

INTERVENTIONS

Sample Interventions for Problem Behaviors*

*Adapted from *How to Make Meetings Work* by Michael Doyle and David Strauss

The Chronic Latecomers: Wait until after the meeting and ask if there are reasons they are always late. Don't lecture. Ask what can be done to make the meetings run better so that they will be on time. If nothing else works, give them a job up front at a future meeting.

The Chronic Early Leavers: In a side conversation, ask if a change in the meeting format will allow complete attendance. Refer to the ground rules, or at the beginning of the next meeting ask if everyone can be there for the full time to state the expectations of the group.

The Broken Records: Give air time to someone worked up and hanging onto an issue. "Why don't we take three minutes now to hear what you have got to say. We want to know everyone heard you and we want you to be able to move along with us through the rest of the meeting."

The Doubting Thomases: Ask the group not to evaluate any ideas until all of the evidence is in. If interruptive, refer to the ground rules. If they are skeptical of the process, show that you heard them and ask them to hang in there for ten minutes to see where it can get.

The Headshakers: If someone gives repeated negative cues, check in on the process with them. It can be asked in a neutral way or if it's overt, ask if they are disturbed with the process.

The Dropouts: Ask a question at a key point in the meeting. Allow some time to elapse by asking another person, then direct the question to the person who seems to have dropped out to give them a chance to be heard. The issue may emerge.

The Whisperers: Move closer, maybe touch the table. Then: "Let's keep a single focus on this topic."

The Loudmouths: Move closer, maintaining eye contact while they are talking.

The Attackers: Redirect subtle attacks from the personal level to the content.

The Interpreters: When someone interjects to clarify the comments of someone else, ask the original speaker if that interpretation is correct.

The Know-It-Alls: "We recognize and respect your experience, but the group has to make the decision after weighing the alternatives."

The Backseat Drivers: Ask for process recommendations and shift if the group's will.