

Gain the knowledge, confidence and skills to handle aggression and violence at work.

Aggression is an emotion, which can have a negative effect on you and people around who are either directly subject to the aggression or witness to it. This training course looks at different techniques to handle these incidences, diffuse them and return a damaging relationship to a professionally satisfactory one.

At Elite Training we design and deliver handling aggression and violence in the workplace to your organisation's unique requirements. Our interactive and fun delivery results in enjoyable and enlightening training, which delegates effective back on the job.

This document provides a course overview and example workbook pages.

To discuss tailoring this or other courses to meet your organisation's requirements, and for a sample course outline and quote, contact:

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Course Overview

Failing to deal with violence at work or aggression in the workplace results in problems for staff and **you have a legal duty to protect your staff** from this.

If you or your staff have to deal with people who do not get what they want, you will know how they can soon show their anger and become aggressive. Not getting what they want or simply having to wait are just two reasons why people change from being calm to aggression.

Handling violence and aggression in the workplace is easier when you know what to do. Our course will provide you with the knowledge and skills to deal with these situations.

We train the police, local authorities and companies to effectively deal with aggression in the workplace.

Salespeople, estate agents, planning officers, social workers, benefit officers, receptionists and others who have to meet people are particularly vulnerable. Our Handling Aggression at Work training course covers a number of safety measures they can take.

The knowledge and confidence participants gain on this course, will help reduce any anger and aggression they encounter.

Dealing with angry people is not easy, but knowing what to do and say can **save injury and improve customer relations.**

Who will benefit:

All staff liable to be in contact with difficult, aggressive or violent people.

By the end of the Handling Violence and Aggression at Work training course delegates will be able to...

- appreciate what are acceptable and unacceptable levels of behaviour
- identify the causes of anger and aggression in the workplace and elsewhere
- use body language to gain rapport with difficult people
- apply diffusion techniques
- use effective conflict resolution techniques
- practice assertive communication
- demonstrate attack prevention in the street, reception areas and the office
- deal with aggression that turns to violence
- gain advice for estate agents, salespeople, and others on their own
- draw up an action plan to create policies and procedures to identify and reduce risk
- **feel confident about dealing with anger or aggression in people.**

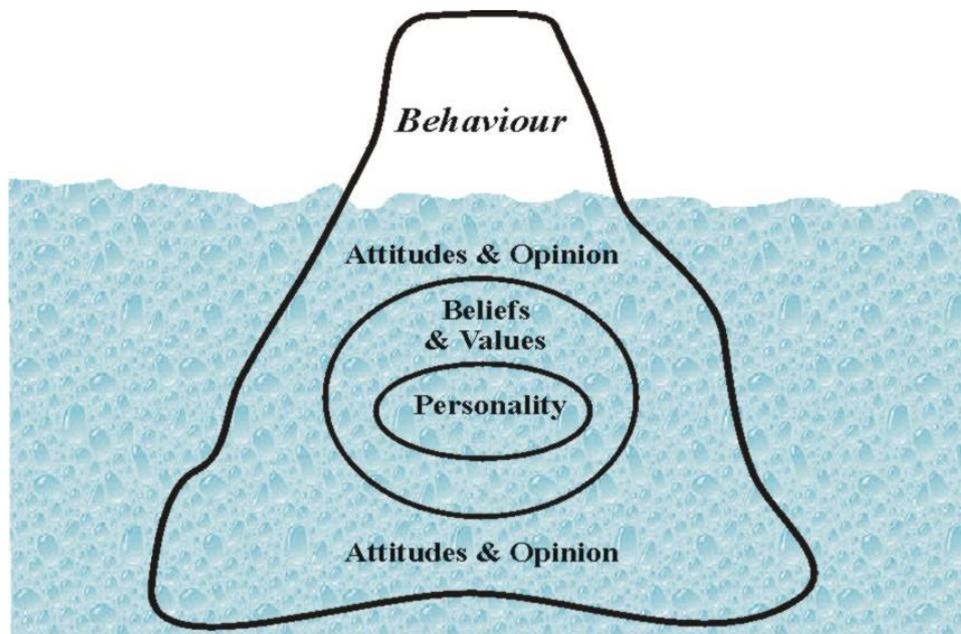
Example Workbook Pages

The following pages are examples from workbooks:

1.3 Principles of Behaviour

- Behaviour that is reinforced is more likely to be repeated (like children who get what they want)
- The strongest type of reinforcement is intermittent (a gambler doesn't win every time - an occasional win is sufficient)
- If you ignore a behaviour that has been used repeatedly in the past, it will initially escalate before getting better
- If a behaviour is consistently followed by a consequence the person doesn't want, it begins to diminish
- Doing nothing is doing something for the bad behaviour.

1.4 What People See of You



Personality

Personality is at the centre of our iceberg. It remains constant over a long period of time, is not directly observable by others and is simply a "predisposition" to behave in a certain way. We usually make judgements about other people's personality based on their behaviour.

Beliefs and Values

Beliefs and values are the ring next to the centre. They are our framework for action. . A value can be seen as what you believe in; the belief is why you believe in it. For example, most organisations value profit. However, why they value profit can vary enormously, which in turn affects how people feel about implementing the value.

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3.3 First Impressions

It is vital to commence the encounter with a positive, confident demeanour. Any hesitancy or insecurity will be seized on and exploited by the other party, whether they are an aggressor or complainer.

When initially bringing up the problem, take responsibility for not having communicated expectations as clearly as you could have and for not confronting the issue as directly as you could have in the past.

Confidence is projected by verbal and non-verbal cues; by a clear introduction, open, welcoming body language, eye contact on first meeting, and an expression of interest in the person's name.

By initially using "I language" (taking partial ownership) as opposed to "you language" (blaming), you reduce defensiveness and help the other person to be more open to change. It often helps to bring up the problem in the form of asking for their help. For example, "I'd like to get your help in ..." or "I have a problem and I need your help in solving it." This reduces the possible defensiveness of the other person and keeps his or her mind more open.

Avoid phrases like "We need to talk." Conversely, a mumbled or forgotten introduction and any chilliness, surliness, impatience or a lack of receptiveness to the other person will cause the interaction to deteriorate into mutual hostility. A lack of positivism and confidence from you reinforces the complainer's essentially negative view.

3.4 Situation

It is often advantageous for the encounter to take place privately, as a mark of respect towards the other person. It also deprives the difficult person of an audience, to whom they may be directing their behaviour. It may also be helpful to see a group of aggrieved persons separately for similar reasons.

An aggressor is often characterised by public displays of hostility; if the difficult person is in a position of authority over you, it may be appropriate for you to make a mild suggestion, "Do you think we should speak about this in private?" This signals both the unreasonableness of the aggressor's behaviour and your comparative rationality.

Physical positions can assist the encounter to develop in a positive manner. If both parties are on the same eye level, the impression is given that the parties are engaged in a co-operative problem solving exercise, rather than a display of hostility.

Keeping documents out of sight until required can assist the relative informality of the encounter. Papers and official forms can be intimidating to some persons and, by producing them at an early point of the meeting, a false agenda may be implied. It is important that the other person believes they are at the centre of your concerns, rather than the mere completion of a form or report.

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5.3. Active Listening Skills

- Being open and unbiased.
- Hearing literally.
- Interpreting what is said.
- Acting on what has been said.

Before you act remember that people in highly charged situations hardly ever say what they mean. If you react to what they say you might make a mistake. When an insult is hurled your way, side-step it and carry on trying to solve the problem. Be hard on the problem and soft on the person.

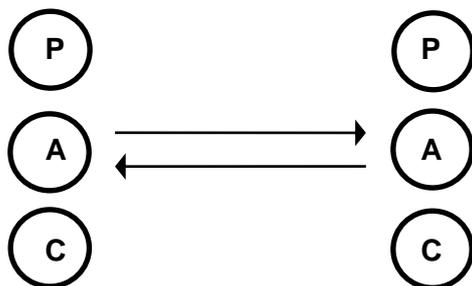
In our active listening role there are some simple rules we can follow that will help communicate to the other person that we are making a genuine effort to hear what they have to say and to work on the problem:

- **don't think ahead** about what you will say
- **don't ignore** or deny the person's feelings. Use your knowledge of non-verbal signals to interpret the whole message accurately
- **don't pretend** to have understood if you haven't - seek further information
- **don't talk about yourself** - you could make yourself the problem
- **acknowledge** their point of view. This does not mean that you agree with it, only that you can see why they are angry or upset. Don't say "I know what it must be like for you." You are likely to get the response "How..... do you know what it is like?" or words to that effect.

When you are in conflict try to use your existing communication skills and develop others by practise. Learn to look, see, listen and hear. With more information you will have a better chance of resolving a situation to everybody's satisfaction.

5.4 Transactional Analysis (TA) - Patterns of Communication

Any situation involving communication between people can be seen and heard as one person's Parent, Adult or Child talking to someone else's Parent, Adult or Child.



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6.1 Assertive, Aggressive or Passive?

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**Exercise 4 - What do you understand by the term 'being passive or submissive'?
Write a short description that describes what this term means to you.**

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Exercise 5 - Read the following quotes from a person at work and decide if they are Assertive, Passive or Aggressive. Circle your answer

“You're always late! If this continues I will have to take action.”

Assertive Passive Aggressive

“Your desk is a disaster area. How you ever find anything beats me. Apart from anything else it gives a bad impression to other staff.”

Assertive Passive Aggressive

“Could you keep a little quieter in here please - I'm on an international call.”

Assertive Passive Aggressive

“I'm not very good, at presentations. I don't know how I'm going to get through it.”

Assertive Passive Aggressive

“If it were me I'd say yes to your having Friday off, but Mrs Grant has decided to refuse all such requests - and in any case we are very busy this week.” (Mrs Grant is the overall Manager)

Assertive Passive Aggressive

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7 Negotiate and Communicate

When dealing with a challenging person delivering a message:

- Acknowledge you have received their message - simply by acknowledging we have received the message we can stop the aggressor from having to increase the intensity of that message.
"I can see you're getting angry" or "You sound really annoyed"
- Sometimes the aggression will be maintained or even returned in a more aggressive manner. In that case try repeating your acknowledgement in a different way and add a request for the behaviour to stop.
 - Aggressor: *"Yes, of course I'm *#*#* angry!"*
 - Reply: *"Yes. I can see that. Please stop shouting and I'll try to get it sorted."*
- Imagine you're pressing the instant replay switch on a video machine. State where you stand, but say it nicely and keep on repeating where you stand. *"I can't think clearly when you're shouting. If you stop shouting I will try to help you."*
- There is no point in saying, *"Don't worry."* Better to say, *"I can see you're angry. If it was me I'd be upset too."*
- Show you are listening and keep them talking; ask if you can make a note of what is being said. (When they are talking they can't fight).
 - *"OK I think I understand. When you said... what did you mean?"*
 - *"From what you are saying I can't see any reason why..."*
- Negotiate - try talking and reassure; try to calm them down.
- Keep your voice low and calm - use adult ego state, not parent or child
- Use open questions (who, what, where, how and when).
 - Not - *"Don't you threaten me."* Better - *"Why are you threatening me?"*
- Open questions will help you see where they are coming from and find some answers.
 - *"What have I done to make you angry?"*
- Show an interest; ask if you can make a note of what is being said.
- Listen, and show you are listening by nodding; words such as 'yes' and 'I see' indicate attention - two minutes active listening can prevent 20 minutes argument.
- Be honest, don't tell lies or be sarcastic...
- Personalise it by using their favoured name.
- ...

Testimonials from the Handling Violence and Aggression at Work Training Course

"The tutor was very good – everybody was put at ease. He spent the right amount of time allocated to each section which was discussed without rushing. I can now deal with aggressive situations and know how to talk to customers." C. Williamson – Suffolk Coastal District Council

"Excellent all – round. I feel much more confident about being able to deal with confrontational situations. All the course was useful – a good balance of practical work and discussion." C. Pearn – University College for the Creative Arts

"The tutor excellently adopted the course to meet our requirements without boredom or overload. He was personable and knowledgeable. Flexibility was the key and we finished all the material in good time – including the fantastic video." P. Hall – Harvest Church

Our expert trainers have top, up-to-date, practical experience and receive exceptional feedback on their training.

For more information on any of our courses visit our website www.elitetraining.co.uk or contact, graeme@elitetraining.co.uk

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