

Relationship Management

The Service Unit Manager, is responsible for relationship management in your unit. Managing relationships is important in resolving and avoiding conflicts. The following tools can help you navigate through difficult conversations.

Using “I” Statements

Perhaps the most important tip for communicating with others is to use “I” statements instead of “you” statements. While “you” statements may make the person feel defensive, “I” statements tell someone what you need from them.

Here are some examples about how to use “I” statements:

If a Volunteer . . .	You Can Say . . .
Is uninvolved and asks how she can help but seems to have no idea of how to follow through or take leadership of even the smallest activity	“I need your help. Here are some specific tasks you can help with.”
Constantly talks about all the ways you could make the group better	“I need your leadership. Share ideas you would like to develop and lead.”
Shifts responsibilities to you and is so busy with her own life that she allows no time to help	“I also am a volunteer and want to make a difference. Let’s brainstorm some ways to fulfill your responsibilities or find help.”

Danger vs. Power Phrases

It’s not what you say but how you say it. Below are some ways to take control of a conversation. This will keep conversations flowing in a positive manner.

Four Magic Power Phrases

Validates the other person, elicits more from speakers, and can provide clarification.

- That's interesting; tell me more.
- That's interesting; why would you say that?
- That's interesting; why would you ask that?
- That's interesting; why would you do that?

Danger	Power
I'm sorry	I apologize – make sure this is intended and not tossed around
I have an idea	I have a solution/answer/proposal
Our policy is . . .	The reason our policy exists . . . – then add a benefit statement (what's in it for them?)
I disagree	I understand what you're saying, but I see it another way
I would suggest	I suggest- exudes more confidence without <i>would</i>

Other Tips:

- Be specific
- Do not use qualifiers - *Danger: "just," "would," "confront"*
- Address one incident - *Danger: "always" or "never"*
- Speak the other person's language
- Address the behavior, not the person - *Danger: "You make me . . ."*
- Say what you want to happen - *Don't assume they know anything*
- Use benefit statements - *Power: "So you can . . ." or "So that you . . ."*
- Close by getting a commitment by using close-ended questions - *Power: "Are we on the same page?" or "Can I count on you?"*

Using Strategic Assertive Verbal Patterns

- Spotlight Questions
Use with passive aggressive people to 'shine the light' on them to reveal their intentions.
 - *"When you say... are you trying to...?"*
- Bottom-Line Statements
Set the rules or boundaries
 - *"I don't allow..."*
 - *"I don't communicate..."*
 - *"I don't permit..."*
- Boundary Statements
Set expectations and directions
 - *"I want to... but not..."*
- Re-direct with Assumptions
Tells people in advance what the reward will be
 - *"When you are ready to... I'll be ready to..."*
- Empowering Statements
Telling them they have a choice/power and increases the odds you'll get the behavior you are seeking
 - *"Would you like... or...?"*