

# KNOWHOW

## Difficult Employees Or Difficult Behavior?

BY DEBBIE BERCOME AND LYNNE COUTURE

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**W**e all feel to some degree that there are difficult people in many aspects of our lives. But what does difficult really mean? Is it a difficult person or is it difficult behavior?

If we personalize the behavior or focus on that person, that is usually when it goes bad. Instead, if we focus on the behavior then we can then see it for what it is. Maybe, it's just a different style than ours or a different way of seeing the same situation.

By focusing on changing behavior we can increase employee motivation and engagement. The result can be increased profits, productivity and customer satisfaction.

There are different lenses we all see the world through — different styles, generations, personalities, and cultures. The more we get to know each other and build relationships, the more we move from judging to valuing others.

The follow four tips are focused on increasing effectiveness when interacting with others:

### 1. Detect Defensiveness

When you see someone go into attack mode or excess

defensiveness, recognize that it is usually unproductive to argue. Don't continue to push them because they will only get worse.

If the symptoms only seem to occur when the person is under stress, wait until another time to pursue the discussion.

### 2. Don't Get "Hooked"

Warning signs that your getting pulled in to a stressful situation: tension headache, stiff neck, shortness of breath, fear, anxiety, obsessive thinking, inability to concentrate or anger.

Practice breathing. Breathe for three counts, hold for three counts and breathe out for six counts.

### 3. Set Boundaries

If you are continually angry, upset or complaining about

someone or something, you may need to set a boundary.

State the boundary clearly, without anger in as few words as possible, and be prepared to maintain it.

### 4. Detach

This means to separate yourself emotionally from the situation and accept the fact that the other person may never change.

Successful detachment happens when you no longer expect the other person to change his or her behavior for your benefit.

The bottom line is

to think before we speak. Some people push our buttons and there are certain reasons why this happens. How we respond versus react makes all the difference in the world and will dramatically impact both your workplace relations and business results. ■

*Both Bercome and Couture are executive coaches that specialize in workplace effectiveness. For more information: [www.bercomeassociates.com](http://www.bercomeassociates.com) or [www.lccandcompany.com](http://www.lccandcompany.com).*

