

Dealing with Angry People




PPT-067-03 1

Dealing with Angry People



Program Goals

Understanding Angry People

- The Angry Person
- Public's Perceptions and Expectations
- Your Agency as Resource Facilitator

Strategies for Dealing With Angry People

- Communications Process
- Listening/Speaking Skills
- Telephone Techniques
- Knowing Your People
- Administrative Policies & Procedures



PPT-067-03 2

Anger Defined



Webster:


"...A strong feeling of displeasure and usually of antagonism."

Synonyms which deal with intensity of anger.

Ire - Rage - Fury - Indignation - Wrath



PPT-067-03 3


Anger Defined 

Webster:


Ire: more intense than anger with display of feelings

Rage: loss of self-control from violence of emotion

Fury: overmastering destructive rage; can verge on madness




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Anger Defined 


Webster:

Indignation: righteous anger at what one considers unfair, mean or shameful

Wrath: ... likely to suggest a desire or intent to revenge or punish



PPT-067-06 5


The Angry Person 

Displays a disruption of balance; an intrusive situation occurs in a person's life to which they cannot react or stabilize or one to which they refuse to react

Is unable to rectify or remedy the situation which they feel they did not create or author themselves; they become angry


If this disruption is not properly addressed, if anger results, it may trigger revenge in the extreme

PPT-067-03 6

Angry People 

People feel threatened by:

1. Manipulation;
2. Erosion of their self-esteem;
3. Life changes;
4. Challenges to their security.



PPT-067-03 7


Angry People 

What makes you angry and why?


How do you handle your anger?



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Profile of Affected Population 


1. Age
2. Mind Set
3. Awareness and Perception
4. Physical & Mental Needs



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Age

Children
Adults
Elderly



Differences in the way anger is caused and handled may be a generational thing.

Boomers: 1946-1964
Gen X: 1965-1979
Gen Y: 1980-2000



PPT-067-03 10

Generational Considerations

<u>Present workforce</u>	<u>Born</u>
The Veterans	1922-1945
Baby Boomers	1946-1964
Generation X	1965-1979
Generation Y – Millennials	1980-2000

Communication

- > WWII Generation
 - > Logical, linear, conservative
- > Baby Boom Generation
 - > Personable; Information = Reward
- > Generation X
 - > Direct, straightforward, results-oriented
- > Millennial Generation
 - > Positive, motivational, personal goal-oriented

PPT-067-03 11

Generational Considerations

Generational Dislikes:

WWII Generation:
Profanity, slang, poor grammar, disrespect

Baby Boom Generation:
Brusqueness, one-upsmanship

Generation X:
Using time poorly, corporate-speak

Millennial Generation:
Cynicism, sarcasm, condescension*

*Phyllis Cohn, Project Manager, AARP, "The Aging Workforce: Moving Forward in a New Age," (Turn-offs), OSHA Small Business Forum, July, 2009.

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Mind Sets

Altruistic Egotistical Messianic
 Questioning Spiteful Arguer
 Detached Complaining Belligerent
 Introverted Extroverted Uncooperative
 Retreating
 Phobic



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Physical & Mental Needs

> Dependencies interfering with understanding and
 > Factors impacting mental health:

- Weight;
- Family Health;
- Rising Prices;
- Full schedules;
- Misplacing/losing things;
- Outside yard/home maintenance;
- Property, investments & taxes;
- Crime;
- Personal/physical appearance.



PPT-067-03 14


Components of Anger

Like the "3 mirror images of Self"

1. How the complainant views the situation
2. How you view the situation
3. What the situation really is



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Life Change Units 

Established from studies conducted by Dr. T. H. Holmes and Dr. R. H. Rahe

Addresses changes to a person's life within the last 24 months.


Values assigned may provide an indication whether a person may incur an illness in the next year if not properly handled.

PPT-067-03 16


Life Change Units 

Areas considered to impact a person and health risks assigned include the areas of:

- > Work Events;
- > Personal Issues;
- > Financial State;
- > Social Condition;
- > Family Concerns.




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Social Changes & High Tech 

"Doublespeak Quiz"

"Technological changes and their new terminology may confound, confuse and anger those required to work with these systems"



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Types of Complaints



Types of complaints from the angry public may be directed at:

- Products;
- Services;
- Individuals within your organization;
- Company performance overall or specifically.



These could be based on a lack of understanding of your operation or false presumptions. (The public's perception and expectations).

PPT-067-03

19

Handling Anger



4 Principles for Dealing with People

1. Build trust and rapport - eliminate the threat;
2. Determine and meet the person's needs;
3. Communicate on all levels -
Read the cues - verbal, visual, tones;
4. Solve the problem.



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20

Handling Anger



1. Assess the Anger - Determine the level

Low: Normal tone/pitch; little/no swearing; context (is it anger?).


Moderate: Higher pitch; swearing; crying; gesturing; face flushed.



High: Sustained high pitch (voice cracking); personalized vulgarity; "fingerpainting"; repeating basic concept; stammering.


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21


Handling Anger 

2. Assess your reaction: (Pro-active or Reactive)

- Realize your abilities/limitations;
- Cope;
- Assert appropriate assertiveness;
- Don't talk yourself into a corner;
- Relax on cue;
- Fog (agree with any truth, probability of or general truth).




PPT-067-03 22


Handling Anger 

3. Calm the anger through:

- Active Listening;
- Allowing the person to "vent";
- Sectoring anger toward true (real) cause;
- Reflecting;
- Asking/answering questions



PPT-067-03 23


Handling Anger 

4. Solve the problem
Keep people feeling good about themselves.

Objectives:

- Get them off defensive;
- Reflect their concern, do not immediately answer complaint;
- Discover reasons behind their problem;
- Involve person in finding a solution.


PPT-067-03 24

Handling Anger 

Types of Questions:

- What in particular troubles you?
- What specifically do you feel we need to correct?
- What stands in the way?
- How do you feel our past performance was better?
- What do you think is the first step in resolving this problem?


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Handling Anger 

Other Goals:


- Provide acceptable alternatives;
- Empathize: see the situation from their perspective;
- Dovetail: resolution summary of event showing how alternative solutions merge with demands or requests;
- Your agency is a facilitator to remedy problems!

PPT-067-03 26


Dealing with Angry Public 

Strategies:

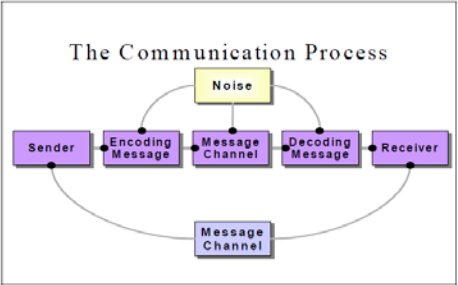
1. The communications process;
2. Listening/speaking skills;
3. Telephone techniques;
4. Knowing your people;
5. Administrative policies & procedures.



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1. The Communication Process 


The Communication Process



```


    graph LR
      Sender[Sender] --> Enc[Encoding Message]
      Enc --> MC1[Message Channel]
      MC1 --> Dec[Decoding Message]
      Dec --> Receiver[Receiver]
      Noise[Noise] -.-> Enc
      Noise -.-> Dec
      MC2[Message Channel] -.-> Receiver
      Receiver -.-> Sender
      
```

PPT-067-03 28

Communications Process 

<u>Sender</u>	<u>Message/ Medium</u>	<u>Receiver</u>
Experience	Verbal/non-	Experience
Attitudes	written	Attitudes
Skills	Email	Skills
Perceptions	Web	Perceptions
	Pictures	


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Anger Vocabulary 

<u>Mild</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Strong</u>	<u>Intense</u>
Moody	Unhappy	Very Unhappy	Bitter
Concerned	Discontented	Frustrated	Angry
Disappointed	Disturbed	Fed Up	Disgusted
Worried	Sullen	Indignant	Outraged
Dissatisfied	Troubled	Irate	Furious

Some words, by their very construct, may sound harsh (hard and soft sounds)

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Phrasing Questions 


Open Questions
Phrased so they can NOT be answered simply with yes or no

Begin With
What Who When
Where How Which


Closed Question (Avoid)
Phrased so they can be answered by a yes or no reply

Begin With
Is Can Do
Will Has Shall

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2. Listening/Speaking Skills 

- Effective Listening;
- Active Listening;
- Persuasion;
- Types of Responses and their Result.



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Effective Listening 

Listening is 1/3 of communication

- Listen for ideas-not facts;
- Judge content (first); not delivery (secondary);
- Be an optimistic listener, from the beginning;
- Listen to the full message-don't jump to conclusions;
- Be flexible-take notes;
- Concentrate on the speaker.



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Effective Listening 

Thought: 4 x faster than speech.

- Analyze message
- Read verbal/non-verbal signs
 - Posture, head positioning
 - Eye movement and contact
 - Hands
 - Proximity (territorial aspect)
 - ✓ Standing/sitting/lounging
 - ✓ Gestures
 - ✓ Word choice and pace of speech
 - ✓ Tonality and intensity
 - Facial expressions



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Active Listening 

Defined: Paying careful attention to content & feelings of message.


Content: What words mean and context of use.

Feeling: Emotions displayed by content.

Feelings real as disclosed?
Are true feelings masked?





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Active Listening 

Before you reply:

- Attempt to determine core theme;
- Determine content and feeling;
- Consider what you heard;
- Ask for clarification & feedback;
- Reflect before replying;
- Understand speaker's position, then construct your conclusion and reply.

Put yourself in **THEIR** shoes 



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Active Listening 

Components

- Encouraging
- Restating
- Reflecting
- Summarizing



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Active Listening Components 


1. Encouraging

Goal: Project interest; maintain conversation.

Process: Be non-committal; don't agree or disagree; use positive tone of voice.

Listener's comments:

- "I see..."
- "Uh-huh"
- "That's interesting..."



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Active Listening Components 

2. Restating

Goal: Shows your understanding; discloses grasp of facts.

Process: Restate speaker's basic ideas; place emphasis on facts.

Listener's comments:

- "If I understand, your idea is..."
- "In other words, you think..."



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Active Listening Components



3. Reflecting

Goal: Demonstrates you're listening and understanding; lets speaker know you understand how they feel.

Process: Reflect person's feelings with short replies without being flippant or curt.

Listener's comments:

"You feel that ..."

"You were pretty annoyed by this ..."

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40

Horizontal lines for notes

Active Listening Components



4. Summarizing

Goal: Draw together ideas and facts; create basis for continued discussion; review/update progress.

Process: Major ideas are restated, reflected and summarized.

Listener's comments:

"These seem to be the main ideas you've expressed ..."

"If I understand you, you feel this way about ..."

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41

Horizontal lines for notes

Reflection and Fogging



Reflection

A restatement, (not a question) of:

- What you understand;
- The speaker said;
- Expressed in your own words;
- Including your understanding of contents and feelings revealed.



Solutions are not reached at this level. This stage seeks to ensure agreement on the topic between parties.

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42

Horizontal lines for notes

Reflection and Fogging



Reflection Levels (5):

- Repeating word-for-word;
- Repeating but changing I to You;
- Repeating part of the conversation but not summarizing;
- Summarizing in your own words;
- Summarizing content and feeling of message;



Example: "I can truly understand why this has you ___(feeling)___ particularly due to ___(content)___."

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43

Fogging



Fogging: Method of reply used when you're under attack or criticism. It's simply agreeing with:

- Any truth
- The probability of truth, or
- The general truth or agreeing in principle

Comment:

"You never give me a good job evaluation. You don't even know my capabilities."

Fogged Reply:

"You're probably right, I should get to know your capabilities better."

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44

Persuasion



Listening Skills


Empathy: Attentive listening to feelings. Reflect back in sympathetic, non-judgmental way.

Disarming: Find the core truth, even if it seems to be distorted or illogical.

Inquiry: Question to change vague points into the real issues.

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45

Persuasion 


Self-Expression Skills

Stroking: Be positive. Compliment and reward people.

Tactful Presentation: Express your thinking and feeling in objective, constructive manner.

Problem-Solving: Resolve real problems after above techniques are used now that core truth and reasons are identified.

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Everybody Wins If You. . . 


- Make decisions by agreement rather than having a winner and a loser;
- Determine if person will accept any agreement on issues;
- Establish a stand on an issue and have other person do the same;
- Be alert for strategies of intimidation by others - don't evoke them yourself.

PPT-067-03 47


4. Knowing Your People 

Problem Employees:

<u>Trait</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Late	Avoidance
Excuses	Transferral
Retreating	Introverted
Defiant Acts	Act of Desperation




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Summary 

- Ask yourself if the anger is justified
- Stay calm
- Avoid character insults
- Know when to disengage
- Stay safe




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Questions 



PPT-067-03 50

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PPT-067-03 51
