

Tools for Better Meetings Dealing with Difficult Directors

Diverter, blockers, negativists

- Focus on the issues
- Ask how they would fix it
- Briefly review past successes
- Convert their concerns into questions to be answered
- Preempt them by raising your own concerns
- Ask the group, “Does everyone see where (name) is coming from?”

Agreeable – ever thing is okay with them

- Bring to the surface the problems that prevent them from being independent
- Let them know you value them as people
- Ask them to talk about any thing that might interfere with your good relationship

Ramblers:

- Listen intently—show you care
- Grab the word spoken that represents what you need to focus on. E.g. “Time, yes, that’s the ticket. What are we ...”

Inarticulate:

- Ask, “Is there anything you would like to add?”
- Ask open-ended questions
- Wait silently for their answer
- If no response, comment on what’s happening, and end with an open-ended question
- When there finally is a response, listen intently, avoid the temptation to gush over their contribution
- Ask a question of all round-robin

Experts:

- Ask the group, “Does everyone see where (name) is coming from?”
- Be prepared yourself
- Listen carefully and reflect back the main points
- Use questions to raise problems
- Avoid dogmatic statements
- Ask extensional questions to assist in re-examining plans

Coroner: Agrees at the meeting but gives negative postmortems.

- In the meeting, say “There may be some rethinking about what we have just agreed to after you leave. We’re pledging our commitment on this until next meeting.”