

Confrontational vs. Cooperative Language

Confrontational language suggests you are:

- Trying to limit the choices of the other person
- Unwilling to consider the other person's position
- Not allowing the other person to save face
- Challenging the other person to back up what s/he says
- Absolutely certain you are right
- Blaming the other person

Confrontational phrases:

- What were you thinking?
- You must have realized you made a mistake.
- I have a problem with what you did.
- That's not my problem (or my job.)
- You blew it again.
- Others...

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Cooperative language suggests you are:

- Willing to consider the other person's position
 - Recognizing you could be wrong
 - Inviting the other person to discuss rather than fight/disagree
 - Not interested in finding someone to blame
 - Trying to work with, not dictate
 - Offering choices
 - Helping the other person save face
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Cooperative phrases:

- I'm curious about...
- Can you help me understand...
- Is now a good time to talk? I have a concern I'd like to discuss with you.
- We seem to see this differently. Can we talk about it?
- I see a problem, and I'd like to see if you can solve it with me.
- Others...