

## General conflict resolution strategies

There's an abundance of lists of what to do and not do in conflict situations, including the [Crisis Prevention Institute's "Top 10 De-escalation tips"](#) that bear keeping in mind.

- *Be empathetic and non-judgmental.* Whether or not you think the other person's feelings are justified, they're real to that person. Pay attention to them.
- *Respect personal space.* Allowing personal space tends to decrease the other person's anxiety and can prevent the incident from getting worse. Try to stand or be no closer than a couple of feet from the other person.
- *Use non-threatening non-verbals.* The more a person loses control, the less they hear the other person's words. Be mindful of your gestures, facial expressions, movements and tone of voice.
- *Avoid over-reacting.* Remain calm, rational, and professional. You can't control the other person's behavior; how you respond to their behavior will have a direct effect on whether the situation escalates or diffuses.
- *Focus on feelings.* Facts are important, but how a person feels is the heart of the matter. Watch and listen carefully for the other person's real message.
- *Ignore challenging questions.* When a person challenges your authority, redirect their attention to the issue at hand.
- *Set limits.* If the other person's behavior is belligerent, overly defensive or disruptive, give them clear, simple, and enforceable limits. Offer whatever positive choices or options first.
- *Choose wisely what you insist upon.* Decide which rules are negotiable and which are not. If you can offer a person options and flexibility, you might be able to avoid unnecessary altercations.
- *Allow silence for reflection.* Silence can be a powerful communication tool by giving a person a chance to reflect on what's happening and how he or she needs to proceed.
- *Allow time for decisions.* People who are upset might not be able to think clearly at a moment's notice. Give them a few moments to think through what you've said.

## Reference:

Effective communication is key to resolving conflicts. (2019). *armyandnavyacademy.org*. <https://armyandnavyacademy.org/blog/effective-communication-is-key-to-resolving-conflicts/>