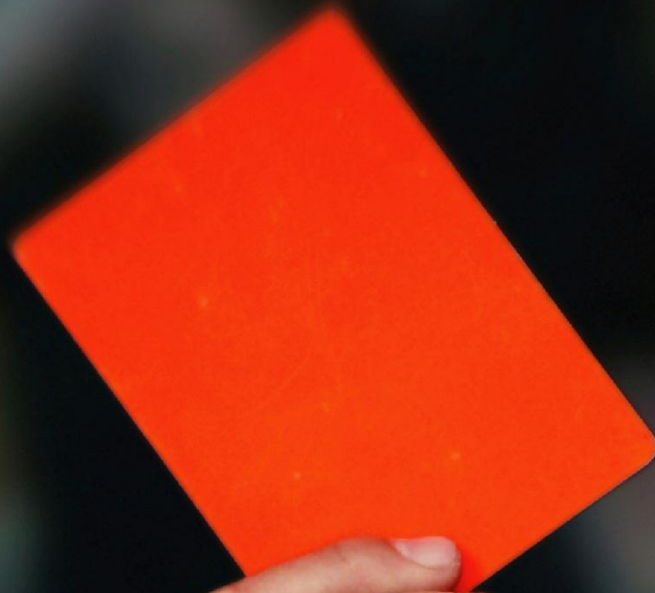


A Useful Guide to Dealing with Difficult Behaviour



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Introduction

Welcome to the Useful Guide to Dealing with Difficult Behaviour, which is designed to help you develop strategies for dealing with a range of behaviour types that you may have come across in the workplace.

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There are several exercises in the Useful Guide. You can either print out the relevant page and write on the printout or, if you prefer, you can download the MS Word toolkit from [here](#) and do the exercises on your computer.

1 Preparing to deal with difficult behaviours

How our beliefs and values influence our behaviour

Each of us will view a situation from our own frame of reference, which includes our beliefs and values. Beliefs are deeply held opinions about ourselves, others and the world around us. Values are closely linked with our beliefs and are the principles that guide us. When our strongly held beliefs and values are challenged we may feel it keenly and want to defend our position or blame someone else for their 'unreasonable' stance.

Our beliefs can impact in other ways too. Most of us will have some unhelpful beliefs which influence our thinking and so make it hard for us to approach situations objectively. These may be about our own skills and abilities, how we stack up against other people etc. That is why it is important to check how our beliefs and values might impact on our response to others before we take action.

Here are some of the reasons why we might find some behaviour difficult.

	Reason	Rank
1	It is different to our own behaviour.	
2	It doesn't fit with our beliefs about how people should behave.	
3	We are worried that they may escalate their behaviour and it will get out of hand.	
4	We fear they might 'expose' us in some way for not being able to deal with them.	
5	We don't believe we have the skills to handle the situation.	
6	We think our own behaviour might get out of control and become unacceptable.	
7	We are afraid of the consequences if we are not able to resolve the situation.	
8	It just makes us feel really uncomfortable.	



Activity:

Look at the reasons given above and rank them in order of how they apply to you with 1 being the reason that most applies and 8 being the one that least applies.

What did you learn from this?

Taking the reason you have put at number 1 on your list, what would you need to change about this to enable you to deal with difficult behaviour more effectively?

Start with the end in mind.

Before you tackle any behavioural or performance problems it is helpful to be clear about what you want to achieve. This will help you to focus on a positive outcome with the individual rather than getting stuck in the problem. For example, if you were tackling someone who was not pulling their weight you might want your outcome to be that they achieve the required level of productivity and become a more motivated member of the team.



Activity:

Think of a situation that you want to deal with, describe it as you see it now.

Now write down what outcome you want to achieve. Make sure that you write this as a positive outcome and make it as specific as you can.

Keeping things objective

With any difficult behaviour you deal with you will need to provide clear and specific feedback to the individual. To do this you will need to ...

1. Ensure you have specific examples of the behaviour that is unacceptable
2. Be clear about the standards of behaviour that are expected
3. Think about the impact of the behaviour on you, the team and the work itself
4. Have a clear outcome in mind
5. Have thought about how you will support the individual to improve or change
6. Know what sanctions you might have to apply if the behaviour does not change
7. Be sure to keep calm and positive when dealing with these situations.
8. Seek support if you need it

When giving feedback on behaviour you will need to ...

- Be clear about the **facts** and describe these objectively
- Outline the **effects** of the behaviour on you, others and the task
- Clarify what you want to happen in **future**

Managing Your Own Behaviour

To be able to deal with difficult behaviour you first need to understand how your behaviour will impact on others.

Putting Yourself in their Shoes

In his book 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey encourages us to 'Seek first to understand and then be understood'. This is very good advice. Putting yourself in the shoes of the other person can help to give you an insight into how they might be seeing things. Perceptual Positions is a way of doing this. Using Perceptual positions we vividly imagine what a situation is like from another person's perspective and then from outside of the situation altogether. The 3 positions are as follows ...

Position 1

Standing in your own shoes

Position 2

Standing in the other person's shoes



Position 3

Standing outside the situation as an independent observer

It is helpful to do this exercise by physically stepping into the different positions. You may also find it useful to get someone else to talk you through each stage so that you can concentrate on putting yourself in the appropriate positions. There are some questions to help you think things through on the following page.



Activity:

Step 1. How do you see the situation? How do you feel? What are you hearing? What does your voice sound like? What do you notice about the other person?

Step 2. Putting yourself in the shoes of the person whose behaviour you are seeing as difficult, how does the situation look from their position? How does it feel to be here? How are you seeing yourself (remember you are looking back at yourself as the other person would be seeing you) from this position?

Step 3. Moving outside of the situation looking at how you and the other person are interacting, what do you see now? Looking from here at how you (in position 1) are approaching the other person, what can you learn from this?

2. Understanding Behaviour

Being able to relate to people well, even in challenging situations, means choosing positive and flexible ways of responding that keep us and the other person OK. The Functional Fluency model helps us to recognise the difference between effective and ineffective behaviours, which means we can then make the choices that will enable us to achieve good outcomes.

The **Functional Fluency** model has five elements.

Guiding And Directing		Looking after People
	Accounting	
Relating to others		Doing my own thing

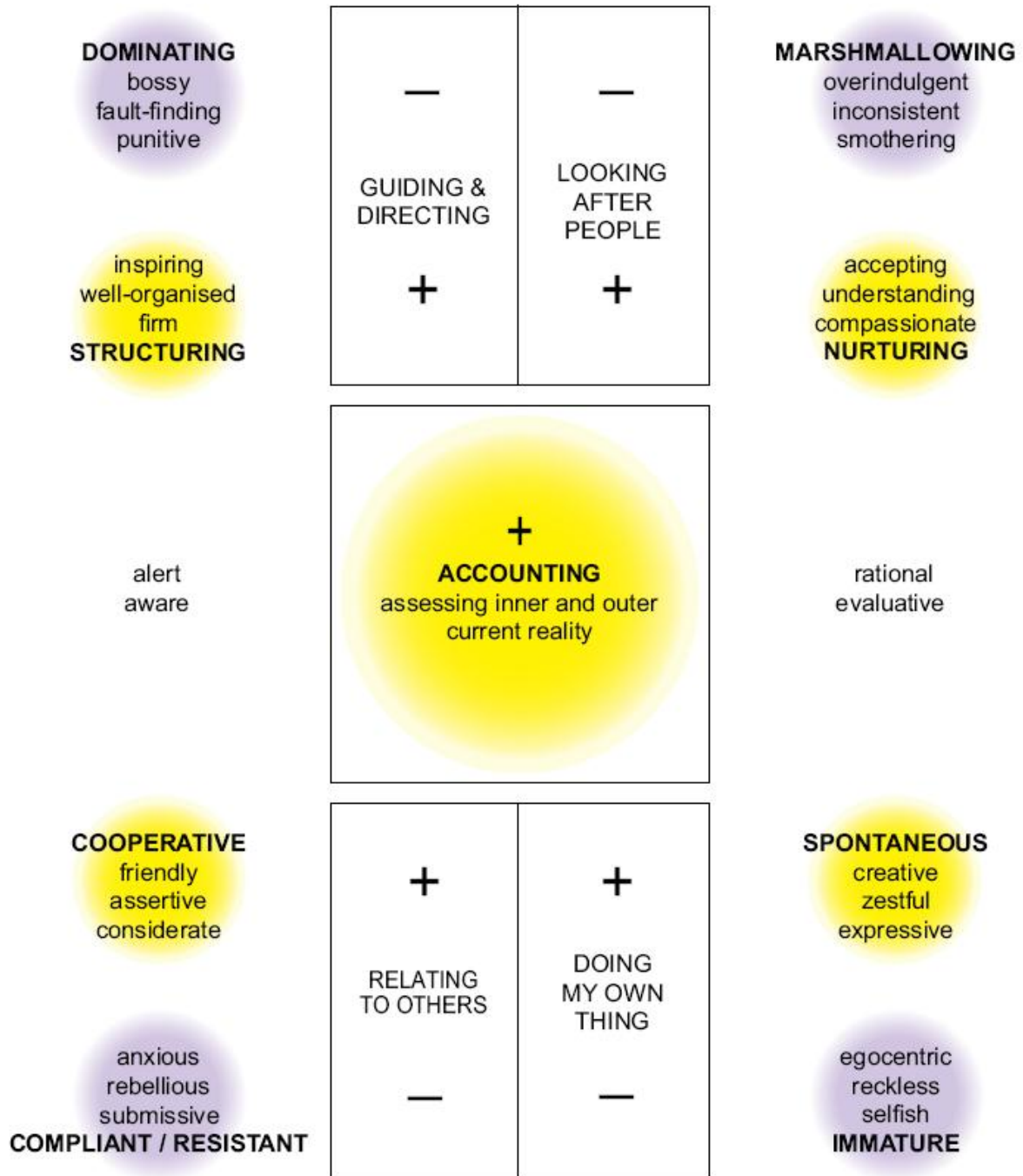
At the core of the model is Accounting. We use Accounting mode to take into account the whole situation to help decide what action to take. We are not necessarily aware of doing this; we do it rapidly in our heads. Realising the importance of doing enough Accounting can help us to remind ourselves to do it enough. Through Accounting we can choose a positive mode of behaviour and avoid flipping into a negative reaction. When we are using Accounting mode we are able to weigh things up and evaluate situations. We are aware of our own feelings and can remain calm and objective.

At the top of the model are behaviours we use when we are being in charge of people (and also of ourselves). The two elements of this are guiding and directing and looking after people.

The Being Yourself elements are at the bottom of the model. These are how you use energy for Relating to Others and Doing your own thing.

The full model has nine modes of behaviour. This is because we can use the 4 elements at the top and the bottom of the model in both positive and negative ways. We use Accounting mode in the middle of the model to help us choose the positive modes to good effect so that our behaviour is functionally fluent.

Here is the full model with the nine modes of behaviour.



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When we are guiding and directing in a positive way we call this Structuring. Structuring is about being firm and setting and maintaining clear boundaries.

We use Structuring mode to inspire and empower others, drawing effectively on our past experience. Our behaviour is well organised and consistent. When people are led by those who use Structuring mode appropriately they know what is expected of them and they are more likely to be confident and cooperative.

The negative way of guiding and directing is called Dominating. When we react to others in a judgemental or fault-finding way we are probably using Dominant mode. Using this mode we come across as bossy and blaming and we may become punitive in dealing with others. Even if we do not deliberately choose to use this mode, the message given is that we are OK and the other person is less OK than we are. As a result of this people may react with anxiety or resentments and feel disempowered in some way.



Activity:

Think of a situation when you reacted to someone using Dominating mode.

How did you react?

What reaction did you get from the other person?

What was the outcome?

How could you have changed your behaviour to make it more Structuring?



Activity:

Think of a situation when you responded to someone using Structuring mode.

How did you respond?

What response did you get from the other person?

What was the outcome?

What did you learn from this experience?

The other element of being in charge is looking after people. Once again there are both positive and negative ways of doing this. When we look after people in a positive way we call this Nurturing. When we use Nurturing mode we deal with people in a kind and understanding way and we demonstrate appropriate empathy. We are encouraging and give people the necessary time and attention to help them learn and grow.

It may seem strange to think of caring for people in a negative way but this can happen when we mistake our own needs for the needs of others and 'do for them what they can or need to do for themselves'. This mode is called Marshmallowing.

When we use this mode we may behave inconsistently and be overly indulgent. We are likely to be too sympathetic and either rescue them by doing things ourselves or just let them get away with not taking action. Unfortunately if we use this mode when we are in charge of other people they may not learn to do things for themselves and become overly dependent or lacking in confidence.



Activity:

Think of a situation when you may have used Marshmallowing mode.

What did you do and say?

What reaction did you get from the other person?

What was the outcome?

How could you have changed your behaviour to make it more Nurturing?

Now think of a situation when you responded to someone using Nurturing mode.

How did you respond?

What response did you get from the other person?

What was the outcome?

What did you learn from this experience?

At the bottom of the model are the ways we use energy on our own behalf, as the individuals we are. There are two elements again, one for doing our own thing in our unique and natural way and one for relating to others – we learn how to do this as part of the socialisation process. Each of these elements can be done in positive or negative ways.

It would be appropriate to use Spontaneous mode when we need to be creative or curious about things. Using this mode we let our energy and enthusiasm flow and can be appropriately playful. At work this is a useful mode for when we are generating new ideas, having fun and getting to know each other [It is a valuable ingredient of Functional Fluency as we can use it to fuel our ingenuity and humour in many situations].

Doing our own thing, however, can also be inappropriate when we use Immature mode. We may act selfishly, not taking other people into account, or we may behave in age or context-inappropriate ways. Imaging someone taking a whoopee cushion into a disciplinary meeting! That would be an extreme example of Immature mode as would indulging dangerously in other risky behaviour.



Activity:

Think of a time when you might have slipped into using Immature mode at work.

What was the situation?

What impact did your behaviour have on the other people involved?

What was the outcome?

What would you do differently next time to avoid slipping into Immature mode?

Now think of a situation when you used Spontaneous mode at work.

What was the situation?

How did using Spontaneous mode help you?

What was the outcome?

What did you learn from this experience?

The 'relating to others' element is when we need to respond to other people, such as our clients, colleagues or our manager. When we are doing this effectively it is called Cooperative mode behaviour. This mode is about using our ability to be in positive relationship with others. Our Cooperative mode behaviour is warm, friendly, considerate and assertive. We can be assertive and get our needs met too in an I'm OK, You're OK way.

We can relate to other people in negative ways too and when we do this we call it Compliant/Resistant mode. This is because there are two main ways of reacting to others on our own behalf. We may behave submissively and rely on people too much. We may feel anxious and lacking in confidence when we being compliant in this way. The other way we may react is by using resistance either actively or passively, by arguing or refusing requests out-right, or more subtly by finding ways to quietly avoid compliance or to sabotage things.



Activity:

Can you think of a time when you may have used Compliant/Resistant mode in response to someone in authority?

How did they behave towards you?

What was your reaction?

What was the outcome?

What would you do differently next time to avoid using Compliant\resistant mode?

Now think of a situation when you used Cooperative mode at work.

What was the situation?

How did using Cooperative mode help you?

What was the outcome?

What did you learn from this experience?

How do you think you could use Accounting mode to help you deal with the difficult situation you described on page 7?

Using Functional Fluency to aid communication

You have probably noticed when dealing with other people that the way you are treated will influence the way you relate to them. You are likely to be able to deal most effectively with people if you use a blend of the five positive modes. They are the ingredients of Functional Fluency. Becoming more functionally fluent means we respond more and react less.

If we use negative modes then we are likely to invite the other person to react using a negative mode too. For example if we react to a situation using Dominating mode (with bossy or fault-finding behaviour) then we are likely to get compliant/resistant behaviours in response. Using Structuring mode, on the other hand, will mean that rather than being bossy we are firm and clear about expectations while keeping the feedback respectful. People are likely to respond by using some Accounting behaviours to consider what we have said, then they are more likely to respond with cooperative behaviours.

If we use Marshmallowing mode (by smothering or being over-tolerant) then again we may invite compliant or resistant reactions or allow the person to carry on with Immature mode behaviour. Using Nurturing mode, however, will mean that we are appropriately kind, supportive and empathic in response to the person's needs. They are likely to benefit by feeling empowered enough to choose different, more positive options.

It is important to remember that Structuring and Nurturing should combine together, so that they feel cared for and supported whilst at the same time being clear about rules and expectations.

Next we will look at how we can use this model to help us with the 7 difficult behaviour types.

3. Introduction to the 7 behaviour types

The seven characters in this Useful Guide provide snapshots of the behaviours that you may find difficult to handle. Before introducing them however it is important to know that in real life people cannot be put into such simple categories as they will display behaviours associated with more than one of the characters. So when thinking about the people you manage, focus on the behaviours rather than labelling them with a 'type'.

Another important thing worth remembering is that we have all probably behaved in these ways, particularly when we are under stress. Keeping this in mind will help you ensure that you think of the person as basically 'ok' and worthy of respect. This is vital to enable you to deal objectively with the difficult behaviour rather than seeing the person as a whole as difficult.

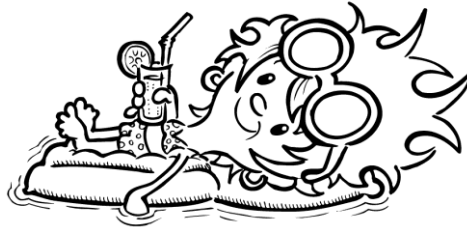
If, as you read this Useful Guide, you have a particular situation in mind that you need to deal with underline the behaviours that you are seeing and focus on developing your own strategy to deal with those behaviours. This means you may have to adapt the suggestions given and pick out ideas from more than one of the behaviour types.



Activity:

Write a brief description of the situation that you want to deal with here.

Lazy Lucy



Behaviours:

Lucy is likely to be late and not complete things on time. She may have a careless and lackadaisical attitude towards work and possibly be clumsy. Someone like Lucy will tend to be talkative and will often be 'the life and soul'.

Example:

Lucy arrives late as usual, talking loudly about the night before and the fun that she had out with the girls. She takes a long time to settle and wants to chat to everyone, disturbing their work.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Lucy's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Lazy Lucy:

There are two key things that might prove difficult in dealing with someone like Lucy. These are ...

- getting Lucy to see that her lateness and the quality of her work are unacceptable,
- Dealing with her talkative nature when meeting with her to address the issues.

Tips for dealing with Lazy Lucy

- Focus on specific aspects of Lucy's behaviour and their effects.
- Keep a record of lateness, and incomplete projects. Remain assertive and factual and restate any standards that exist for the job.
- Ask her to keep a record of her own timekeeping and tell her that she needs to keep discussions of her busy social life to lunchtime breaks.
- Ask her to think about the impact her behaviour is having on others before explaining the impact you see.
- Ask her to map out her work flow and identify where each part of her work touches other people. Set her an objective to spend some time with those people who are on the receiving end of her work and then discuss with her what she has learnt from this.
- Praise any improvement that you see as a result.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Lucy's behaviour?

Suggestions:

You will need to use enough Accounting behaviours to ensure that you gather enough information, consider the situation from different perspectives and remain alert to any changes you will need to make to your approach as you manage the situation with Lucy.

Structuring behaviours will be important too as you will need to establish clear standards of behaviour.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Lucy.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned.

Histrionic Henry



Behaviours:

Henry tends to over react and may become emotional when under stress. He is likely to make a drama out of a crisis and can act as a victim when he feels under pressure. Because of these behaviours he can come across to others as immature.

Example:

Henry was a very friendly member of the team who would go out of his way to help other people in the department. However sometimes when he hit upon a problem he would become very emotional and create a fuss rather than working out what he needed to do to resolve the situation. His manager knew that telling him to calm down did not work and in fact often got him more agitated.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Henry's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Histrionic Henry;

When dealing with the behaviours like Henry displays the challenging aspects are likely to be ...

- Helping him to keep calm rather than getting emotional
- Finding a strategy that will help him to work out solutions to problems without getting agitated

Tips for dealing with Histrionic Henry

- Make sure that you deal with Henry privately. Take him to one side or arrange a one to one with him.
- Ask him to explain to you why he was upset
- Acknowledge Henry's feelings but do not agree with him if he blames someone or something for causing him to feel this way
- Build rapport by listening to what he has to say.
- Ask questions to get him to think logically about the situation and how he can resolve it.
- Be clear about the impact of his behaviour but do this only when he is calm
- Get him to tell you how he will tackle similar situations differently in future.
- Praise any changes you see in his behaviour.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Henry's behaviour?

Suggestions:

You will need to use enough Accounting behaviours to ensure that you keep yourself calm, grounded and unaffected by any emotion that Henry displays. Accounting mode will also be needed to enable you to ask Henry clear questions and to help him to think.

Some Structuring behaviours will be important as you will need to ensure Henry is clear about the impact of his behaviour and just enough Nurturing behaviour so that you can remain empathic and build rapport.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Henry.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Make sure you think about how you will keep yourself calm if faced with Henry's emotions.

Withdrawn Wendy



Behaviours:

Wendy acts passive and so may come across as uncooperative. She may be seen as shy and some may think her detached. Wendy is likely to be self-critical and may seem to act hopeless when under stress.

Example:

You recently asked Wendy to complete a piece of work which was an important part of a project. She took on the work in a resigned way, without complaint. You haven't seen it since and the deadline is approaching. You are not sure if she has completed it or not. When asked she said she had started it but wasn't sure how to finish it and what she had done she felt wasn't quite right. She looked and sounded quite anxious.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Wendy's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Withdrawn Wendy

Wendy's behaviours might pose the following challenges ...

- Getting Wendy to feel comfortable about asking for help
- Encouraging her to open up and discuss her workload and issues with you
- Building her confidence so that she can manage her work and her working relationships more effectively

Tips for dealing with Withdrawn Wendy

- Tackle the situation gently. Speak to her calmly and give her time to respond.
- Concentrate initially on getting the work completed and coach her to identify the steps she needs to take to complete the project on time.
- Acknowledge her ideas and suggestions
- Remember to include milestones.
- Once the pressure is off, ask her how she might approach a similar project differently next time and agree with her what needs to be in place for her to complete the work on time.
- Reinforce your faith in her ability to get good results if appropriate and praise her when she achieves good results.
- Agree what support is available to her if she needs it and be clear about how you will follow up.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Wendy's behaviour?

Suggestions:

Using Nurturing behaviours will be very important with Wendy as you will need to show understanding and support. However you will also need to use some Structuring behaviours to show her what is expected. Accounting mode will help you to be enquiring so that you can better understand Wendy's needs and to be alert so that you can remain patient and responsive.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Wendy.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Be prepared to ask lots of clear, open questions to get Wendy to open up and agree a plan with you.

Paranoid Pete



Behaviours:

Pete may adopt a 'Poor me' approach when under stress. He will tend to blame others and may act suspicious or envious. He may be pessimistic about things working and talk in extremes, 'this will never work' or 'it always happens to me'.

Example:

Pete has failed to meet the deadline on a report you asked him to complete. When you tackle him about this he says that it is not his fault as the deadline you gave him was too short, that other managers keep giving him work even though they know he is busy, and that his colleagues were deliberately being noisy and distracting.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Pete's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Paranoid Pete;

With Pete the important areas to focus on are ...

- Ensuring he voices any concerns with you before problems emerge
- Encouraging him to take responsibility for his own actions and decisions
- Helping him to see things more realistically rather than taking a pessimistic attitude

Tips for dealing with Paranoid Pete

- Focus on the facts and remain objective – both in considering the situation and when discussing it with Pete.
- Avoid the temptation to either, criticise and become impatient, or to rescue him and solve the problem for him.
- Plan what you will say before speaking to him and stick to it.
- If necessary, use questions and gentle challenges to get Pete to think more logically about the situation and see things from other perspectives.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Pete's behaviour?

Suggestions:

Accounting mode will be really important as you deal with Pete so that you can remain enquiring and avoid the temptation to blame or rescue. Structuring behaviours will be useful so you can outline the facts and expectations. Although you will need to be gentle, Nurturing mode will be less crucial as too much may push Pete further into his 'poor me' behaviour.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Pete.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Make sure you think about how you will keep yourself calm and objective and keep Pete focused on his own actions and behaviour.

Controlling Clara



Behaviours:

Others may see Clara as bossy and domineering. She tends to want to do everything her way and is likely to keep tight control over her work and information. Clara can be stubborn and may seem aggressive, especially when under stress.

Example:

Clara has a tendency to take on too much work and not let her colleagues "have a go" at tackling some of the more complex projects. Recently you have noticed this is starting to cause resentment among her team.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Clara's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Controlling Clara;

With Clara the challenging areas that need to be tackled are ...

- Providing feedback to her on the effects of her 'bossy and aggressive' approach to her colleagues
- Helping her learn how to delegate work and involve other people

Tips for dealing with Controlling Clara

- Be clear about what you have noticed and your concerns about the effect.
- Encourage her to consider the effects of her behaviour on others.
- Agree with Clara that you want to work with her to look at ways in which she can learn to involve people more. One way you can do this is to choose a specific project and ask Clara to find out as many different ways as possible to complete the task satisfactorily.
- Set her a task to ask her colleagues for their suggestions as a piece of research. Then get her to choose 2 alternatives and explain why she has chosen them.
- Make sure that you give her positive feedback as she does this.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Clara's behaviour?

Suggestions:

Structuring behaviours will be important as you will need to outline your expectations, provide direct and honest feedback and set tasks and goals as appropriate. You will need to use Accounting mode enough to ensure that you explore with Clara how she might make the changes you want to see. Nurturing behaviours will come into play when Clara takes your expectations on board and starts making changes as then you can offer supportive and encouraging feedback.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Clara.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Make sure you think about how you will help Clara to see the impact of her behaviours and both the short- term and long-term effects that this might have.

Domineering Dave



Behaviours:

Dave tends to act aggressively. He has a loud manner and others may see him as a bully. Dave can play favourites and is likely to belittle some people, using put downs and sarcasm. Others may feel that he damns them with faint praise.

Example:

You can hear Dave's voice above everyone else's in the office. He tells a female member of staff that she's 'a lovely young girl', then asks her to go and make him a cup of tea. He then castigates a male colleague for making a mistake, laughing loudly as he describes him as 'About as much use as a chocolate tea pot'.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Dave's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Domineering Dave

Dave displays a number of behaviours which are disrespectful of others and it is this that needs to be dealt with, particularly ...

- Providing clear and specific feedback on the unacceptable behaviours, giving examples to support this.
- Outlining the standards expected and how these are being contravened
- Helping Dave to recognise for himself the negative impact his attitude is having on his colleagues.

Tips for dealing with Domineering Dave

- Talk to Dave in private.
- Focus on Dave's behaviour and its effects.
- Explain that some of his behaviours could constitute bullying and harassment. Check his understanding of this.
- Be assertive and take responsibility for what you are saying – 'I am not happy' rather than 'Dawn has complained'.
- Be clear that bullying behaviours are not only against company policy but also against the law.
- If Dave recognises and accepts the need to change his behaviour, work with him to agree what he will do to redress the situation with his colleagues.
- Explain if they continue you will have to take disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Dave's behaviour?

Suggestions:

You will need to use Accounting mode to ensure you are rational and provide all the necessary facts and feedback. This will go hand in hand with the importance of using Structuring behaviours to set standards and ensure that Dave is aware of the consequences of his behaviour.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Dave.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Make sure you think about how you will ensure that Dave understands the consequences of continuing with his behaviour.

Manipulative Mike



Behaviours:

Mike may be seen as irresponsible and selfish. He could gossip behind people's backs but to their faces is likely to act charmingly in an attempt to 'seduce' them. Mike may try to catch people out and seek to take advantage of people and situations.

Example:

At a recent team meeting you brainstormed ways of reducing costs. Mike has taken these ideas and put them in a paper direct to the Chief Executive, presenting them as his own. When you talk to him about it Mike smiles and says that his failure to mention the rest of the team was 'just an oversight', and that he thought you would appreciate his initiative.



Activity:

What would you find challenging about dealing with Mike's behaviour?

What would you need to do to overcome these challenges?

Issues involved in dealing with Manipulative Mike

Behaviours like those that Mike displays can be tricky to deal with as it can be easy to be 'seduced' by his charming and innocent attitude. With Mike it will be important to ...

- Give clear feedback about the incident you are concerned about
- include how you felt about it in what you say and give clear and objective information about the impact his behaviour has had.
- Keep yourself calm and grounded to ensure he does not get round you
- Be clear about how you would like him to behave in the future and help him to see the benefits of this.

Tips for dealing with Manipulative Mike

- Make sure that you have clear and specific feedback to give Mike
- Remain calm. Do not try to deal with Mike if you are feeling angry or emotional.
- When tackling him about issues plan what you have to say and stick to it.
- Be clear about his behaviour and the effects of his behaviour on you and the other people in the team.
- Invite him to put himself in their shoes and consider the impact.
- Be clear about your organisation's standards, code of conduct and lines of communication and be prepared to restate these to Mike if necessary.



Activity:

Which of the positive Functional modes will be most important as you deal with Mike's behaviour?

Suggestions:

Accounting mode will be really important as you deal with Mike so that you can remain calm and grounded and avoid being charmed into backing down or getting irritated with Mike's behaviour. Structuring behaviours will be important so you can outline the facts and expectations and ensure that Mike is clear about the impact of his behaviour.



Activity:

Write down what you might say to Mike.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned. Make sure you think about how you will stick to your guns if Mike tries to charm you or make excuses.

4. Action Planning



Activity:

Review the situation you outlined on page 7 and answer the following questions:

Which of the 7 behaviour types are being shown in this situation?

What are the key issues that you need to deal with in this situation?

What information do you need?

What support might you need and how will you get it?

Which of the Positive Modes from the Functional Fluency model will you need to use and how will you use them?



Activity:

Write your action plan for how you will approach Dealing with the Difficult Behaviour.

You may find it helpful to check this out with a colleague, a coach or your manager to get some feedback on your strategy. Alternatively, leave this for a while and then come back and review your plan. Look at it objectively and think about whether it is likely to help you achieve the outcomes you have planned.

5 Summary

- Concentrate on the behaviour not the person
- Be calm!
- Be consistent!
- Work with the person
- Know your organisation's policies and procedures
- Help them to see the impact of their behaviour
- Acknowledge and praise any improvements or change

Dealing with difficult behaviour can be a challenge, but, if left to their own devices, individuals may undermine the whole team. If you don't take action the situation will not necessarily improve. Tackle the situation early rather than leaving it to fester. Issues rarely end up sorting themselves out of their own accord and can get worse if left. Make sure you are focusing on the whole situation, not just the problem but keep it in proportion.

If you cannot resolve the issue, or you feel you need support on how to handle it, talk to someone. It could be your manager, a colleague, or even an external coach.

Attending a course may also be helpful as you will get the opportunity to plan and practice dealing with these difficult behaviours.

References

"Functional Fluency: What is it all about?" is a booklet published by Fleur Temple Publishing in 2009.

Feedback

As we are always trying to improve our Useful Guides we would appreciate any feedback you can give us on A Useful Guide to Dealing with Difficult Behaviour. Please click on the link below to access our online feedback form ...

<http://www.pansophix.com/useful-guide-feedback.html>

If we use your feedback to improve A Useful Guide to Dealing with Difficult Behaviour. we will email you a copy of the updated version.

You can access lots of free tips and tools at 247freetips.com.