



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 they say
- 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...

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

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...