



# How to Manage Challenging Situations and Individuals

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August 31, 2022



# AGENDA



## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Preparation  
Listening  
Volunteers  
Emergencies  
Resources



# Preparation

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- Self reflection
  - Where are we now?
  - Where are we going?
  - How would we like to get there?
- Gather the facts and document the issues
- Agenda
  - Provided in advance
  - Before: Purpose of meeting, expected outcome, reference materials
  - After: Action items, decision log, reference materials
- Performance Improvement Plans
  - Very detailed expectations
  - Discussed and mutually agreed upon
  - Employee assistance programs



# Listening

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- Lead with empathy / ask don't tell
  - “You may not realize this...”
  - “What obstacles are you facing?”
  - “Tell me more...”
  - “Explain what you mean”
- Ask open ended questions such as
  - How would this situation look in the best-case scenario?
  - How would it look in the worst-case scenario?
  - Is there something that's preventing you from participating to the level that you wanted to?
- Digital challenges
  - Using Zoom and other digital platforms has decreased the ability to read nonverbal cues by 20 to 30 percent
  - Ability to meet privately and quietly can be limited
- Paraphrasing – shows the person that you hear them and understand



# Volunteers

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- Recognize that not addressing poor behavior can cause low morale, resentment among your high performers
- Handle situations promptly and candidly
- Define the issue
  - Consider if the situation is the result of lack of training, unclear definition of responsibilities, limited resources (time, money, space, materials), conflict of interest, lack of systems, bad fit, lack of appropriate skills, chemistry.
  - Offer options
- Find the positive. Share what is going well. Emphasize that you want them to have a positive experience.
- Always prioritize the safety of yourself and others



# Emergencies

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- Types of emergencies to consider – medical, safety (weather, terrorism, fire), public relations, technical/power. **Have a plan for each!**
- Situational Awareness
  - Stay Alert
  - Personal Space
  - After Hours
  - Elevators
  - Parking Lots
- Run, Hide, Fight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rDdY4EaKVY>



## **TIPS FROM THE AUDIENCE:**

**What difficult situations have you faced, and how did you deal with them?**



# Resources

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- [How to Handle Difficult Conversations](#)
- [Golden Hour Preparedness](#)
- [Difficult Conversations: More Difficult Than Ever](#)
- [3 Steps to Better Communication](#)
- [Before, During, After: Detailed Steps for Approaching Difficult Volunteer Behavior](#)
- [5 Healthy Ways to Handle a Difficult Volunteer](#)

Please email [afowler@nefe.org](mailto:afowler@nefe.org) for an electronic version of the presentation!





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