



Handling Difficult People

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Emmet Ore:

Hello, everyone. Thanks for joining us today. Welcome to part two of this month's Wednesday Webinar Series, Expert Communication for Every Level of Employer. My name is Emmet. I'm a marketing specialist over here at Vensure and I will be your host. Today, we're going to be talking about how to handle difficult people. And as usual, there will be a Q&A session at the end. So, please feel free to submit any questions you have for Robin throughout the webinar and we'll get to those during the Q&A. This webinar is brought to us always by Vensure Employer Services. Vensure is the leader of 20-plus PEO partners and clients in all 50 states. Today, we'll be going over how we're all kind of difficult people sometimes, how unmet needs turn into difficult behavior, how to speak their language, some other alternatives, and preventing yourself from becoming difficult. And lastly, we'll have the Q&A session. So, again, if you hear a topic you need more clarity on, feel free to submit a follow-up in the Q&A box. And as always, we're thrilled to have Robin Paggi joining us as our panelist today. She's a seasoned human resource practitioner specializing in training on topics, such as harassment prevention, communication, team building and supervisory skills. So, with that, I'll let Robin take it away.

Robin Paggi:

Thank you, Emmet. Yes, we're all difficult people, sometimes, and sometimes that is learned behavior. Sometimes we're difficult because of the circumstances that life has brought us. But, people are sometimes difficult because they're trying to express their unmet needs. Alright, we all have similar needs, such as we need to eat, we need to sleep, we need to feel safe, we need to feel that we belong, we need our pats on the back. But then we have different needs based upon our particular personality styles. And I like using personality profiles in training and in coaching, and usually my training and coaching clients like them, too. But occasionally, someone will tell me that personality profiles just categorize people and we are much too complex for that. And I agree that people are complex. I am currently working on a master's degree

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in psychology so that I can better understand people, so I can be more effective in training and coaching. And yes, we've got all sorts of stuff going on inside us that make us do what we do that is layered, and we got to dig through those layers to try to figure it out. But here's an explanation behind personality profiles. People who study the brain tell us that our mind likes regularity because it makes life less scary. So, we've got stuff coming at us constantly and we cannot take in all this information as rapidly as it comes to us. So, our brain is designed to find patterns and create order so that we can predict what might happen to us so that we can control our environment as much as possible. And so, that we can feel comfortable because when life's chaotic, we feel uncomfortable, and that doesn't feel good. So, our brain is naturally designed to help us categorize. Now, the most important things in our environment now are people—used to be we really have to watch out for wild animals and that type of thing, but now we need to really watch out for people. And philosophers, and scientists, and psychologists, and others have been trying to categorize people for thousands of years to help us better understand how to interact with them, so that we have predictability, and control, and comfort. And sometimes categories are silly, such as blondes have more fun. That was a really popular saying when I was younger, and I'm a brunette, and so I didn't like that thing. Sometimes categories are harmful, such as women are bad drivers. But sometimes categories can be very useful, such as behavioral characteristics. And that's what I'm going to talk about now. And the DISC personality profile. In the 1940's, a psychologist named William Marston created this profile, and it's very similar to four categories that people as far back as Hipocrates put people in. So, you might know that Hipocrates is the Father of Medicine. He believed that people acted the way they did based upon the bile that they had inside of them, and who knows? But still, he had four styles back then, and over the centuries, still four styles. In 1940, William Marston had these four styles and this was what he called them. Now, we aren't just one style. We are a blend of these four categories here, but one tends to come out more than others and tends to be visible to other people when sometimes we can't even see it ourselves. So, that's one of the things that's very interesting is how we see ourselves is usually not how other people see us. And we really need to be concerned with how other people see us because that helps us determine what goes right or wrong with our interactions. So, how we interact with others and the responses we get from others are inspired in large part upon our personality style. And if you're not getting the responses you want from people, think about how you're interacting with them. So, let me tell you a little bit more about these styles.

The dominant is a get the task done, and not only get the task done person, but get it done now. And they tend to be very driven, direct, decisive, strong-willed, self-confident, daring, determined, fast pace. So, hopefully, you've got an idea of what that dominant personality style looks like. They're motivated by power and authority. And so, they don't necessarily want to have power over people, they just want to be able to control their environment, and what happens to them. They do like to win, they tend to be very competitive and they like success. And so, that's one of the reasons they like to win is because it makes them more successful. They value competency, concrete results, and personal freedom, and they don't like being controlled or taken advantage of or being vulnerable. So, a good saying that a dominant might have is, "What's the point of playing if winning isn't the goal?" So, that dominant personality style, again, someone is not all dominant, but if those are the kinds of things that come out that they're very direct in their communication, they're very self-confident, they're very fast-paced. You can kind of tell when somebody has a need for those things, that for the task to be getting done as quickly as possible. I'll get to why that person becomes difficult on our next slide, but before we go there, let's talk about this influence. This is the get appreciation from people. Now, we all need appreciation, but some people need it more than others. And this style, in order to get appreciation from others, tends to be very charming and collaborative, energizing, trusting, enthusiastic, impulsive, optimistic, and persuasive. And they're very much motivated by social recognition. So, that's why they behave the way that they do in order to get social appreciation and recognition. They like group activities because they're a people person. They need to interact with people and very much value relationships. And they like freedom of expression and individuality. And their biggest fear is social rejection, disapproval, loss of

influence, and being ignored. So, that might give you a hint of why they end up becoming difficult people in just a moment. So, the steadiness is get along with people. And they're people-people, too, but they're just a quieter version of it. So, they tend to be calm and patient, predictable, deliberate, stable, warm, passive, and loyal. They're motivated by cooperation, opportunities to help people, they really like to help people, and sincere appreciation. And they value loyalty and security. And so, a big fear for them is lots of stability, change, loss of harmony, or offending people. They just want everybody to get along. And then finally to conscientiousness, they are they get it, the task done right the first time kind of people. And so in order to get the task done right the first time, they're cautious, systematic, private, objective, analytical, diplomatic, accurate, and reserved. They're motivated by opportunities to gain knowledge, show their expertise, and they want quality work. They want it done right the first time. So, they very much value accuracy. But, they also like to be challenged. They fear criticism. They don't like slipshod methods and they hate being wrong. Now, I don't think any of us likes being wrong, but for them it's especially daunting to them. And so, one of the things that might go along with them is it takes less time to do things right, than explain why you did it wrong. Alright, so that's just an overview of personality styles. And again, you might not fit neatly into a category, but think about if you have one that really is more dominant than the other ones.

One of the things that happens, again, is that we have needs that we have in common, but then because of our personality style, our needs sometimes are specific to us based upon what we need to get done. So, they get the task done people. And by the way, I want to give a shout out to Dr. Rick Brinkman and Dr. Rick Kershner. They wrote the book "Dealing with Difficult People." And what they did is they took the four personality styles that Marston had developed, and then they added this information about how all of the personality styles become difficult people, if their particular needs are not met. And so, their book is dealing with difficult people. So, you don't need to write a bazillion notes down on all of this, just by the book, and I don't get any credit or any compensation/ it's just a really good book and it's easy to read. So, I certainly don't want to take credit for all the information that I'm giving you. So, get the task done people. Now remember, they need to get things done quickly, and when things are not getting done quickly, they become very frustrated. And when they become frustrated, this person's behavior becomes more controlling. Now, I have to laugh because I'm at home and I was trying to print up my notes for today. And the computer that I'm trying to print it up on is the printer is not working. My husband happened to come home and I told him the computer is not working. And he said, "What do you want me to do about it?" I said, "I want you to get it to work." And so, I could tell, because I am a get the task done person, I could tell my communication was becoming much more clipped, more direct, more to the point, and just get it done now. Fortunately, my husband knows how to handle me when I go into difficult person mode, but before then I was just a happy camper just going along with my day and everything's fine, but all of a sudden an obstacle is presented in front of me and I turn into a tank. A tank pushes you out of the way. And so, if you are a get it done now person, that's what you'll typically do, is an obstacle comes in front of you and you just try to steamroll right over that obstacle. Or if that obstacle is people, steamroll right over those people. That's not a good thing. People don't like being steamrolled. But I know what it's like to go from zero to 100 in seconds because things are not going how you want them to go. So, then the sniper attempts to control you through embarrassment or humiliation. And so, that's one of the things that if somebody challenges me, especially in front of a lot of other people, then chances are I'll slip right into sniper mode, or know it all mode, by letting them know I actually know more than they do. Alright. So, we are all difficult people when our needs are not being met. Now, that's a problem for us and we'll talk about that a little bit later on. But, just when you're wondering, "Why are people being so mean," just understand that it's because their needs are not being met. Now, the get appreciation, appreciated by others people. When the intent to get appreciation isn't working for them, and remember, they're very charming, and storytelling, and joking, and all of that. And when people aren't laughing at their jokes or appreciating them in general, the behavior becomes increasingly aimed at getting attention. And so, that's one of the things that you can tell about people sometimes if you really watch them, is that they communicate to get their needs met, and when their needs aren't being met, their

communication just becomes exaggerated. So, the get the task done people just become even more direct and to the point, trying to get things done. The get appreciated people, their behavior becomes even more apparent to other people, in order to try to get people's attention. So, the grenade aims out-of-control explosions in every direction. I have a very good friend who is this personality type—wonderful person. People love him, but when he does not feel appreciated, oh my goodness, he can be so mean, and it just all comes out like he doesn't have any control over it. Or there's the friendly sniper. The sniping is a fun way of getting attention. So, I have these folks in my workshops every once in a while, where they'll make a little joke, and frequently it's under their breath. And when I ask them, "What did you say?" Oh, nothing. Nothing. So, that's a friendly sniper. Or they think they know it all, and this is somebody who specializes in exaggerations and half-truths, and useless advice, and unsolicited opinions, just trying to get attention. So, remember, the reason that they're behaving this way is because they don't feel appreciated by other people. Now, the get along with others people, people who are focused on getting along with others. And so, they act in ways in order to get along with people. They tend to be very agreeable and they just go along to get along and don't want to rock the boat. And so, when they feel that they're not getting along with people, they will become a "yes" person. They'll just say yes to everything, even though they don't mean it. Or maybe person, avoids disapproval by avoiding decisions. So, everything gets a maybe response. Or a nothing person, if they have nothing nice to say, they say nothing at all. Now, that might seem like a good thing, but it's really not so much, because this nothing person says nothing at all when they're unhappy until they explode. Right before our webinar today, I had a call from a client who told me about a situation, and it perfectly describes the nothing person. This employee was in their performance evaluation, and they were mad at their supervisor, but they never said anything to their supervisor about it or to anybody else. Not the person, not the supervisor's supervisor, they said nothing, until they started to get a poor performance review, and then they blew. And that's what frequently happens. That's a problem, and the HR person told me that she counseled this employee. It's a problem when you say nothing because we can't fix anything. What frequently happens with nothing people is they say nothing when they're unhappy and then they just leave. And how can you provide help when people say nothing? So, that is difficult behavior. And then finally they get the task right, the first time people. When the task is not getting done right the first time, they become increasingly pessimistic and perfectionistic. And so, they become a no person. Nothing is going to be right. What's wrong will never be set right. Or the first response they have to everything is, "No." The nothing person, they withdraw completely when things don't go right. So, I'm just going to take my marbles and go home. The whiner believes he or she is powerless to create change, so whines instead. So, again, what I hope that you do with this is you begin to recognize that, "Oh, this person isn't difficult, it's that their needs are not being met." And so, what can I do about that? Speaking their language, what do I mean by that?

Oh, one of the things that I learned many years ago, is that the golden rule is good, treat people how you want to be treated. There is a better rule, treat people how they want to be treated. And part of that is on speaking their language. Now, even when we all speak the same language, such as English, we speak it differently. And when people are not talking to us the way we like to be taught to, then we get agitated and can become difficult. And so, we need to learn to be bilingual, trilingual, multilingual, so that we can learn to make small changes in how we communicate, in order to meet people's needs. Alright. So now, let's go on. So, the "get the task done now" person. Their style, in the best of times, is brief and to the point, and the reason that they communicate that way is to get things done quickly. And so, you see that our communication is trying to get our needs met. And so, if we talk quickly and say few words, then we can get stuff done. And so, if you want to speak to a get the task done person, especially when they are being difficult, like when the printer is not printing, what you can do to help them not be so difficult is be brief and to the point. Get to the bottom line. One of the things that interferes with stuff getting done is people talking. And so, if you talk and talk and talk and provide a lot of details, all that's doing is making that person more and more agitated. So, all you need to do is, get to

the point. Be brief, speak up, and that's one of the things, too, is that this style, when they get upset, yes, they're loud and they're aggressive, and they're scary, and it's intimidating to other people. But, what will help you to help them is to not act intimidated, but to act confident, speak up, speak louder, narrow the discussion, avoid generalizations, avoid repeating yourself. So, the next style that we're going to talk about tends to repeat themselves, they say the same thing three different ways, and that is just more unnecessary language for the get the task done person. So, it makes them even more agitated. And focus on solutions rather than problems, because that's all they want. They just want the solution. They want to get it done. They don't want an explanation for it. They don't want reasons why things can't work. Just get it done as quickly as possible. So, with those folks, when you see them get agitated, just focus on, "This is what I can do for you, and do it." And that will help release their anxiety. Now, the get appreciated by other people—people again, the reason that they joke and tell stories and interact with people a lot is because they want people to recognize their contributions. And when that jokey person starts being mean, or condescending, or flippant, that that's their sign, they're trying to tell you, "I need you to appreciate me." And so, here are some things that you can do. Allow them to talk—don't interrupt them because interrupting them shows that you're not appreciating them. So, get them to talk, don't interrupt, be an active listener. Share your experiences—so, not focusing on tasks, but focusing on people and relationships. And avoid overloading them with lots of details and show respect for their optimism, their high energy. So, show them that you appreciate them. Now, what if I don't appreciate them? Well, you can find something to appreciate. And so, that's one of the things sometimes, we need to look a little harder than we're looking. The get along with others people. Remember, they just want everybody to get along with people. So, they do not understand why the get the task done people are loud and mean, and they don't understand why the get appreciated by other people are mean and loud. They just want everybody to get along, quietly, for the most part. And so, with them, you want to be calm, and quieter, and express your interest in them. Be polite with them. This personality style, more than other, believes in the, "Please, thank you, hello, goodbye—all of those things that we're supposed to do in a polite society. Take time to provide clarification on exactly what you want. Let them know what you expect of them so that they can fulfill your needs and be helpful, because that's really what they're trying to do. And then, the get it right the first time people. So again, when they're being very negative and pessimistic, then you know that they are, things are not getting right the first time. So how do you do that? Well, focus on facts and details, and minimize the pep talk or the emotional language. And so, you can see that what works for the get appreciated by others people does not work for the get it right the first time people. They don't want a pep talk. They don't want jokes. They don't want stories. That just makes them even more difficult. Be patient and diplomatic. They don't like aggression, for the most part. Respect their desire to work independently, for the most part. And don't be put off by their detached approach, because these folks, especially when they're at work, it's all about getting the work done. It's not about us having a relationship and getting to know each other. So, you can see how different things work for different people. And if you just pay attention to how people act, then you can usually figure out why they're acting in a way that's not working for you. So, here's another thing that you can do. You can show them how their behavior prevents them from getting their needs met. So, to me, this was one of the big ironies of personality styles and communication, is that, for example, as a dominant personality style, and I just want things to get done quickly, when things aren't getting done quickly, my behavior, my reaction to that, just ensures things are not going to get done quickly because people become afraid or they become offended or their reaction is just not what I want. And so, when somebody pointed that out to me, "You know when you go into extra-dominant mode, that almost guarantees you're not going to get things done quickly. You're going to spend time having to apologize and talk to people in HR and all sorts of things that you don't want to do." Same thing with get appreciated by other people. When they feel they're not appreciated by others, then their behavior almost guarantees that no one will appreciate them. So, pointing that out to them can help. The get along with others people. When they are just avoiding situations and avoiding people and not saying anything, that almost guarantees that people will not try to get along with them. And the get it right people, when they're being so pessimistic and perfectionistic,

it almost guarantees that people are not going to get it right because people will feel like they can't, they can't live up to their expectations. So, when we understand that our natural reaction to not getting what we want almost guarantees that we won't get what we want, then hopefully that will help us minimize our reactions. And then suggesting new behaviors to people. And that's one of the things that sometimes other people can see very clearly that we cannot see ourselves because we are so used to behaving the way that we behave. It becomes a pattern, and the longer you live, the bigger the pattern is or the more embedded it is. And so, trying to undo those patterns of behavior, those natural reactions that we have. And so, that's where feedback really is helpful, is when we ask people, "What should I do instead?, What could I do instead?" And, you know when somebody is reacting in a way that you don't like, you know exactly what they should do instead. And so, point that out to them, in a kind way, to inspire them to change their reaction.

Well, there are certainly other options. And so, I mean, you don't have to spend all this time trying to learn other people's behaviors and why they behave the way that they do, and how to communicate to them in a way that reduces their difficulty. You don't have to do that if you don't want to. You can just ignore them if you can. But then, the problem never goes away. You can keep your distance from them if you can, but sometimes you can't. You can get help if they're being such a problem for you, such as going to your supervisor or to HR, but sometimes that just escalates the problem. And you can look at your own behavior because chances are you might be contributing to the other person's difficult behavior. So, that's one of the things, think about how you interact with people. And one of the things when I mediate conflicts for people, one of the most amusing parts of the whole thing is when I meet with people separately, and I ask them to tell me their story. Tell me the story of the conflict, what happened? And when people are telling me their story, they are never the villain in their story, they're always the victim. And then when I talk to the person that they're in conflict with, they're not the villain, they're the victim. Now, how can both parties be the victim? And so, one of the things that we need to understand is that when we get into a conflict with somebody, we are one-half of that conflict, and we are contributing to their behavior toward us. So, we're going to talk about conflict resolution, coming up next month. But before we get there, just look at your own behavior, especially if people react differently toward you than they tend to react toward others. Then you know that perhaps you might be contributing to the problem. Preventing ourselves from becoming difficult. First of all, you really need to know yourself. You need to know what your needs are. So, again, it is a little bit more complex than what I presented. Certainly, get the task done now people need that, but then they need other things as well. So, we've got to dig through the layers a little bit. Well, how do you know what your needs are? Personality profiles are a great way. I'm amazed sometimes at how spot-on a personality profile is for me. Reading the ones that I have done, the DISC, the Myers-Briggs type indicator, the Enneagram, all of those types of things, it's just like somebody was following me around and wrote a book about me. And so, look into personality profiles. Go to therapy, do all sorts of things to figure out why you operate the way you operate. And when you do that, the clarity is amazing, and you can figure out all sorts of things and see things that you never did before. Then, the next thing, pay attention to how others react to you. So, one of the things is that whatever we put out into the world is often reflected to us. And if you do not like how other people are reacting to you, then pay attention to what you are doing, because you might be inspiring those reactions. So, again, if you don't like those reactions, don't change other people, change what you're putting out there into the world. Listen to what people say about you. Now, gossip sometimes can be very beneficial. And one of the reasons for that is that if people are talking badly about you, there might be some truth to it. So, listen to what people are saying about you because you might learn a lot of things that you need to know about yourself. The other thing is take care of yourself. And so, that is, eat right, sleep, exercise, do all of those types of things. And the reason for that is that when we don't feel good, we don't communicate well. When we haven't had enough sleep, when we're hungry, hangry, all of those types of things, we don't communicate well. So, I had a gentleman who was sent to me for coaching, and because he was not communicating well, especially with his assistant. And so, during our first coaching session, he was kind of grimacing when he was moving his leg. And I asked

him, “What’s going on there?” And he said he had knee problems and had for a long time, and it caused him a lot of pain. And I said, “Do you think that the pain is related to how you might be communicating with people?” And he said, “Could be.” And I said, “Alright, well, your first homework assignment is to go to the doctor and figure out if you can do something about that pain.” He did, and it helped immediately. And so, that’s one of the things, is that when we are not taking care of ourself, we cannot face the world at our best. And when you’ve got a lot of stuff going on and you need to make sure you do not become a difficult person, taking care of yourself can help immensely with that. And then ask for help. If you’re struggling with your behavior and your reactions, if people are complaining about you, if people are gossiping about you, if they’re doing things that is not working for you, ask for help. And that’s one of the things that happens sometimes with people, especially if they get promoted into executive or management positions, and they think they should know everything and they shouldn’t have to ask anybody for help, I think that is a sign of immaturity. A sign of maturity is being able to recognize when you need help and ask for it. And we all need help from time to time, whatever that kind of help may be. So, people are often difficult because they’re trying to express their unmet needs. And a philosophy that I like to tell other people, is that if you give people what they need, chances are they’ll give you what you need. And hopefully, I’ve given you some things that you need that will help you in dealing with difficult people. Alright. Anybody have any questions for me?

Emmet Ore:

Alright, thank you, Robyn. First question here is, What is the difference between a typical person and a bully?

Robin Paggi:

Sometimes it might seem the same. I’m in California and we have a definition of workplace bullying here. And it is when people intentionally try to sabotage others, or humiliate them, or intimidate them—when they intentionally do it, and it has no business reason. So, that is our state’s definition of bullying, and I think it’s a good one. So, a difficult person is one who’s not having their needs met, for the most part. Or they are someone who doesn’t feel good. Or they’ve had a bad childhood, or all sorts of difficulties in their life. A bully might have experienced all the same things, but they are intentionally messing with people for no good business reason. So, that’s the difference between the two.

Emmet Ore:

Thank you. Can an employee be fired for being a difficult person?

Robin Paggi:

Well, in most cases, yes. And so, that’s one of the things that, we have all sorts of good reasons to be difficult people, but if we are too difficult, then we can be terminated as a result of that. And so, that’s one of the things somebody challenged me in a workshop about, and I’ve already told you how I don’t like being challenged. But this person said, “No, you can’t be fired for people thinking that you’re bothering them, or being mean to them, or something like that.” Well, sure, you can. If you have at-will employment, you certainly can. You can be fired for any reason or no reason. And they don’t have to give you the reason. So, one of the things that I learned a long time ago from one of my supervisors, she really did me the favor of pointing out some of the things that I did that just were not working for me and were sabotaging my success. And she told me, “Robin, you can be the smartest one. You can be the most talented one. But if you can’t get along with your coworkers, you’re going to be the unemployed one.” And so, that was something that I needed to hear in my younger days when my dominant personality style was even more dominant than it is now. So, yes, you can be the smartest, you can be the most talented, you can be the best at your job. But if you can’t get along with people, you’ll be unemployed.

Emmet Ore:

So, advice there. How do you work with difficult people who are lazy and want you to provide them all the information?

Robin Paggi:

Don't provide them with all the information. And so, that is not a flippant answer, I swear. But, this reminds me of when I was younger and I had a supervisor, I would go and ask her a question, and she would tell me where to look up the information. And I just thought, "You know the answer, why don't you just tell me the answer?" But no, I'd have to go look it up. And then after a while, I figure, don't ask her because she's going to tell you to look it up, and so just go look it up. Well, that's exactly why she wouldn't tell me the answer, is so that I would learn the information on my own, and I wouldn't just rely upon her to provide the information to me. Now, here's one of the things I find interesting about that question, is that that the person who asked it is talking about the lazy person. And one of the things that sometimes people do, is they inspire people to be lazy because they do all the work for them. And that is another word for enabling. And so, perhaps that person is lazy because they've always gotten people to do things for them, and they need somebody to teach them, "Do it yourself." And so, for that person, when they ask for all this data, if that person can tell them, "You need to find it yourself, I can't keep doing this for you." What if I'm not here someday? So, you need to learn how to do it yourself. So, remember, when we have a conflict with somebody, we need to ask ourselves what role am I playing in this conflict? How am I inspiring this person to act toward me the way that they are acting toward me? And when you do that, you usually find the answer to what you need to do. And it's often, don't do what I'm currently doing.

Emmet Ore:

Got it. Okay. Looks like we have a couple more coming in now. When you have attempted to change your communication and meet an employee's needs, but there's still difficult, how do you know when it's time to throw in the towel?

Robin Paggi:

Well, I would ask them why they are still being difficult. Maybe not in those words. But I would just have a very honest conversation with them about, "This is what I've attempted to do to help this situation and it doesn't seem to be working." And I need to know why it's not working. And if there is nothing else that can be done to make it work. And if there's nothing else, then perhaps it's time to part ways. So, one of the things we typically do is we make guesses about things. And so, I am encouraging you to watch people, see how they act, and try to give them what they need. But sometimes the best thing is just ask them. Just ask them what they need, and how you can meet their needs. And so, it goes back to the Jerry Maguire line, "Help me, help you." And one of the things, too, we typically are pretty bad at telling other people what we need. First of all, we think that it's common sense what we need, or we shouldn't have to tell them. But life is so much easier if you just tell people what you need from them. And so, for example, when I'm at work especially, I need people to just be really quick with what they need to tell me. And I don't want a lot of emotion surrounding it. I just need the facts of what I need to know so I can keep moving. And so, when I let people know, when they say, "Hey, you got a minute?" And I say, "Well, I've got about one, then I'm helping them give me what I need." And so, the world would just be so much easier if we would tell people what we need, ask them what they need, and try to figure out how we can meet each other's needs. So, that's what I suggest for that employee. You've tried to give them everything you think they need. Ask them what they think they need, and that might help.

Emmet Ore:

Excellent. Okay. So, how do you deal with a procrastinator, especially if you're a dominant person?

Robin Paggi:

Well, one of the things, when it comes to personality profiles, I like the Myers-Briggs also. And in the Myers-Briggs, it talks about people who are procrastinators, but it doesn't call them that. They're called perceivers instead. And I am one of those as well. Ironically, dominant, but also perceiver. Perceivers need to have a looming deadline to get things done. And so, one of the things that you can do is to provide them with an artificial deadline. And one of the things that, and by artificial deadline, I mean, if you need it by Friday, tell them you need it done by Wednesday. Okay, so artificial deadline is the deadline you're giving them, but it's not your deadline. So, that's one thing. The other thing is that dominants are not very good at providing details. And they tend to think that everything's going to get done right now. So, if they are vague with their language, as far as I need you to get this done. Well, when, when am I supposed to get it done? Well, right now. Okay, so the dominant things that everybody has the same timing that they do, I mean, we're all guilty of this. And so, you've got to be more specific and provide more details. And so, I need this done by 5:00 on Friday. And so, that provides more details. The procrastinator will usually get it done by 5:00 on Friday—well, by 4:59. But at least if you're more specific, then you will get it done. So, one of the things that we tend to do to sabotage ourselves, is we are not speaking the other person's language. And we think that when we speak our language, they get it, and they don't. One of my favorite quotes, "The biggest problem with communication is the illusion we have achieved it." If it makes sense to us, we think it makes sense to other people. The other thing is that if this person is asking the question is a woman, sometimes women will ask, will make statements, but in the form of a question. So, could you get this done for me by five? And that's a question, it's not a statement. Now, dominants usually don't have any problem in being very direct. I need you to get it done by 5:00, or get this done by 5:00. But you add the gender equation in there, and I do it myself. I will ask questions when I'm really making statements. And so, again, with this dominant person, ask why am I not getting the results and how am I contributing to this equation?

Emmet Ore:

Okay, there's a question for some more clarity on that topic. So, the dominants, or the dominant person will always be a difficult person because they want a good job done quickly?

Robin Paggi:

No. Dominant people can be wonderful, lovely, charming people. When the job, when things are not getting done quickly, that's usually when you see the bad side of them. Having said that, dominants usually are the personality style that people have the most trouble with. And so, we all have trouble with different personality styles, but dominants are the ones, for the most part, that people are most frightened of, that are most offended by, and have a difficult time dealing with. I have a whole webinar just on how to handle dominant personality styles. So, dominants are not always difficult, but they tend to be the most difficult of the personality styles. And, and if they're not getting things done quickly, they become difficult pretty quickly.

Emmet Ore:

Awesome. And then there's another follow-up question to that. So, how can you be less dominant?

Robin Paggi:

Well, that's an excellent question. First of all, give yourself plenty of time to do things. So, one of the things that dominants have a tendency to do is to think they can do everything. And can you do this? Can you do that? Yeah. Yeah. And they pile all of this stuff on top of themselves, and they don't give themselves enough time, and they think everything is going to be easier than they think it will. And then they hit an obstacle, and then they become even more dominant. So, prevent

yourself from hitting those obstacles by giving yourself more time. And if you think something will take a half-hour, give yourself an hour to get it done, because the copy machine is going to jam, the printer is not going to work, all of this stuff is going to happen. And so, that's the situation I got myself in this morning. I'm trying to print things up 10 minutes before it's time to go on, and stuff's not working. And so, what do I want to do? I want to pick it up, and throw it out the window, and all of those types of things. So, giving myself more time would have prevented that situation. So, one of the things I will say, we're always a work in progress. We will always be a work in progress, hopefully. You're always going to have to work on these things. It will get easier as time goes by. But still, the other thing, practice your patience. So, I practice my patience when I'm standing in line anywhere. I'm at a grocery store, and it's taking way longer than I think it should. And part of it is because the people in front of me are chit chatting and doing these things, and the blood just begins to boil. Well, now I see those as opportunities to practice my patience. And when I understand, "Oh, I can actually be accomplishing something while I'm waiting in line," then it makes me feel better immediately. But seeing turning things around as this is not an obstacle, it is an opportunity, has really helped. And then again, just taking care of yourself, making sure you're getting enough sleep and all of those types of things, because when you don't, and dominants have a tendency to be overachievers and type A personality styles who don't take care of themselves until they crash. And so, don't do that to yourself, slow it down. And that's ways to work on it.

Emmet Ore:

And you may have answered this in a more general sense here, but how do I work with others if I am dominant?

Robin Paggi:

Yeah, well, the big thing is to recognize, again, how you probably come across to other people, and chances are people have told you, "You're scary, you're intimidating, you're those types of things." So, with the influencer that I talked about, remember that they are people first, task second. So, what a dominant has a tendency to do is to walk up to people and get to business, immediately. And so, they'll walk in the door, they don't say hello, they just walk up to people. They don't say good morning. They just say, "Hey, did you get this done, what I need you to get done?" And so, with your influence and your steady, they are people first, task second. And so, they think you are rude when you are just getting down to business. And so, you want to go through the pleasantries. "Good morning. How's everything going?" Good. With the influence, you can be loud. With the steadiness, you need to bring your voice down, because you're even more scary. Dominants sound like they're yelling when they're not yelling. With the, the steady especially, they like things to be very calm. They need things to take time. And so, if you just stand over them, and hover, and watch them while they're trying to find something for you, that's very intimidating. And so, just trying to relax a little bit more and people first. Now with the conscientious, they're just all about the facts and business. And so, you don't have to change that much. But what you do need to modify, is wanting things right now. And so, that's one of the things is the conscientious, they need time to make sure it's perfect when they put it out there the first time. They don't want anything to be criticized. That's their Achilles heel. And so, that's one of the things. And as a dominant, if you're like me, chances are you only focus on talking about what needs to be fixed and not focusing on what has gone right. And so, that needs to be something that you include in your communication with people, especially with the influence and the steady, because they're the appreciation people and get along with people, and then the conscientious has a difficult time with criticism. I mean, we all do. I don't like to be criticized, but the dominant usually, again, focuses on what's wrong instead of what's right. And the other thing is a dominant does not like to be vulnerable. And so, they frequently do not tell people how much they like them and appreciate them. And they need to learn how to do that because a lot of people need to be told that they are liked and appreciated. And I know it's uncomfortable, but it's something you need to learn how to do, and so need to practice with that.

Emmet Ore:

Where would you recommend we go to find out which type we are?

Just get online, and so, with the DISC, again, it's DISC. That's the one that I work with quite a bit when I don't have a lot of time to go into detail. And so, just Google it, and websites will come up, and you will be able to complete the questionnaire online and get a report to tell you more.

Excellent. Okay, here's one that I am having trouble figuring out the phrasing here, so bear with me. How do you handle a dominant person on a call while explaining a job or the content?

Robin Paggi:

Well, with dominants, again, be brief and to the point, be loud and confident, and and just focus on the bottom line. And so, with any dominant personality style, that's how to do it. When somebody is really going into dominant mode, again those are the most important things. Just bottom line it, don't go into a lot of detail, don't go into a lot of reasons why. And the most important thing to do is focus on what you can do for them. And we're going to talk about that in our customer service training next week, because that is the basics for good customer service. When you have a difficult customer, what they're trying to tell you is you need to do something for me. And so, that's what you need to focus on, is this is what I can do for you. And so, especially with dominants, don't go into, I can't do this, I can't do that, because that just makes the situation worse. So, just focus on this is what I can do for you, this is when I can do it, and hammer that in.

Emmet Ore:

Alright, well, I think that is about all the time we have today. Please join us next week for providing exceptional customer service. And thanks so much, Robin.

Robin Paggi:

Thank you.