Dealing with Difficult Members

Difficult members can be found in every organization. It is important that the leaders learn to deal effectively with these individuates to ensure that their behaviors and attitudes do not adversely affect the group’s ability to function.

The 7 C’s of Effectively Working with Difficult Behavior

Compliment– Difficult people need praise too
Concern– Genuinely caring for their welfare will assist in building that relationship
Congratulations– Assist members with a negative view of themselves, feel like winners
Choice– Given a choice a member may feel important and respond positively
Challenge– Boredom can cause members to react in a negative or difficult way
Confidence– Expressing confidence in a member’s ability, assists in building their confidence
Compromise– Attempting to compromise may soften a hard person

Types of Behavior

Hostile Aggressive– those who try to bully & overwhelm usually by sarcasm or cutting remarks
Tips: Stand up for yourself, look directly at them and wait, do not argue or try to cut them down

Complainers– those who constantly complain, but never try to do anything about what they are complaining about
Tips: Listen attentively to them, Acknowledge their concerns, ask “how do you want to remedy the situation?”

Negativists– those who never expect anything to work, or who never have anything good to say about any things/one
Tips: Do not be pulled down by their negativity, do not argue with them

Silent Unresponsive– those who only participate with short responses and never contribute
Tips: Do not interrupt silences; give them a chance to open up, ask open-ended questions

Super Agreeable– very personable, funny people who never act or follow through the way you thought they would
Tips: Ask them to be honest, carefully point out inconsistencies, let them know you value them as a person

Know It All Experts– Condescending, pompous who claim to know all about everything/one
Tips: Know what you are talking about when you talk with them, listen attentively and affirm their perspective

Adapted from University of Wyoming http://www.uwyo.edu/rso/PeakPointers/difficultmembers.pdf