

# Co-operantics

## People skills for co-operatives

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### DEALING WITH WORKPLACE TENSIONS

*Tensions between individuals inevitably arise from time to time. The following guidelines can be used by both the individuals concerned, and by the other members of the group.*

**Be constructive:** Instead of trying to “win” seek changes that will make both sides happier

#### **Be specific**

- ★ Talk about action and behaviour, *not* personality
- ★ Examine facts, *not* assertions and accusations
- ★ Discuss examples, *not* generalisations

#### **Be clear about feelings**

- ★ “I feel angry” *not* “you really get up my nose”
- ★ “I feel disappointed” *not* “you’ve let me down”
- ★ “I feel nervous” *not* “you make me jumpy”

#### **Be clear about demands**

- ★ Be specific about who you want to do something
- ★ Be specific about what action you want them to perform
- ★ Ask them to start or increase doing the thing you want (not to stop doing the thing you don’t want)

#### **Explain why**

If you ask someone to change their behaviour, make sure they understand the reason:

When you did ...	(concrete example)
I feel ...	(acknowledge feeling)
And I want you to do ...	(specific, positive request)
Because ...	(explanation or reason)