

Suggested Strategies for Managing Frustrating Behaviors “In-the-Moment”

Behavior	Possible Strategy
Yelling	Ask the individual to stop yelling. Inform him/her that you cannot assist unless they stop. Inform that you will end the conversation/ until he/she can talk without yelling.
Interrupting	In person – use your hand to signal the person. On phone – clearly and calmly request not to be interrupted.
Won't Stop Talking	Wait them out, let them be heard. Provide time limits. Acknowledge the feelings, inform that you want to assist, and redirect towards action Summarize what you hearing “I’m not hearing any new information. Is there anything new or different that you can tell me?” Reach resolution and let them know the next step (might be to call them back.
Talks in circles	Summarize and redirect towards action. Validate feelings and ask clear questions.
Curses	Consider most effective timing of when to confront. Inform the person that you would appreciate it if he/she would not curse.
Elevated emotions	Assess whether the emotional release is healthy. Consider, “It sounds like you are really upset. Tell me more about how you are feeling and how this affected you.” Minimize risk. Sometimes in person or via phone is better than email.
Blames/Claims you “ruined their life”	Work towards being an ally. Acknowledge the feelings – “I understand this is difficult. I can suggest some resources to help you work through this.”
Wants you to make an exception	Describe where to find the policy, take a moment to review it, and ask the individual if/why it shouldn't apply. Explain why policies/procedures are in place. Describe the appeal options Describe the kinds of exceptions that are made.
Wants a different answer	Provide explanation and explain any appeals processes Ask if there is anything else you can assist with Explain why some other solutions are not feasible.
Claims discrimination	Point them to the policy or procedure in question and inform that you are following it. Inform them that there is a process they can utilize if they feel they have been treated unfairly, and describe where to find it. (Non-Academic Complaint Process in the Student Code; office appeal procedures)
Threatens to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sue you • Go to the media • Go to your director • Go to the President 	Don't let this derail you and don't get defensive. Continue to reference the policies. Acknowledge that is fine, then “Let me see what I can do to help you first,” and focus on solutions. Inform them of realities: that the same policies are followed, that the President or supervisor may refer them back, etc Remind them of appeals procedures.
Claims discrimination	Point them to the policy or procedure in question and demonstrate how you are following it. Inform them that there is a process they can utilize if they feel they have been treated unfairly, and describe where to find it.

