

Part 8: Dealing with Group Dynamics

Things You Can Do to Interrupt Destructive Behavior:

1. Directly intervene
2. Make eye contact
3. Distract and/or redirect
4. Diffuse the situation with humor
5. Confront the aggressor
6. Document what is happening
7. Report to an authority figure
8. Gather more information afterwards

Closing Tips:

- 1. Be aware of your destructive behaviors in group settings.**
One bad apple spoils the bunch.
- 2. Work to create environments that support positive group dynamics.**
Great teams don't just magically happen.
- 3. Embrace the challenges associated with collaborating.**
Working with diverse groups is hard but worth it.



Additional Resources:

- **Virginia Tech resources on conflict management:** <https://oea.vt.edu/conflict-resolution.html>
- **Constructive and destructive group behavior material:** https://strobe.colorado.edu/wp-content/uploads/SCMT_SU2020-Session-1-for-Participants.pdf
- **Constructive group behaviors:** cooperating, clarifying, Inspiring, harmonizing, risk taking, process taking.
- **Destructive group behaviors:** dominating, rushing, withdrawing, discounting, digressing, blocking.
- **Tips for handling conflict:** Flynn, C. (2015). "How To Handle A Conflict With A Coworker." *Bustle*. Retrieved from <https://www.bustle.com/articles/103025-8-ways-to-handle-a-conflict-with-a-coworker>
- **'How can I practice active listening?' video from Virginia Tech:** https://video.vt.edu/media/How+can+I+practice+active+listeningF/0_7iae6xex
- **The Graduate Ombudsperson:** You'll learn more about the ombudsperson in Session 5 (Part 9 & 10). The Ombudsperson is a crucial resource for graduate students. "The Office of the Ombudsperson promotes a harmonious campus community by providing a comfortable resource to help manage and resolve concerns or conflicts that affect members of the Virginia Tech Graduate School community. Comfort is established through an office that is independent, impartial, informal, and confidential." <https://www.graduate.ombudsman.vt.edu/>
- **The Bystander Effect**
 - **Video:** SoulPancake. (2017, November 17). *The Bystander Effect | The Science of Empathy*. [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/Wy6eUTLzcU4>
 - **Article cited in class:** <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/bystander-effect>
- **Paper on Intergroup Contact Theory cited in class:** Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup contact theory. *Annual review of psychology*, 49(1), 65-85. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.65>



