

Exercise #4

Face-to-Face “Communication Strategies” Skill Practice

In this exercise you will learn and practice important verbal skills that you can use to help calm difficult library users.

The “head in the sand syndrome”: Good communication often depends more on what people hear than on what they say. Accurate awareness of an individual’s emotional surroundings allows one to anticipate danger and irrationality before it becomes explosive. By clearly perceiving, and non-defensively responding to the communications of others, one can effectively and decisively influence the immediate social environment in a positive way.

Resolving heated, conflict-filled situations requires a communication style that allows the other person to see and feel that you understand what they are saying.

Work with the instructor to practice the following verbal skills:

1. Make psychological contact
2. Be calm as you speak - use relaxed breathing
3. Be empathetic and authentic
4. Respect people’s feelings, beliefs, and emotions - we are concerned with behaviors
5. Mimesis
6. Demonstrate that you hear what is being said
7. Speak the person’s language
8. Reflect feelings and facts
9. Clarify and paraphrase
10. Ask open-ended questions