

## **Five Challenging Behaviors You'll Meet in Training Responses to End of Session Questions**

**Q: Someone arrives 2 hours late to a 6 hour training session. They smile and ask you to “catch them up” as you are in the middle of your teaching. How do you respond?**

Response: An offline conversation is a good fit for this situation. Consider asking to talk to them at the next break or outside the room when they arrive. Point out that they have missed an important piece (and big chunk) of the training. Give them the choice of trying to fall in where the other participants are in the training or to leave and come back another time when they can benefit from the whole training.

\*You could also proactively include an attendance requirement on the welcome email for the training so it discourages tardiness and if this does happen, you have something to fall back on and use as the reason the student has to re-join a future training. For example, “For the best learning experience for all participants, 100% attendance required.” or “Due to the experiential nature of the training, attendees more than ½ hour late will not be able to join the training. “

**Q: How do you handle passive/aggressive behavior?**

Response: Stay neutral, have an offline conversation or ask for written feedback about the training to see what is underlying this behavior, see if they exhibit that behavior in small groups or pairs also or just the whole group (often behaviors disappear when there isn't a “stage”). Highlight the behaviors you want to see in the training by acknowledging them when other participants exhibit them (ie. Thanks for being open, I appreciate your candor and positive attitude). If a behavior is offensive or aggressive in a way that threatens or offends others in the class, it's your job to eliminate that and sometimes it means asking someone to leave the training.

**Q: We have a student with a challenging behavior currently. This person experiences difficulty in learning and constantly requests the teacher write everything on the board. His questions hold the class behind. What is the technique to deal with this case?**

Response: Consider meeting with the student and coming up with a learning plan so that he gets what he needs to learn in a way that doesn't take away from others. This could help with the requests for writing and the many questions. Pair work, small groups, or asking students to write their questions down could also help depending on the situation. An academic advisor or learning consultant could assist with the learning plan part. What appears like challenging classroom behavior is sometimes rooted in learning difficulties and the learning challenge has to be dealt with first.

**Q: Please define the “Talking Stick”.**

Response: A talking stick is a stick that you can have in a meeting, class, etc. where only the person holding the stick can talk. It doesn't have to be a stick, it could be a ball or any small object that can be passed around easily. This technique prevents too many people from speaking at once.

**Q: How do you handle a negative person? It's really a heavy burden for a teacher.**

Response: Negative energy is always difficult in a training situation (or any situation, really!!). You could consider finding out if there is anything behind it that you should know about (ie. struggling with the material, frustrations with other classmates or sensitivity to certain activities). By just acknowledging it and spending time to find out if you can help, this might be the key. If the student does feel comfortable divulging why he/she is sometimes negative, respond with empathy. If the student doesn't feel comfortable opening up about it and the negativity continues to affect the class, consider an offline conversation.

“I noticed that.... What is your perspective on that?” or “Do you notice that too?”

“When that happens in class, it affects the learning of the other students...and it's my job to make sure everyone has the best chance to learn.”

“Can we agree to .....so that everyone can learn?” or “What do you think we should do to make sure everyone has the best chance to learn?”

**Q: What happens when a colleague who is supposed to be your teammate refuses to act/work jointly?**

Response: Wow! Not sure I am qualified to answer this question but I'll take a stab. A conversation is usually the easiest, most valuable, and least frequently attempted solution. It is amazing what can happen when people realize how their actions affect others. Be specific and consider following the BIRA model for feedback

**Behavior** (Say what specific behaviors/actions exclude you) Often I notice I am not included in meetings and emails that I think I should be.

**Impact** (What is the impact?) This makes me less effective at my job and makes it harder for me to be a good team member.

**Reaction** (Ask them for their reaction to this information) What are your thoughts on that? Are their reasons I am not included?

**Action** (Agreed upon action moving forward) How can we move forward in a way that allows me to be included more? Can we agree that you will include me on \_\_\_\_\_ emails and include me in \_\_\_\_\_ meetings?