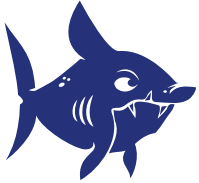




Dealing with Disruptive Behaviors

Improve your facilitation skills by using the techniques.



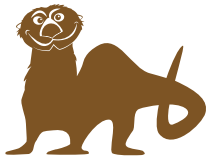
DOMINATING SHARK

The Situation: The shark is aggressive and focused on efficiency and the task. They can be hostile.

Your Approach: Be firm, but not threatening; be friendly.

“Sharky, I can tell you care deeply about this topic, and I would like to capture what you have said in the marina [parking lot], and then hear what others think. Let’s use a round robin to hear from others, and please save your next idea for the next round.”

Listen actively, give them time to vent, and use the person’s name to get their attention. Call the name, pause, call it again and again until Sharky pauses, then jump in with your intervention: “Sharky, Sharky, Sharky—thank you for your knowledge and your perspective, it is important information for us to consider. Then use ping pong to engage others in the conversation. “Clammy, how does your perspective compare?”



EAGER SEA OTTER

The Situation: The sea otter is a passive “people person” and wants everyone to get along.

Your Approach: Ask probing questions that will make honesty easy: “What needs to be done? How long will it take?” Ask specific questions about what it will take to fulfill commitments: “What other projects are you working on? Do you have any other ideas about how we can do this?”

Paraphrase so sea otters are aware of what they are saying: “Did I hear you say that [use your own words to describe their point as you understand it]?”

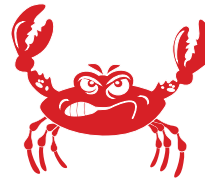


ARROGANT SEA LION

The Situation: Sea lions are assertive and need the group to accept their expertise; they might become know-it-alls when questioned. They believe they have more credibility than has

been acknowledged and want everyone to understand and agree with them.

Your Approach: Listen actively to sea lions and acknowledge what they say, allowing them to be experts: “Thank you for your expertise, sea lion; let me make sure I capture that correctly. Now I’d like to hear from someone else.” Then ping pong the conversation to other experts in the room: “Clammy, can you build on what sea lion had to say?”



COMPLAINING CRAB

The Situation: The complainer can come in many forms: whiner, critic, or obstructionist. Crabs are passive and task-focused, and they want to get it done.

Your Approach: Stay neutral: “I know you value the quality of the solutions you develop.” Ask clarifying questions; ask for the specifics that focus on the content.

“Can you describe the reason why the proposed solution is flawed? Perhaps you can suggest a way we might improve it?”

Write the complaint on easel chart and say: “Let me capture your concerns on the chart so that we all understand what to avoid.”



BLOWFISH

The Situation: Blowfish is a very chatty, assertive “people person.” Blowfish want everyone to feel comfortable and positive about the process.

Your Approach: Listen actively: “I’d like to capture all your points on the easel chart and then get the other participants’ feedback as well. Help me make sure I capture your thoughts correctly. Your first point is [pause for response]?” Label sidetracks and interrupt tactfully by clearly saying his or her name: “Blowfish? Blowfish? Blowfish? Is this comment related to what we are discussing or should it go onto the marina [parking lot]?”



APATHETIC FLOUNDER

The Situation: The flounder is a passive person who wants everyone to get along. Flounders may be uninterested in the topic or not

comfortable sharing their perspectives.

Your Approach: Ask questions and use this person’s name. Don’t rush to fill in a response, but be willing to wait through an awkward silence, and if other participants feel compelled to speak, ask them to please hold their comments until the flounder has had a chance to offer his or her opinion or reaction.

Or paraphrase, restating the flounder’s comments to ensure that everyone hears them, and acknowledge the contribution. Note: If intervention is necessary, consider communicating with the flounder individually.

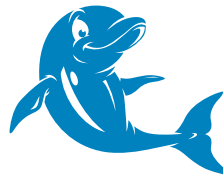


SHY CLAM

The Situation: The clam is shy and quiet, passive, and task-focused. Clam wants to get it right.

If intervention is necessary, consider communicating with the clam individually.

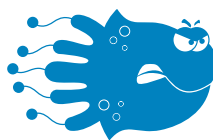
Your Approach: Using the clam’s name, ask for his or her thoughts: “Clam, do you have any points to add to the discussion?” Allow Clam time to answer, even if it takes longer than is comfortable: “Please let Clam respond” or you can say “Clam has the floor.” You can also use anonymous input techniques that make participation easy. Record all answers given: “Please write your answer to the following question on an index card, and hand it to me.”



DIVERTING DOLPHIN

The Situation: The dolphin is assertive and people-focused and will entertain the group to keep tension down. Dolphins want everyone to be comfortable and understand their contributions.

Your Approach: Ignore the humorous remark and follow up with a serious one: “Does anyone have something to add directly related to the topic?” Ask the dolphin to relate the story to the topic being discussed: “Dolphin, I’m unclear how your input relates to [the topic].” Paraphrase the input to refocus the discussion: “Dolphin, if I understand your point, you are trying to express the idea that [paraphrase input].” Write Dolphin’s suggestion on the easel chart: “Dolphin, have I captured your suggestion here?”



ARGUMENTATIVE JELLYFISH

The Situation: The jellyfish is task-focused and aggressive. They are confrontational and want to finish the job their way.

Your Approach: Stay neutral: “Jellyfish, that’s an interesting perspective.” Paraphrase what this person is saying using a soft voice and patient, reasoned statements: “Jellyfish, you have a concern about the proposed solution—let’s break that down into understandable parts.” Acknowledge this person’s positive contributions: “Thank you for that suggestion, let me capture that for reference.”



INDECISIVE OCTOPUS

The Situation: The octopus is the perfectionist, passive and task-focused. Whether he or she is afraid of being wrong, disagreeing with someone else, or just going on record, the octopus causes problems by the inability to move forward.

Your Approach: Ask questions of octopuses to draw them out and let them process: “Tell us what else you need to know to make the decision?” Paraphrase what they are saying so they can hear it in new words: “What I believe I hear you saying is [paraphrase]” or “Here is a list of the options agreed upon. Which is the best option, in your opinion?”