

# Handling An Emotional Employee

----Coping Strategies and Tips----



**It's not an easy situation when an employee becomes hostile or hysterical. Handling an outburst becomes particularly difficult if others involved also become hostile. But there are ways to turn such a confrontation into something more positive.**

## Do's

- Remain calm and quiet
- Hear the person out.
- Listen attentively
- Compromise when possible.
- Be reasonable and work on a resolution.
- Be assertive.

## Don't

- Avoid name calling.
- Don't patronize
- Avoid power plays.
- Don't make unrealistic promises.
- Don't touch the employee.

### Hostility From Employees

Hostile and disruptive behavior generally falls into two categories: the problem employee and the overly ambitious one. A problem employee has to be dealt with since disruptive behavior can disturb an entire department. Although such

employees make up only 10 percent of the work force, they cause 90 percent of the problems. Discipline should be swift. Clearly show that future disruption will not be tolerated. Deal with the employee privately, professionally, and without anger or harsh words. Show the person that you are in control.

If you are unable to resolve the situation, refer employee to an employee assistance program. Severe problems may require termination, but the case must be clearly documented.

An overly ambitious employee can undermine a manager's authority and competence. Such an employee wants to make you look bad to your staff, peers, and superior. Some subversive tactics can be quite cunning.

Encourage an ambitious person to stay occupied. As you learn to delegate challenging projects to such a person, you are also shoring up your own job performance. Your skillful management will be reflected in the department's success.

If the employee has marked your job as a goal, you may need to fight to keep it.

Remain professional throughout the process. Keep your superior apprised of the situation. If your superior is on the employee's side, or if the employee has a wide base of influence, your task will be harder. Take action early so as to avoid a dramatic showdown with everyone taking sides.

### Hostility From Superiors

To emerge unscathed from a boss's attack on your image and self-respect, remain calm and objective and plan a winning strategy. Determine why there is animosity and avoid further conflict in that area. Remain professional when you are personally attacked. State that you find such treatment objectionable and then work on a neutral compromise. Build a wide support network with your co-workers and subordinates. Keep your competence visible to the rest of the company by volunteering for company projects. Demonstrate that you are a company person. Strengthen your relationship with your boss's boss whenever possible.

Document all problems with your supervisor. Go over your boss's head as a last resort. Report documented evidence, but avoid attacking your boss personally. Offer solutions for resolving differences.