



SPECIAL DISTRICT RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

# **CALAFCO 2015 STAFF WORKSHOP**

**Thursday, April 16, 2015**

**Effectively Dealing with  
Difficult Behaviors**

**3:30 – 4:45PM**

**Grass Valley, California**

Maximizing Protection. Minimizing Risk.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Presented By

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Chief Risk Officer

Special District Risk Management Authority

Dennis has worked in the insurance/risk management industry for the past 30 years starting with Liberty Mutual Insurance handling commercial insurance claims and the last 15 years with SDRMA, managing the Property/Liability and Workers' Compensation claims operations.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Know Your Audience

**Local Agency Formation Commissions** (or **LAFCOs**) are political entities associated with each of the 58 counties of the State of California that oversee the formation and development of local governmental agencies in those counties. LAFCOs' regulatory duties include approving the establishment, expansion, reorganization, and elimination of all cities and most types of special districts, and their spheres of influence. Spheres of influence demark the territory the affected LAFCO independently believes represents the appropriate and probable future jurisdictional boundary and service area of the subject agency. All jurisdictional boundary changes and outside service extensions, notably, must be consistent with the subject agencies' spheres of influence with limited exceptions. They are established in each county by the Cortese–Knox–Hertzberg Act ([Government Code](#) § § 56000 et seq.)<sup>[1]</sup>

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Identify the Source

- \* External contacts
  - Other public agencies
  - Public advocates
  - Contractor groups
  - Member's of the Public
  - Vendors
  
- \* Internal contacts
  - Co-workers
  - Commission Members

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Behavior Types - External

- \* The Know It All
- \* Legal Beagle
- \* The Complainer
- \* My Way or the Highway

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Behavior Types - Internal

- \* The Chatterbox
- \* The Gossip
- \* The Complainer
- \* The Delegator
- \* The Credit Grabber

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Use Conflict as a Natural Resource.** People who work together have different perceptions, and it would be unnatural if they did not disagree from time to time. The conflict generated can be a first step on the road to improving communication, solving a problem, and even building trust and cooperation. Avoidance or hiding conflict can be much more damaging in the workplace than facing it and dealing with it appropriately. You may even find that proverbial silver lining in a dark cloud.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIORS

**Don't React.** Take time to cool off and gather your emotions. The most natural thing to do when faced with a difficult person or situation is to react. Give yourself time to think and remain focused on identifying the real needs and interests of the other person and yourself. Deep breathing and counting to ten is very helpful.



# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Deal with Feelings.** Helping the other person identify or acknowledge their feelings tends to reduce the intensity of those feelings and allows the person to focus on the underlying issues. By encouraging and permitting the expression of negative feelings without fear of reprisal or punishment, you have increased the probability that your similar emotional expressions will be better accepted.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Attack the Problem, Not the Person.** Keep an objective eye on the problem and detach any feelings about the person presenting it. Try to understand what the actual problem is and generate possibilities for settling it. Don't attack the other person and try to see the situation from their point of view. If you make assumptions about their behavior, verify by asking or repeat what you thought you heard. Show respect, try not to interrupt, and avoid using hostile words that inflame.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Practice Direct Communication.** Speak directly to the other party. Use “I” statements and be clear about points of agreement, about purpose, and about needs. Use body language to show support and attention. Ask questions to clarify and paraphrase what the other person is attempting to communicate to you. Ask problem solving questions. Other people can provide you with some very important information about yourself, positive and negative, and you can provide equally important information helpful to them. Words alone do not convey this information, so be aware of your body language and tone of voice.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Look Past Positions to the Underlying Interests.** A position is someone's limited view of what solution is necessary to meet a particular need. Until the needs and interests of each of you are ascertained, it is not possible to generate options that will be mutually beneficial and agreeable. Try to identify the other person's physical or psychological needs, along with your common interests. You can bring these interests to the surface or you can leave them submerged only to emerge in unmanageable ways later.

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## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

**Focus on the Future.** Proving or disproving past allegations may not be of value to a continuing relationship at work. Give the other person ownership in the resolution. Don't sell your ideas but engage in a joint problem solving discussion. Ask what's important and be sure agreement is reached in dignity and respect for each of you. Any ongoing relationship you have with someone is longitudinal and can be altered to be constructive and improved. What just happened may be important or it may be trivial depending on how you want to make it appear just now. Remember, in a marathon you must pace yourself and believe that things will improve if only you give it the chance.

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## PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR

### **Inform others where appropriate**

Informing others of the situation or issue to ensure no future misunderstanding occurs or problems re-surface. Obviously, where difficult behavior has occurred due to personal issues, it may not be appropriate to inform or share information with others. If you commit to retaining confidentiality, your credibility in dealing with the difficult behavior and relationships in general will be at risk as well as the original trust in the relationship.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## SURVIVOR TIPS

- Listen;
- Build rapport through empathy;
- Lower your voice;
- Know when to give in;
- Never get angry or upset;
- Never take it personally;
- It's okay to say NO;
- It's okay to say I DON'T KNOW.

# Effectively Dealing With Difficult Behaviors

## Questions?

Thank you for your participation today.

For further information or questions call Dennis at 800.537.7790; or email Dennis at [dtimoney@sdrma.org](mailto:dtimoney@sdrma.org).





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