

Lab Dynamics

Difficult conversations and interactions in the research workplace: *Fundamentals of negotiation.*

Slides



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Lab Dynamics

Difficult conversations and interactions in the research workplace: *Fundamentals of negotiation*

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Workshops, coaching, management solutions

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1

1

Today's Schedule

10:00 AM – Noon

AM Session

Noon – 12:30 PM

Break

12:30 PM – 2:30 PM

PM Session

2:30 PM

Review

Finish

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2

2

Logistics

- Please keep your mic. muted unless you have a question.
- Please keep your video feed "on."
- If you have a question use the **"raise hand"** feature:
 - Press "More" then select "raise hand."
 - Or press alt-Y (PC) or option-Y (Mac).
- When your raised hand is recognized temporarily **unmute** yourself:
 - Hold down the "space" bar.
 - Or press alt-A (PC) or Shift-Command – A (Mac).
- To ask a question via the "chat" feature:
 - Click "Participants" button then select "Chat" and type the question.
- At various times during the workshop you will be assigned to Breakout Rooms. Make sure you are unmuted and your video feed is on when in breakout rooms.
- To ask for help while in a breakout room click on the "Ask for help" icon in your breakout room screen.
- During the noon break or if you need to step away, don't sign out or close the app. Mute your mic and turn off your video feed with the Zoom toolbar. Also, since you will be assigned to Breakout Groups several times during the workshop, please remember to activate your video and audio so others can see and hear you.

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3

Logistics

Please make sure you have the following:

1. The "Exercise" handout you were sent, either in printed form, on a second screen or device or available in a "window."
2. An 8 ½ x 11 pad of paper and writing implement.

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4

What you will learn today

- The principles of effective negotiation.
- How to use negotiation skills in difficult situations.
- How to interact with difficult people.



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5

Impediments to scientific productivity

Technical professionals in teams*:

- Are unaware of interpersonal conflict within the team.
- Don't understand the motivation and needs of other team members.
- Are unaware of expectations of others in the team.
- Don't listen carefully enough to team discussion.
- Misread lack of argument as agreement.
- Interpret conflict as unhealthy when can be powerfully constructive.



*Gemmell, Gary and David Wilemon, (1994). "The hidden side of leadership in technical team management". Research Technology Management, Nov-Dec, p25.

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What do researchers find hard to do?

- Disagreeing productively over technical matters (*"That can't possibly be right, you forgot to pre-incubate at 37° .."*).
- Dealing with demanding colleagues (*"I need your data for the manuscript by the end of the day!"*) or recalcitrant employees (*"No way can I get that done, I'm taking next week off – didn't I tell you?"*).
- Coaching, evaluating or terminating employees.
- Dealing with competitive colleagues.
- Resolving arguments over space, equipment, cleanliness.
- Mediating disputes between others.

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What do all these situations have in common?

- They all involve interacting with others.
- They all involve an uncomfortable situation in which emotions are stirred up.
- This can lead to instinctual responses – "fight or flight" reactions- that lead to confrontation, avoidance and un-productive outcomes.

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What you learn from negotiation

- **Focus on needs, interests and beliefs of others.**
- **Monitor and modulate behavior in tense and emotion laden situations.**
- **Listening can be more productive than talking.**

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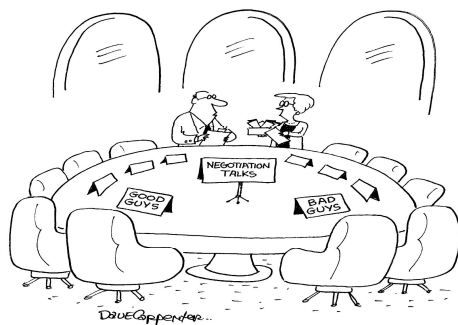
Role playing

I hear and I forget,
I see and I remember,
I do and I understand

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How do you negotiate?



"MAYBE YOU SHOULD RECONSIDER THOSE PLACE CARDS, MS. HARRIS?"

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Exercise 1: The breakthrough paper (page 2 of exercise booklet)

- Dr. First and Dr. Second are post-docs working on a new method to identify and isolate stem cells.
- The idea for the general approach came out of First's Ph.D. thesis work and First has been working on it as a postdoc in a lab run by Dr. Waffle for three years. While there were high expectations for this approach, the project basically ground to a halt due to a series of technical issues that seemed insurmountable. These challenges were so great that Waffle was thinking of abandoning the project.
- Dr. Second joined the project a year ago, with a background in neuroscience. Second has deep knowledge of neural cell development and in a matter of months devised a specific application of First's approach for neuronal stem cells. This approach appears to overcome the technical issues holding the project back and has the potential to transform the entire field of stem cell identification and isolation.
- Despite the slow progress on this project First is planning to leave Waffle's lab in nine to twelve months.

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Exercise 1, continued

- Dr. Waffle, tells them that they need to write up the results right away. Waffle says “Look, I’ll be last author on the paper. You two know who contributed what to this work better than I do, so why don’t you get together and decide who will be first author? I really don’t care.”
- First and Second each strongly wants to be first author. On leaving the meeting First says to Second “This is easy – it’s pretty obvious you should be second author but we can put an asterisk next to your name saying we contributed equally.” Second responds “That’s baloney and you know it. Asterisks don’t mean a thing. This project would be dead in the water if it weren’t for me. You take the asterisk.”
- They grudgingly decide to meet the following day to discuss the matter further.

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13

Exercise 1, continued

- In pairs decide who will be Dr First and who will be Dr. Second.
- You have 10 minutes to decide who will be first author.
- Remember, your job is to convince the other person that your character is the one who should be first author.
- At the end of the negotiation write down three words or phrases describing what you felt during the negotiation in the space provided at the end of the case study.

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14

- Difficult situations engender feelings that affect how you act.
- If you are unaware of these feelings, you are at their mercy.

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15

Barriers to productive negotiation

1. Participants feel threatened by conflict or disagreement.
This leads to “emotional hijacking.”
2. As a result, participants engage in unproductive behaviors that block the discussion.
 - Getting defensive.
 - Giving in or leaving.
 - Attacking.

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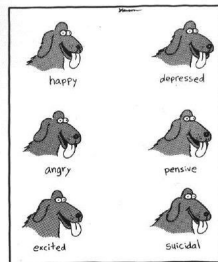
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16

Are you aware of what you feel?

Feeling

- Threatened
- Angry
- Hurt
- Sad
- Happy
- Anxious
- Confused



How to recognize the moods of an Irish setter

Thinking

- Want to win
- Determined
- Strategizing
- Not getting point across
- Stuck
- Not being listened to

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Suzanne's feeling words

[illegible]

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17

18

What did we learn from this?

- Difficult situations engender feelings that affect how you act.
- If you are unaware of these feelings, you are at their mercy.

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19

Negotiation Styles

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Conflict resolution style assessment key

- **A: Win-Lose**
- **B: Win-Leave**
- **C: Compromise**
- **D: Win-Yield**
- **E: Win-Win**



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21

Common negotiation styles

A. Win-Lose style (forcing).

- Goal is to defeat the other side.
- Only one winner and it must be *you*.

Assumptions:

- Conflict is a contest.
- The participants are adversaries.

Don't dig in just because they are.



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22

Common negotiation styles

B. Win-Leave style (avoiding).

- Don't get involved or change topic (reasons: overpowering adversary, anxiety over conflict).

Assumptions:

- Conflict is irrational and can be ignored.

Compliance by default.

You may be "blind" to conflict.

Pay attention to feelings of anxiety or discomfort.



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23

Common negotiation styles

C. Compromise style (bargaining).

- Concede something to gain something.
- Initial positions are extreme.
- Compromises ignore underlying interests.
- Outcome frequently ends up satisfying neither party.

Assumptions:

- Conflict can be resolved by bargaining.
- Goodwill is shown by exchanging concessions.

Be careful what you each give up.

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24

Common negotiation styles

D. Win-yeild style

- The outcome is subservient to maintaining a good relationship.
- Focus shifted to being nice and going away friends.

Assumptions:

- Conflict must be avoided.
- Make concessions to maintain the relationship.
- The goal is agreement.



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25

Common negotiation styles

E. Win-Win style (Collaborative).

- Participants are trying to meet the interests (not the positions) of each.

Assumptions:

- Conflict is natural; can be dealt with.
- The participants are problem solvers not adversaries.
- The interests of all participants deserve respect.



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When to use styles strategically

- **Win/Lose**
 - When you are in a position of authority and need to make a quick or unpopular decision; To 'protect yourself' against those who see anything other than an aggressive stance as weakness.
- **Win/Leave**
 - Let people cool down; More information needed.
- **Compromise**
 - When a quick solution to a thorny problem is needed.
- **Win/Yield**
 - The issue is much more important to them than to you – build 'social credit' for future negotiations.

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Exercise 2

- On page 4 of the exercise booklet, briefly describe one negotiation you engaged in recently.
- Indicate which negotiation style you used.
- Do not answer any other questions on the worksheet at this time.
- This is for your use only.

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The elements of negotiation

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Principled Negotiation

Versus “Used Car Salesman” negotiation



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The elements of negotiation Overview

Tactical tools

- Prepare- clarify your objectives beforehand
- Focus on problem not person
- Manage obstacles
- Work outside the box – expand the pie

Behavioral tools

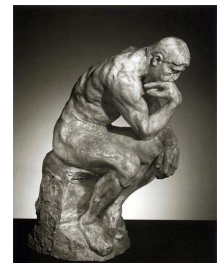
- Manage yourself
- Manage other people

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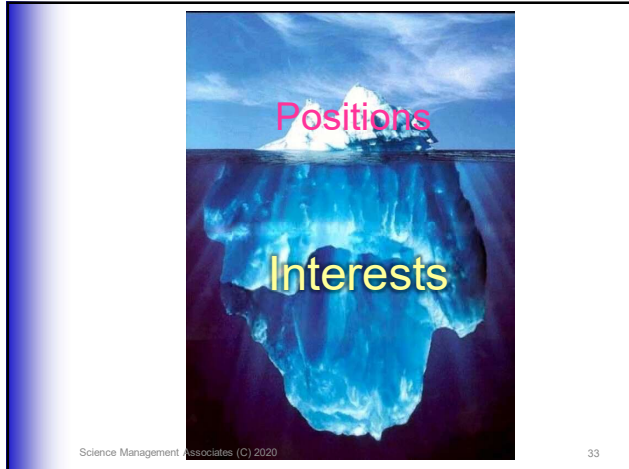
1. Prepare

- Define your ideal outcome.
- Define an outcome you'd be happy with.
- Define an outcome you could live with (bottom line).
- Identify both sides' best alternative to a negotiated agreement (*BATNA*).
- Identify underlying interests.



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Positions vs Interests

Position		Interest
• First authorship	➡	• Get a job
• New mass spec.	➡	• Keep up with workload
• No salary increases this year	➡	• Maintain last year's budget level
• Need experiment done by end of week	➡	• Anxious for data for grant application
• More space for lab	➡	
• Can't run dept. seminar series	➡	

Positions are "take it or leave it."
In contrast, there are many ways to satisfy interests.

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Positions vs Interests

Position		Interest
• First authorship	➡	• Get a job
• New mass spec.	➡	• Keep up with workload
• No salary increases this year	➡	• Maintain last year's budget level
• Need experiment done by end of week	➡	• Anxious for data for grant application
• More space for lab	➡	• Accommodate two new post docs
• Can't run dept. seminar series	➡	

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Positions vs Interests

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• First authorship	➡	• Get a job
• New mass spec.	➡	• Keep up with workload
• No salary increases this year	➡	• Maintain last year's budget level
• Need experiment done by end of week	➡	• Anxious for data for grant application
• More space for lab	➡	• Accommodate two new post docs
• Can't run dept. seminar series	➡	• Cope with overwhelming administrative load.

Positions are "take it or leave it."
In contrast, there are many ways to satisfy interests.

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Exercise 2

- Refer to the recent negotiation you wrote down.
- Fill in the following :
 1. Your position
 2. Their position
 3. Your interest
 4. Their interest
 5. What you would have liked to achieve
 6. What you would have been content with
 7. What you could have lived with
 8. Your BATNA

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2. Focus on the problem not the person

- **Separate the problem from the people by**
 - Asking questions about standards.
 - Asking problem solving questions to turn the negotiation into a brainstorming session.



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Ask questions about standards

- Budget:
“Is everyone’s budget being cut to the same degree?”
- Salary
“Are there departmental salary guidelines we could review?” (don’t rely on this)
- Authorship
“How has your lab handled authorship questions in the past? Are there any institutional guidelines?”
- Space
“Was there some formula the committee used in its space allocation?”

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Ask problem solving questions to keep the dialog moving and generate new options

Use questions that start with :

“What if we...?”

“Have you considered the possibility...?”

“How about if we ...?”

“What about...?”

“What would be wrong with ...?”

“Would we be going in the right direction if...?”

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Separate the problem from the person

- Problem: You can't agree on what the next experiment should be.
- Instead of "You just keep repeating yourself and you're not listening to me."
- Try "I'm feeling like we're stuck. Can we take a step back and review what we agree on?"



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41

41

Separating the problem from the person has broad applicability – in the lab:

- Instead of "How could you have tested only two of the cell lines? These results are useless."
- Try "I'm only seeing results from two of the lines here. Was there some reason why you only used two?"

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42

Cohen's Behavioral Rule #1

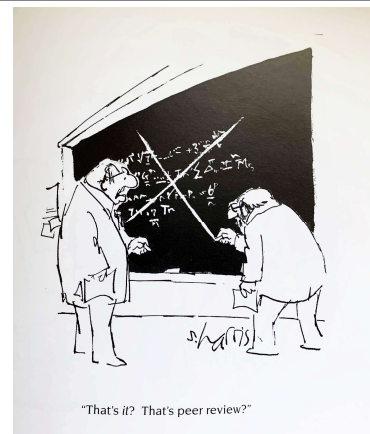
- Always expect that an attack or criticism of an idea will be interpreted or felt as an attack on the person.
- Corollary: Expect that you will feel this way too (P.C.)



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43



"That's it? That's peer review?"

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44

What about when you think the person *is* the problem?

In these situations:

- Giving feedback
- Doing evaluations

Do this:

- Focus on the observable behavior, not what you may think is the underlying personality issue.
- People can change behavior without changing their personality



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Dealing with an employee performance problem

"Jim, you've added the wrong media to the cell cultures 5 times in the last month, most recently yesterday. What's going on? Is everything OK?"

Not: "Jim you seem to be forgetful and inattentive"



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3. Deflect or ignore obstacles to negotiation

When someone says "That's just not possible" or "No"

Do this:

- Ignore it.
- Empathize.
- Ask open ended questions.
- Focus on fairness and standards.
- Ignore stone walls or reinterpret stone walls as aspirations.
- Ignore attacks or reinterpret attacks on you as attacks on the problem.



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Examples

Ignoring stone walls:

Them: "Its just not possible for us to schedule your experiments any sooner. We're booked."

You: "I hear you; I know you're busy. All I ask is that we go over the schedule again and just see if hypothetically there's any way to come up with some wiggle room. For example, what if we....."

- Empathize
- Acknowledge their problem.
- Ask problem solving questions.

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Example continued - reframe attacks on you as attacks on problem

- Them: "You always do this – you think your group is the most important group in the organization. I make the decisions here."
 - You "Look, I'm as frustrated by this as you are. I know you're under a lot of pressure and I'm sorry if I seem pushy. I don't mean to be, but we're both in a bind here."
 - I know we would both be happier if we had more resources all around, but we need to come up with a solution using our current resources. Could we review the schedule one more time?"
- Ignore personal attack.
 - Acknowledge their frustration (empathy).
 - Reframe as frustration with problem.
 - Ask problem solving questions.

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49

49

Exercise 3: Role play Exercise book, page 5

Resume your roles of Dr First and Dr Second. Start with Dr First saying something that's a "stonewall" and mildly insulting to Dr Second.

Dr Second use as many of the tools that we just learned as you can in your response:

- Ignore stone walls or reinterpret as aspirations.
- Ignore attacks or reinterpret as attacks on the problem.
- Ask open ended questions.
- Focus on fairness and standards.
- Focus on objective criteria.

Then switch scripts and repeat.

Total time: 3 minutes each.

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50

Cohen's behavioral Rule #2 (the 95% rule)

- 95% of what others say or do in your presence has *nothing* to do with you.
- Corollary: You shouldn't assume others are aware of this rule



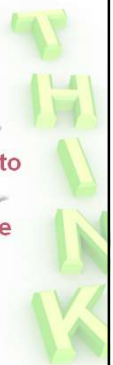
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51

4. Work outside the box and expand the pie

- Work outside the box
 - Focusing on interests allows you to expand the discussion.
 - Don't make assumptions about the parameters of the negotiation.
- Expand the pie.



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52

Expanding the pie: one of your most important tools

- In a negotiation you often do better to make things more complicated.
- You can turn what seems to be a win/lose situation into an opportunity for mutual gain.

Do this:

- Focusing on interests rather than on positions enables you to expand the discussion.



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Exercise 4 – Page 6 in exercise book

- The scenario: Dr. Eager is an Assistant Professor at Bigtime University. Last month Eager placed an order for 6 new monoclonal antibodies to be made by the University's Monoclonal Core Laboratory and was told they would be ready in six months.
- Four weeks later Eager got an email from Dr. Milstein who heads the Core Facility saying that due to unanticipated problems in the facility's renovation schedule Eager's monoclonals would be delayed by four months. Eager has critical experiments scheduled with collaborators at other universities that might have to be cancelled if there is a four month delay. Eager schedules a meeting with Dr. Milstein.

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54

Exercise 4: Interests, problem solving questions and standards. *Page 6 in exercise booklet*

In your breakout rooms:

Read the case study. Answer the questions as a group.

- What are some problem-solving questions?
- What are some standards or criteria that could be used by each person?
- Everyone should record the answers.
- To ask for help while in a breakout room click on the "Ask for help" icon in your breakout room screen.

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5. Manage yourself: state of mind

- Know your hot buttons.
- Cognitive restructuring
- If you succumb to an emotional reaction buy time to cool off or think.
- "Go to the balcony."



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56

Body language



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Body language

Things to do:

- Relaxed posture
- Eye Contact
- Moving shoulders towards other person
- Relaxed gestures towards other person.
- Facing square towards other person
- Positive nod of head.
- Interested facial expression.

Things to avoid:

- Leaning away from other person.
- Picking lint off pants or skirt.
- Lack of eye contact.
- Making hostile motions.



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Exercise 5: Body language role play

In pairs, quickly decide who will be "A" and who will be "B."

"A" starts by telling "B" what they did for fun or enjoyment **last** weekend. While A is talking, B will exhibit **positive** body language.

Then A will tell B what they are going to do for fun or enjoyment **next** weekend. While they are talking, B will exhibit **negative** body language.

Then trade roles – B will be the talker and A will display the body language.

Time limit: 8 minutes for both.

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Body Language

- "Any words, be they ever so flawless, can have their meaning cancelled by body language- but not vice versa. There are no words capable of canceling the meaning of transmitted body language."

Suzette Elgin, The Gentle Art of Self Defense.

- It has been estimated that 65 - 90 % of information communicated during human interaction is non-verbal.

Mark Knapp, 1972 "Non-Verbal Communication in Human Interaction."

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6. Manage their state of mind.

- **Acknowledge their point of view, interests and feelings.**
- **Summarize and paraphrase.**
- **Agree whenever you can. Use their name.**
- **Listen!**
- **Don't say "Yes, but..." say "Yes, and..."**
- **Make 'I' statements not 'you' statements.**



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Example: "yes but.." vs. "yes and.."

- Them: "We need to cut our budget by 10% next year"
- You: "Yes, but that will mean we won't be able to do any of our new projects."
- Or "Yes, and we'll need to discuss how to handle the new projects we committed to."
- Them: "So, those are all the reasons why your project gets the lowest priority on the production schedule."
- You "Yes but you completely ignored that we have contractual commitments to our collaborators."
- Or "Yes, and now lets talk about our commitments to our collaborators and how we handle that."

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Example: "I" statements vs. "you" statements

"You"

"I"

- "You are being sloppy and careless in your work."

- "I'd like to see more attention to detail in your work. For example..."

- "You don't appreciate all the hard work and long hours I put in."

- "I don't think my work is getting the recognition it deserves."

- "You're going to kill this program if you cut our budget."

- "I'm concerned that we won't be able to achieve our objectives with these budget cuts."

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How to work with difficult people



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Guidelines I

1. Find something to **AGREE** with (It's hard to be angry with someone who is agreeing with you).
2. **EMPATHIZE** (let them know you understand what they're saying; use positive facial and body language, repeat some of their words- mirroring.)
3. **INQUIRE**, **ASSURE**, **APOLOGIZE** (clarify their issue, gather information; establish your commitment to the relationship.)

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Dealing with hostile or angry people.

- **Agree**
 - “You must have a good reason..”
 - “Well, this wasn't the best experiment I ever did..”
- **Empathize**
 - “I know you're angry.”
 - “I can understand why that would make you angry.”
- **Inquire**
 - “Can you tell me what I did that was so upsetting?”
 - “Can we sit down and talk about this?”
- **Assure**
 - “I assure you that was not my intent.”
 - “Our relationship is important to me, can we discuss this?”



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Dealing with hostile or angry people

- “I'm really furious with you. This is the second time you forgot to invite me to the investigators meeting.”
- “Sarah, you're right, I did forget (**Agree**). I'd be angry too if that happened to me (**Empathize**). I'm really sorry (**Apologize**). Can I update you on what we discussed? (**Inquire**). I promise this won't happen again (**Assure**).”
- **Remember: If you did it and you know it was wrong, APOLOGIZE RIGHT AWAY.**

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Dealing with hostile or angry people

- **Never say “you're wrong” – try “In my opinion..” “I see it differently..”**
 - Try “I know you're angry about this. At the same time (NOT “BUT”), I see it a bit differently. Can we sit down and discuss this?”
- **Use the person's name**
 - “Jim, I know you're angry. I'd like to hear what you have to say..”
- **Let their anger run its course – listen, nod, empathize.**
- **Ignore attacks.**

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Cohen's Behavioral Rule #3

Apologize for what you did, *not* for how what you did made them feel.



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69

If *you* get angry..

- Never react to your anger in a professional situation.
- Take a time out – write an angry letter and then tear it up.
- Remember the 95% rule.

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70

Cohen's Behavioral Rule #4

- If you're thinking of saying something in rebuttal and you're anticipating how good its going to make you feel: **DON'T SAY IT!**



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71

71

Dealing with critical and judgmental people

- **Agree**
- **Empathize**
- **Inquire.**



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72

72

Exercise 6: Role play, difficult people Exercise book, page 8

In pairs, choose a role from the Dr First/Dr Second case.

Dr First: Say something in character and critical and/or judgmental to Dr Second.

Dr Second: Use the Agree, Empathize, Inquire or Assure tools in your response.

Then switch scripts – Dr Second say something critical and/or judgmental to Dr. Second, etc.

Time limit: 3 minutes each.

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73

73

Passive aggressive behavior

Exerting control or expressing hostility covertly

- Repeatedly postponing an important meeting.
- Refusing to discuss or admit there is a problem.
- Withholding support by not showing up.
- Sitting silently in a team meeting.
- “Forgetting” to communicate important or useful information.

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74

74

Dealing with passive aggressive people

- **Agree**
 - “I’m sure you have a good reason for not coming to our meeting..”
- **Empathize**
 - “I know you’ve been very busy lately..”
- **Assure**
 - “I’m confident that we’ll be able to work productively on this together..”
- **But don’t force it. Wait if necessary**
- **Be non-judgmental, ask questions.**
- **Don’t give up, be positive.**
- **Don’t get caught up in power struggles**

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75

75

Dealing with passive aggressive people

- **For non-participants ask open ended questions – avoid questions that can be answered yes or no:**
 - “Jim, what do you think?”
 - “Susan I’d like to hear what’s on your mind.”
- **Present concrete and factual data about their behavior without being judgmental:**
 - “Sam, I noticed that for the last seven Tuesday lab meetings you’ve been more than 10 minutes late. We need to address this, what do you suggest?”

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Differing with your boss.

- The next time your boss says something you disagree with find some element that you do agree with.
- Start the conversation with that.
- Transition to the things you don't agree with in a way that focuses attention on the impact of the decision, statement, etc. on the project or group.



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77

77

Differing with someone in authority

Them: "I think you ought to pair up with Ramon's group on the new Program Project Grant application."

You: (Thinking that this is a bad choice)
"Great – I know Ramon knows this stuff and it could make for a strong proposal."

Agree/empathize

Them: "Good. Its settled."

You: "OK. Just for discussion sake though, what would you think about our working with Sasha's group on this instead? She and I have been working well together on a related project for a couple of months and we have a good working relationship."

Start negotiating

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78

78

Dealing with an angry person in authority

Them: "This proposal is disappointing. I think it really needs to be done over. I'm very surprised. I expected more from you."

You: "Wow I'm sorry that this isn't what you had in mind. I know how important it is."

Agree/empathize

Them: "It's incredibly important."

You: "How should we proceed? Can we go over the proposal so I can see where you think the problems are? Do you have time now?"

Enquire -ask for specifics

Them: "I have no time."

You: "OK, but what if we just take two minutes and run through it so you can point out the problem areas? That way I can get it back to you ASAP."

Start negotiating.
Ignore brick wall
Involve them in the solution.

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79

79

Are you one of these people?

- Interactions are two-way streets.
- These examples are extremes but we all display some of these characteristics at some time.
- Are you aware of it when you do?

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80

Summary and review

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81

81

What did we learn ?

Tactical tools

- **Prepare- clarify your objectives beforehand.**
- **Focus on interests and problem not person.**
- **Manage obstacles.**
- **Work outside the box – expand the pie.**

Behavioral tools

- **Manage yourself.**
- **Manage other people.**

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82

82

When dealing with difficult people focus on the task not on the person

Your goal is to get your work done, not to act insulted.

Its hard to get work done with a hostile, argumentative person.

So:

- **Agree - to defuse anger.**
- **Empathize – to start a dialogue**
- **Inquire or Assure– to show interest.**

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83

83

Remember Cohen's Behavioral Rules

- **Always** expect that an attack or criticism of an idea will be interpreted or felt as an attack on the person.
Corollary: Expect that you will feel this way too.
- 95% of what others say or do in your presence has *nothing* to do with you. Corollary: You shouldn't assume others are aware of this rule.
- Apologize for what you did, not for how it made them feel.
- If you're thinking of saying something in rebuttal and you're anticipating how good its going to make you feel: **DON'T SAY IT!**

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84

84

The biggest mistake you can make?

Avoiding problems or conflict and hoping they will go away by themselves.



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85

Finally....

- **Good negotiation skills cannot turn bad science into good science, but poor negotiation skills can and do kill good science.**
- **Pay as much attention to how people are dealing with each other as you do to your work.**

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86

86

Negotiation guide: Pages 9-10 of exercise book

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87

87

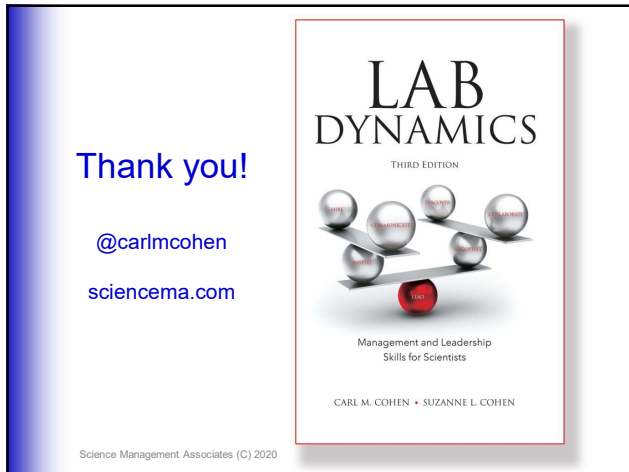
Readings Exercise book, p 11-12

- **"Lab Dynamics: Management and Leadership Skills for Scientists"** (2018) Third Edition. Carl M. Cohen and Suzanne I. Cohen, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press.
- **"How to Have Impossible Conversations"** 2019 Peter Boghossian and James Lindsay, Lifelong Books.
- **"Getting Past No"** (2007) W. Ury, Bantam.
- **"Emotional Intelligence. Why it can matter more than IQ"** (2012) Daniel Goleman, Bantam
- **"Dealing with People You Can't Stand"** Rick Brinkman and Rick Kirschner (2012) McGraw Hill, N.Y.
- **"Leading Geeks: How To Manage the People Who Deliver Technology"** Paul Glen (2007) Josey-Bass, San Francisco.

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88

88



89