

On the Edge – How to tell when to intervene

*Tools and tips to help identify and manage
workplace violence concerns*

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Overview: What we'll cover today

- Formation and Role of Behavioral Intervention Team
- Incivility & Hostility vs. Violence in the Workplace
- Recognizing Behaviors of Concern or Warning Signs of Potential Violence
- Range of Intervention Strategies
- De-escalation: What can you do?
- Resources: Where can you go for help?

Behavioral Intervention Team

- Multidisciplinary, “rapid response team” to evaluate, investigate, and respond to incidents of actual or potential workplace violence that may affect members of the UC ANR community.
- Function of the BIT is to:
 - Investigate – Assess – Advise
- Modeled after teams on UC Campuses

Behavioral Intervention Team

- Expertise and professional training in managing threats and violence in the workplace or other environments.
- Team members work together to assess reports of intimidating, threatening or violent behaviors and may suggest possible strategies to respond to such behavior.
- BIT may help to coordinate communication, internally and externally, and monitor resolution of situations.
- Work with Systemwide BIT Leadership Council to share best practices and coordinate among campuses

Behavioral Intervention Team

- ANR Team:
 - Robert Martinez (HR) – Co-Chair
 - Brian Oatman (Risk/Safety) – Co-Chair
 - Robin Sanchez (Policy)
 - Katina Ancar (Legal)
 - Rob Starkey (Psychologist, UCD ASAP)
 - Phillip Van Saun (UCOP, Risk, Security & Resilience)
- As needed, ANR BIT may coordinate with:
 - UC Police, consulting psychologists
 - ANR County/REC Directors, Statewide Program Directors, etc.

Behavioral Intervention Team

There is no system or process which accurately predicts and prevents violence.

- Can't predict violence, but threat scenarios can be managed
- Identify risk factors
- Notice and respond to behavior you see or know about
- Make connections to identify, evaluate, respond
- Implement actions to mitigate behaviors
- Monitor for changes

Behavioral Intervention Team

- Challenges for ANR
 - Geography
 - Lack some in-house resources (police, psychologist)
 - Partner with campuses, UCOP, or outside consultants as needed
 - Awareness
 - Communication

Behavioral Intervention Team

- Questions or concerns of potential threats or concerning behavior – contact behavior@ucanr.edu and a member of the team will respond.
- See website: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/BIT> for more information and resources.

Case Study



Incivility, Hostility & Violence



Incivility, Hostility & Violence

Incivility:

The most common form of problematic workplace behavior, including:

- rudeness
- mean-spirited gossip and rumor-spreading
- teasing and name-calling
- demeaning or belittling others
- chronic impatience and irritability
- discounting or ignoring the input or contributions of others
- in general, any violation of the Principles of Community

Incivility, Hostility & Violence

Hostility:

A pattern of behavior that creates a “hostile work environment”, including:

- any form of harassment (sexual or otherwise)
- stalking
- bullying
- abuses of power
- retaliation against perceived disloyalty or challenges to authority
- discrimination based on any personal or demographic attribute

Violence in the Workplace: Definitions

Intimidation: A physical or verbal act toward another person, the result of which causes that person to reasonably fear for his/her safety or the safety of others.

Threat of Violence: A physical or verbal act which threatens bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.

Act of Violence: A physical act, whether or not it causes actual bodily harm to another person or damage to the property of another.

“Behaviors of Concern”

Common events or behavior that should get attention & review:

- Threats
- Violent talk
- Loss of temper
- Bullying
- Bizarre behavior
- Uninvited contact
- Suicidal communication
- Stalking
- Boundary crossing
- Assaults
- Alarming cyber activity
- Property destruction
- Inappropriate weapons talk or bringing to worksite
- “People are afraid”

Recognizing Signs of Potential Violence

- Direct or veiled verbal threats of harm
- Homicidal and/or suicidal statements
- History of violent behavior
- Intimidates or tries to instill fear in coworkers
- Fits of rage, angry outbursts
- Disregard for the safety of co-workers
- Evidence of alcohol or other drug abuse
- Extreme interest in weapons
- Excessive interest in media reports of violence, especially workplace violence

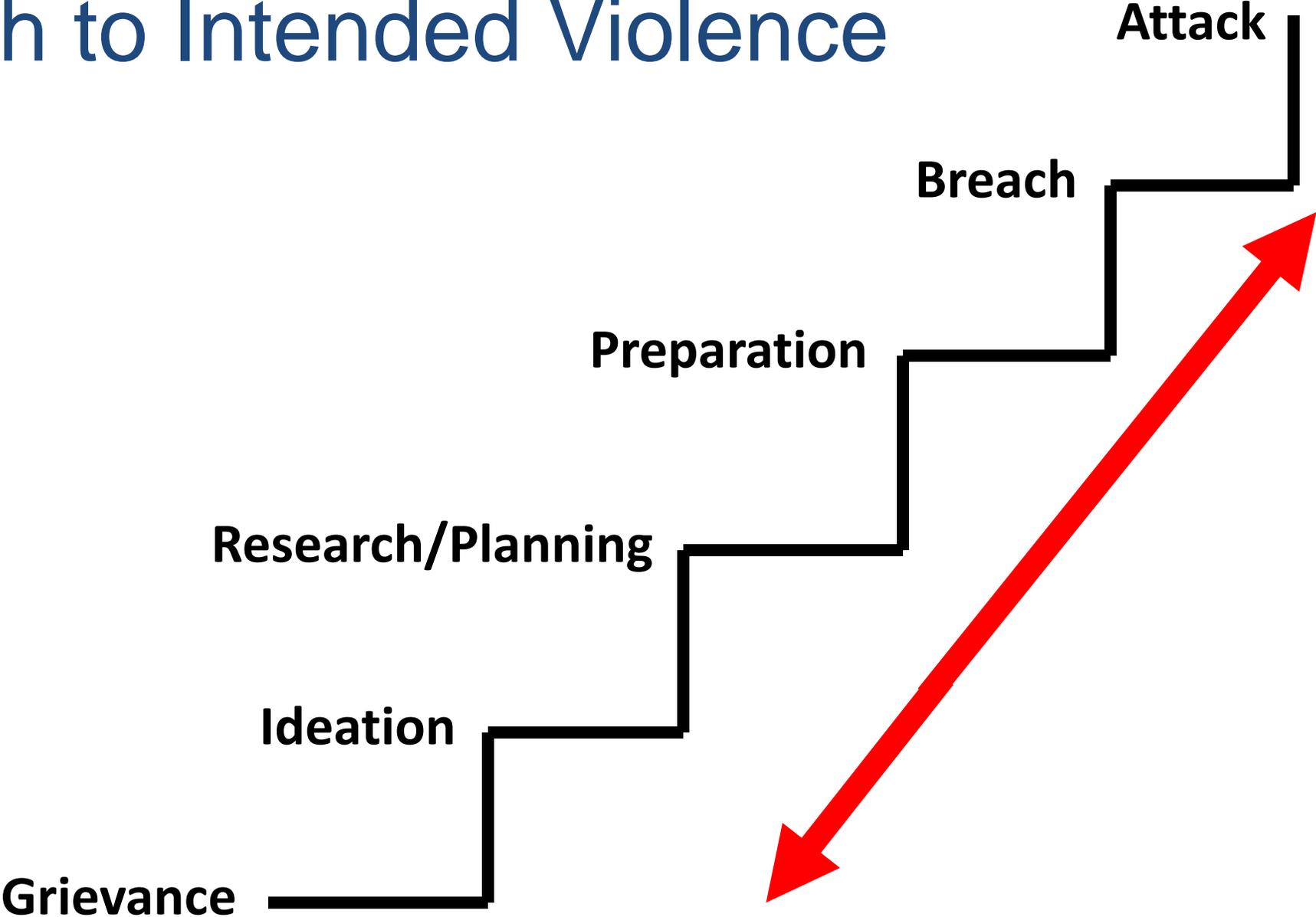
Recognizing Signs of Potential Violence

- Disgruntled employee who perceives injustice by management
- Moral righteousness – belief that organization is not following its rules
- Holding a grudge
- Verbalizes hope for something to happen to the person against whom the employee has the grudge
- Unable to take constructive criticism
- A pattern of blaming
- Feeling of persecution / paranoia
- Socially isolated
- Obsessive involvement with the job
- Verbalizes feelings of total helplessness, hopelessness and powerlessness

Two Principal Types of Violence

- ***Intended violence*** is a planned, premeditated attack on a specific target
 - Predatory
 - Targeted
 - Premeditated
 - Purposeful
- ***Impromptu violence*** is an unplanned, usually emotional, violent outburst in reaction to the circumstances of the moment.
 - Affective
 - Reactive
 - Unplanned
 - Instinctual

Path to Intended Violence



Can't predict violence, but...

- Attempts to predict violent behavior have not been successful
 - Low frequency event
 - Rarely have all the information
- Instead look to identify risk factors
- Notice and respond to behavior you see or know about
- How you understand a problem effects how you try to fix it

...threat scenarios can be managed

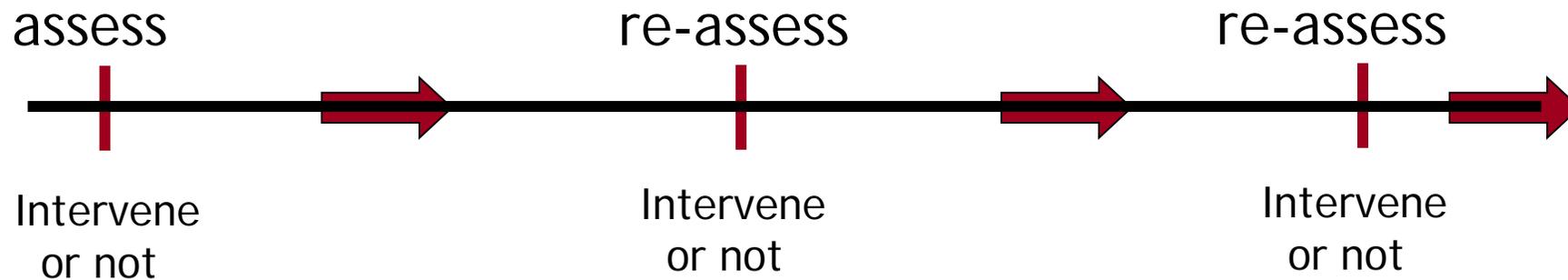
Assessing Threats is Dynamic

- Some risk factors are static
 - e.g., **history of violence, a divorce last year**
- Some risk factors are dynamic, in play
 - e.g., **anger, access to weapons, substance use**
- Some risk factors we can control/influence
 - e.g., **how an employee is separated from the organization (potential triggering event)**

Thus, assessment data unfold as we intervene and the subject reacts

Assess - Decide - Intervene

Following an individual of interest
through time and events



Human Resources Response

- ANR Principles of Community
 - Adopted in 2016
- Presidential Guidance on Abusive Conduct and Bullying
 - State legislation on abusive conduct provides helpful description of bullying (Assembly Bill 2053)
- Workplace Violence Prevention (UCOP policy)
 - prohibits acts of intimidation as well as actual or threatened violence against co-workers, students, etc.

ANR Principles of Community

Rights and Responsibilities

Members of the far-reaching UC ANR community have the right to work in an environment that promotes fairness, trust, respect, and physical and emotional safety and security.

ANR Principles of Community

- Ensure open communication
- Work together to achieve common goals and mutual understandings
- Value the contribution and worth of all members
- Appreciate and celebrate differences and diversity
- Foster a sense of belonging and emotional safety
- Practice mutual respect
- Demonstrate ethics and integrity
- Invest in all members
- Recognize that all members are important

Abusive Conduct and Bullying

- Conduct in the workplace, with malice, that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to legitimate business interests.
- Examples:
 - Persistent or egregious use of abusive, insulting, or offensive language
 - Spreading misinformation or malicious rumors
 - Behavior or language that frightens, humiliates, belittles or degrades
 - Unwarranted physical contact
- Differences of opinion, interpersonal conflicts, and occasional problems in working relations are an inevitable part of working life and do not necessarily constitute workplace bullying

Shared Responsibility

- Every member of the ANR community shares responsibility for creating and maintaining a civil and respectful workplace, free of threatening or violent behaviors.
- Any employee who is the subject of, or a witness to, suspected workplace violence or abusive conduct should report the incident to the next-in-line supervisor who is not a party to the incident.

Supervisor's Role

- Supervisors are expected to take appropriate action to investigate and, in consultation with Human Resources, take corrective action.
- Any emergency or suspected criminal conduct should be immediately reported to local law enforcement.

UC Policies: Discipline and Protection

- Any ANR employee found to be in violation of University policy may be subject to discipline pursuant to applicable University Personnel Policies or Collective Bargaining Agreements.
- Employees are protected from retaliation for truthfully reporting perceived intimidation, threats or acts of violence.

Police Response (non-emergency)

- Possible outcomes
 - Standby and preserve the peace
 - Field Interview
 - Officer's Report (documentation only)
 - Student Conduct
 - Penal Code 626.6 (a)- 7 day ban
 - Misdemeanor (most likely citation issued)
 - Felony (arrest) and booked into jail

De-escalation



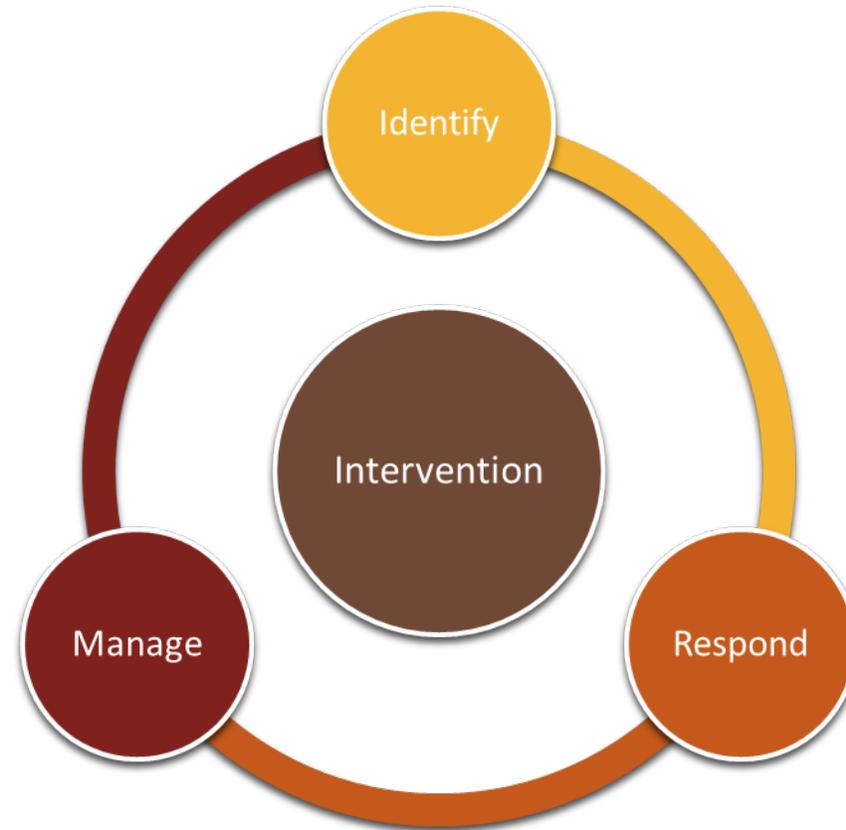
- Definition: to reduce the level or intensity of
 - Used during potentially dangerous or threatening situations to prevent persons from causing harm to self and/or harm to others.
- In a crisis, de-escalation is *abnormal*.
 - Normal response: Fight, flight, or freeze.
 - Practice the opposite until it becomes second nature. → You want to appear calm and self-assured.
- Goal of de-escalation: Reduce the level of agitation.
 - Calm the situation down enough for a rational discussion to become possible.

Factors That Can Escalate a Situation

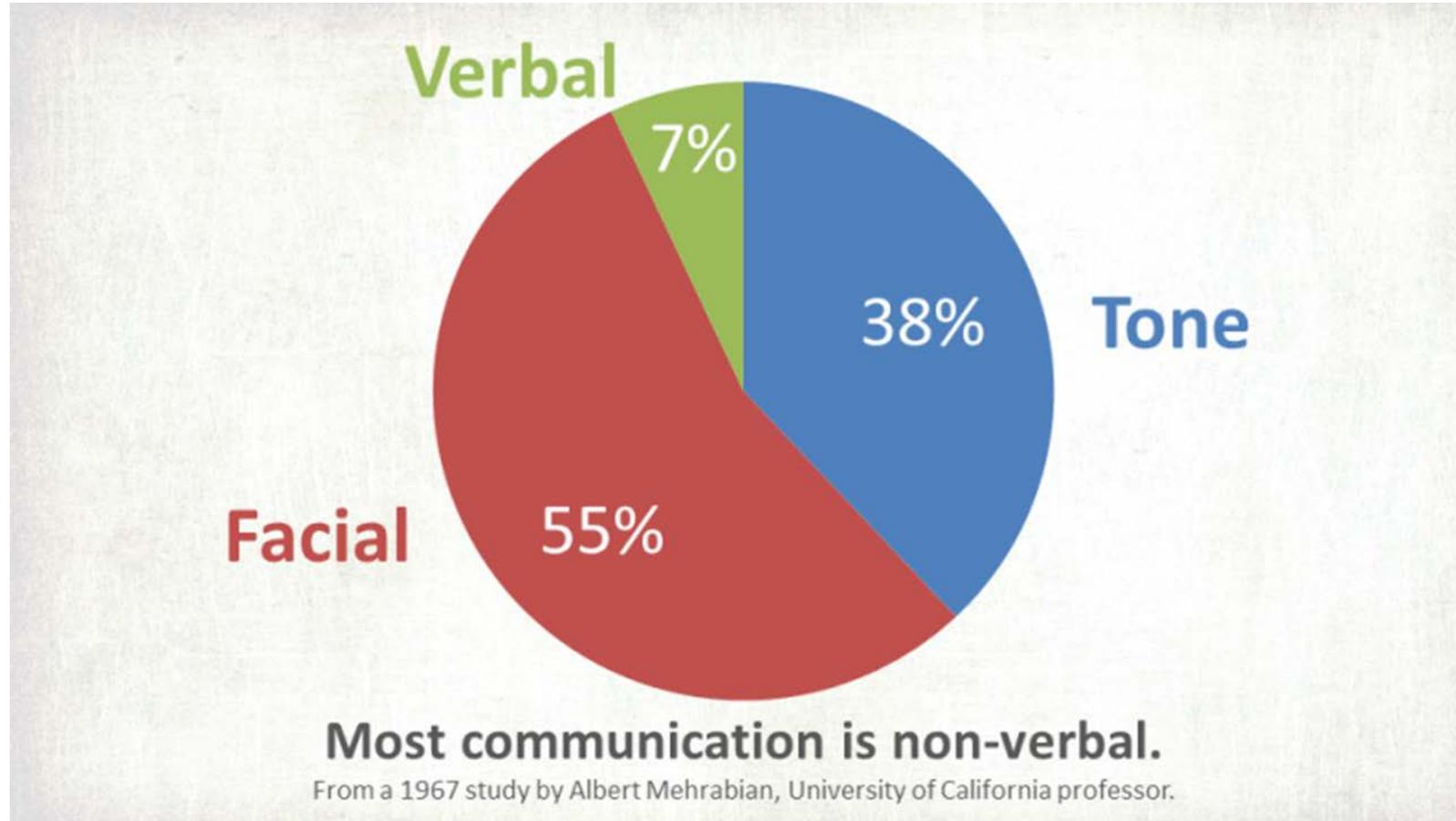
- Loss of personal power
- Fear
- Displaced anger
- Failure
- Manage self-esteem
- **Psychological or physiological causes**



Components of De-escalation



Effective Communication



What to Look Out For

Identify

- Pacing, fidgeting
- Balled fists, shaking
- Erratic movements, wild gesturing
- Aggressive posture
- Rapid speech
- Raised voice, high pitched voice



Control Yourself

Respond

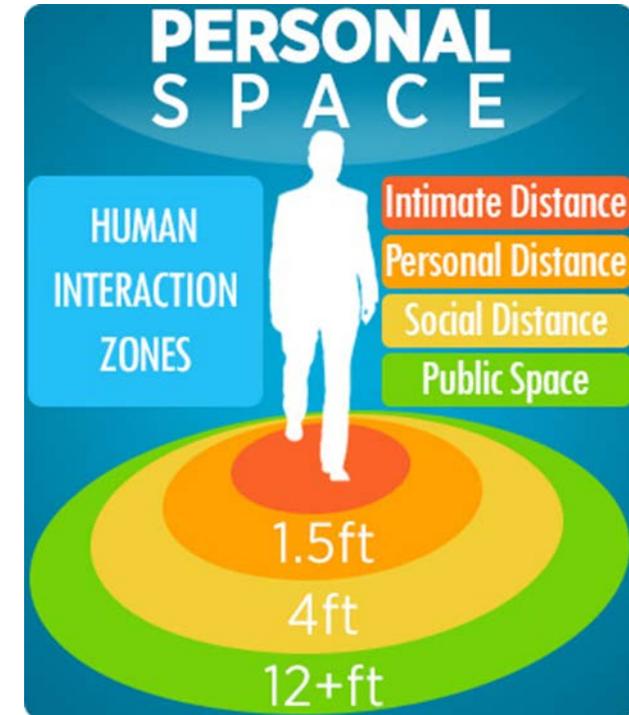
- Remember to:
 - Breathe
 - Watch your volume and tone of voice
 - Convey openness in your body language
- Do not:
 - Take things personally
 - Argue or try to convince the other person
 - Touch the other person



Control Your Environment

Respond

- Position yourself for safety
 - Keep a clear path for the exit
 - Maintain a safe distance from the other person
 - Stay at the same height as the other person
 - Always face the person, but at a 45 degree angle



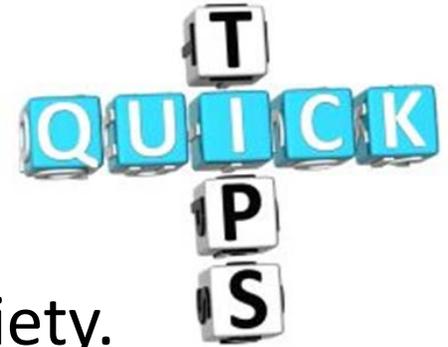
What to Say and How to Say it: LEAP



Manage

- **Listen:** focus on what the other person is saying and convey you are paying attention (e.g., head nods, saying “mm-hmm,” repeating main points).
- **Empathize:** show you are trying to understand what it is like to be in the other person’s shoes (e.g., identify emotions the person described, paraphrase said concerns).
- **Affirm:** have the other person tell you what the problem is and confirm you understand the situation correctly.
- **Plan:** partner with the other person to find alternatives/resolutions to the problem.
 - Make it manageable and concrete. Repeat the plan and have the other person agree to the course of action.

Don'ts and Do's



- Don't say, "Calm down."
- Don't smile. It can seem mocking or signal your own anxiety.
- Don't be judgmental.
- Do use the person's name from the start, and use it often.
- Do respond to informational questions, even when asked rudely.
- Do explain external controls as institutional rather than personal.

Reminders



- De-escalation does not always work.
 - You can usually tell after 2 or 3 minutes if the de-escalation is starting to work.
 - If it does seem to be working, continue being patient with the other person, and work together to find a resolution.
 - If it does not seem to be working, you always have the option to leave and call the police/security; ask another coworker for help; or ask the person to leave.
- Being calm is as contagious as fear and panic.
 - **Strategic visualization:** What are your hot buttons, your personal limits? Develop a plan and practice becoming proactive and not reactive when faced with crises. You will gain more confidence.
 - Use **positive self-talk** (e.g., telling yourself “I can deal with this” or “I know what to do”).

Resources

- ANR BIT
 - Questions or concerns of potential threats or concerning behavior – contact behavior@ucanr.edu
 - <http://ucanr.edu/sites/BIT> for more information and resources.
- UC Davis ASAP
 - <http://www.hr.ucdavis.edu/ASAP/>
 - Call 530-752-2727 to schedule an appointment