



Tough Situations

DEGREE OF TOUGHNESS:

Tough

SITUATION:

You supervise someone who seems to constantly undermine your authority as a leader.

YOUR MISSION:

Assert your authority in a way that focuses on permanently changing his/her undermining behavior.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO OR SAY:

“When you make comments like ‘I don’t think your idea is any good,’ in front of the entire group, it undermines my authority. Statements like that are unacceptable. Don’t say things like that in front of the group. Instead, what I expect of you is that you approach me one on one and ask to speak to me about your concerns privately.”

Or:

“When you roll your eyes in response to something I or someone else says, I interpret it as a sign of disrespect. Rolling your eyes is unacceptable behavior. If you have some concern or disagree with something I’ve said I expect you to ask to speak to me about your concerns.”

After you have made a statement like one of these, then say:

“If you stop making comments like, ‘I don’t think your idea is any good,’ (or, whatever the undesired behavior was), you and I will be able to work together much more effectively. Does that make sense to you?”

WHY IT WILL WORK:

He/she may not be aware of the impact of his/her actions. Don’t assume that he/she knows better than to behave in this way. Most importantly, and this is a key point, **DON’T ALLOW**

YOUR EMOTIONS TO DICTATE YOUR RESPONSE. Don't soft-soap your approach; hit them right between the eyes (figurative). Telling someone, "You are a great employee, but you need to stop (whatever it is)" won't have the impact that a more direct approach will have on him/her.

You have to give someone an alternative option, a better way to handle their disagreements with you than he/she is currently following. Simply telling them to stop doing something, even if you say it calmly, is insufficient. It's not enough. Your mission is to not only stop something undesirable; it is to *permanently* change someone's actions from this point forward.