body mass.

Aerobic exercise was also a more efficient method of exercise for losing body fat. The aerobic exercise group spent an average of 133 minutes a week training and lost weight, while the resistance training group spent about 180 minutes exercising a week without shedding pounds.

The combination exercise group, while requiring double the time commitment, provided a mixed result. The regimen helped participants lose weight and fat mass, but did not significantly reduce body mass nor fat mass over aerobic training alone. This group did notice the largest decrease in waist circumference, which may be attributed to the amount of time participants spent exercising.

The researchers say no one type of exercise will be best for every health benefit or every person. Older adults will need resistance training to combat loss of muscle mass with age. Younger, healthy adults or those looking to lose weight would see better results doing aerobics.

Health-e headlines™

*On average, 20 steps will burn one calorie-*

This does not mean you need to walk 20 steps for every calorie you eat. Your body will burn many just going through its normal functions. But by taking those extra steps and burning extra calories, you can help maintain a balance with the energy in foods you consume.

Health-e headlines™

### *The Blame Game*

Like to blame others for personal problems? Perhaps you've gotten angry at your boss, your life partner, or someone else for making your life miserable. Stop focusing on what you can't control and put energy into all of the things within your control, says psychotherapist Jonathan Alpert, author of *BE FEARLESS: Change Your Life in 28 Days*.

Health-e headlines™

### *An EAP Reminder*

*Life Can Be Hectic. The EAP Can Help You Find Your Balance.*

Deer Oaks, your EAP, is always available to you and your household members.

If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.

Counselors are available 24/7 to provide you with immediate care.





## Clinician's Corner..

*Monthly Advice from the Deer Oaks Clinical Team*

### Dealing with Difficult People at Work

Do you have someone at work, a coworker, a boss, that triggers you? Takes credit for your work? Annoys you? Constantly talks about themselves? You are not alone! Most of us deal with that; so much so, we think of leaving our jobs/careers because of it.

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011) indicates that 20-something year olds entering the workforce are likely to change jobs 7 to 10 times during the course of their career. One of the top three reasons is searching for a job with less drama.

Because of dealing with perceived difficult people, we often tend to feel negative and devalued. When we feel devalued we tend to play the role of the victim versus putting our energies into how we can influence our circumstances.

In Tony Schwartz' article, *The Secret to Dealing with Difficult People: It's About You*, he states that we perceive the world through our personal lens. Our lens may not display "reality" but it's "our reality." Our lens gets formed through our own experiences and therefore, each of our lenses and/or perceptions is different, according to Don Miguel Ruiz' *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom* who tells us not to take anything personally due to this.

Try putting on these three lenses when dealing with difficult people or negative emotions:

1. *The Lens of Realistic Optimism.* Ask yourself these two questions; 1) What are the facts in this situation? 2) What's the story I'm telling myself about those facts? This allows you to stand back and not just react out of emotion. It also opens the possibility that whatever story you're telling yourself isn't necessarily the only way to look at your situation.
2. *The Reverse Lens.* This lens requires viewing the world through the lens of the person who is "difficult." Ask yourself, "What is this person feeling, and in what ways does that make sense?" Try to empathize. Just as you do, others tend to behave better when they feel seen and valued — especially since insecurity is what usually prompts them to act badly in the first place.
3. *The Long Lens.* Sometimes seeing things from others' perspective doesn't help for whatever reason. The long lens provides a way of looking beyond the present to imagine a better future. Begin with this question: "Regardless of how I feel about what's happening right now, how can I grow and learn from this experience?"

Remember, nothing stays the same. Your troubles or worries of today shall pass. However, it's often helpful to be able to manage and cope with them today. Try on some new lenses that are mentioned above to decrease your annoyance and stress.

~Calleen Friedel, MS LMFT-S CEAP SAP



## Save on the Cost of Owning a Pet

Sixty-two percent of households, roughly 72.9 million homes, own a pet according to the 2011-2012 APPA National Pet Owners Survey. While the majority of U.S. households get to experience the joys of pet ownership, they must also work the expense of owning a pet into their budgets.

If you already own a pet, or are considering adopting a pet into your family, you can benefit from the following tips on how to cut back on the expense.



1. *Research the type of pet you want.* When selecting the right pet for your lifestyle and your budget, research is important. Certain types and breeds of pets are pricier than others. Take into consideration the cost of food, grooming costs, and whether the particular breed has any potential health concerns that may cost you at the veterinarian's office.
2. *Adopt from a shelter.* Adopting an animal from a shelter can be rewarding for you and your wallet. Often, shelter animals have a much smaller price tag than an animal from a breeder. Shelters will often spay or neuter the animal, as well as give any needed vaccines for a fraction of the price a veterinarian would charge.
3. *Groom at home.* If your pet requires frequent grooming, consider purchasing some starter supplies and taking on the challenge. Grooming your pet helps you and your animal bond, plus, you forgo money spent at the groomer. One golden retriever owner calculated a savings of \$623 per year by grooming at home rather than taking his pup to a professional.
4. *Get the right kind of food.* Just like with people food, striking the right balance between nutrition and price can be tricky. The cheapest pet food may contain unhealthy fillers, resulting in more trips to the vet over the pet's lifetime. The highest quality pet food, however, is also a poor choice if you cannot afford it. The perfect food for your pet is one that balances your pet's health and your financial well-being.
5. *Keep your pet safe.* While veterinary checkups are always recommended, you can avoid unnecessary trips to the vet by making sure your pet is in a safe environment. Keep cats indoors and dogs in fenced-in areas or leashed to avoid injury from cars and other animals.

Pet ownership does not have to be a huge strain on your finances. Implementing a few money-savvy strategies into your budget can make pet ownership a rewarding experience.

### **About Money Management International**

*Money Management International (MMI) is a nonprofit, full-service credit-counseling agency, providing confidential financial guidance, financial education, counseling and debt management assistance to consumers since 1958. MMI helps consumers trim their expenses, develop a spending plan and repay debts. Counseling is available by appointment in branch offices and 24/7 by telephone and Internet. Services are available in English or Spanish. To learn more, call 800.432.7310 or visit [www.MoneyManagement.org](http://www.MoneyManagement.org).*