



*Creating opportunity, Inspiring success*

# **TOUGH SITUATIONS AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM**





# ***Difficult People***

*We've discussed some ways to manage difficult people and situations in the office in the accompanying short film.*

*This guide will take you through some more techniques and useful approaches.*



## 1

# Managing conflict in the office

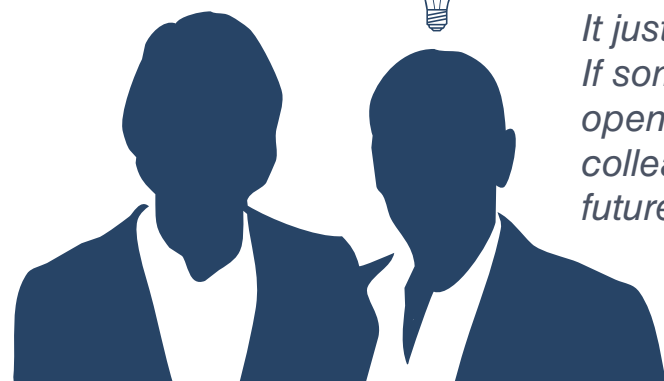
*Conflict in the office, or elsewhere, isn't inevitable. However, it is sometimes unavoidable - but you can manage it in some easy ways.*

- *Take pride in controlling your temper - as you practice this, the better you will become at it. Self control is a muscle – the more you work it, the stronger it becomes. As described in the video, be the bigger person and take a breath. If it helps, visualise something calm or something that makes you happy. This will give you an extra thirty seconds to watch how you respond.*

- *Don't exchange aggressive emails, phone calls or messages – if you have a problem with someone, deal with it face to face, or the situation can grow out of proportion. Make your point heard but in a calm and reasonable way.*

- *When you're angry – focus on the issue at hand and don't take it out on something that isn't connected. For example, if someone has let you down with a specific piece of work, then ask a question around that issue and don't pick on anything else. This helps you stay in control and to solve the problem rather than descending into a different argument.*

- *Conflict doesn't have to be negative. Handled in the right way and when it doesn't leave others feeling resentful, disagreements can be the source of new ideas. It just takes some practice to learn how to handle them. If someone questions your idea, listen to them with an open mind. Not only will you gain the respect of colleagues but you will gain their co-operation in the future.*

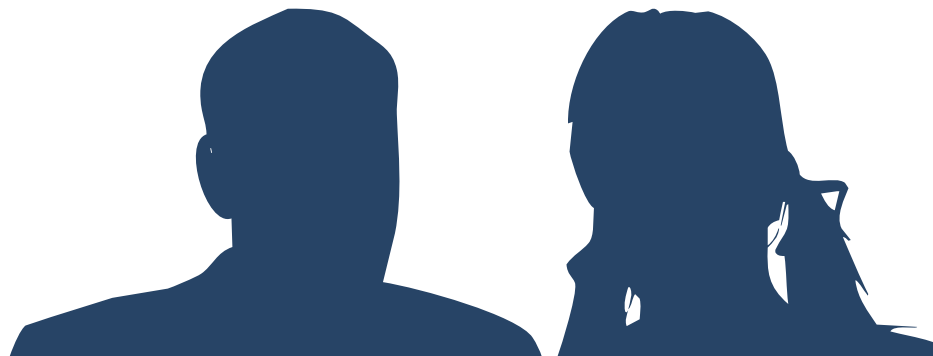


*The film discussed approaching situations in an assertive manner – but when the word ‘assertive’ is used, what does this mean?*

- *Assertiveness refers to standing up for your beliefs and your rights, but without intruding on the rights of others.*
- *In practice, as in the training film, it means standing up for yourself but in a way that doesn't make others uncomfortable, like shouting, bullying or making the other person feel threatened.*
- *Being assertive is the backbone of most good communication in the office, as it ensures that people not only speak pleasantly but ask for what they want.*

*It doesn't only help with conflict but with managing your workload, dealing with unmanageable requests and helping you get the most out of your internship.*

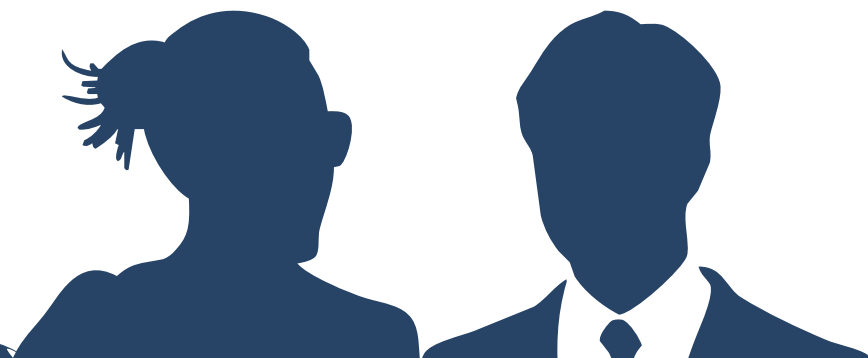
- *For example, if someone repeatedly asks you to do something that is outside of your remit and impacts on your core duties, using these techniques can help you manage your time.*





### *Useful techniques and phrases:*

- *Keep it short and to the point – avoid long explanations, and don't apologise if you are in the right. If you apologise this can detract from influencing the other party to give you what you want.*
- *Agree with the other party where you can to try and gain co-operation and make your point clear ("I agree with your principle, however...."or" I can see how this will affect you but the larger impact will be...").*
- *Repeat your point - try and frame this differently if you can, but stick to your original requests / viewpoint.*
- *If you are nervous about asking for what you want – firstly, try not to be, and secondly, try to hide this. People are less likely to believe in what you are saying or be persuaded if you do not show confidence in your own requests.*
- *Work out what your 'tells' are (ask a friend to help you with this) and practice on projecting a confident persona until it becomes reality.*



# 3

## Resilience

*In addition to being assertive, it's important to be able to bounce back from setbacks and stay positive, inside and outside the office.*

### How can you do this?

- *Look after yourself. If you're facing the world with a well-nourished body, and plenty of sleep, it's easier to solve problems. This helps keep things in perspective.*
- *It's normal for things to seem tough at the start – it will get better as setbacks are just a part of life.*
- *Focus on what you can do to change things, as you're in control.*
- *Talk to other people – use your friends, other interns and see if they have useful advice, and don't be afraid to ask for help. If you don't ask, you don't get.*
- *Try and keep issues and problems in their context - keep things in perspective and do not forget the bigger picture.*
- *Try and switch off from the problem if you can – if it's in the office, leave it at the office door when you leave.*



*Remember to use all of this in conjunction with The Intern Group's tips on communication. Dealing with difficult people and situations is just one part of working life and one you can master with time and practice.*