

Dealing with Disruptive People in Groups

Type	Behaviors/Effects	Possible Solutions
The Latecomer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrives late • makes big commotion • wants to be caught up • gives “reasons” why late 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • don’t confront in front of group • talk to person after session • set up “front” of room away from door • start sessions on time
The Early Leaver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaves session early • drains energy from session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • don’t confront in front of group • set norms for all straying to end of session • make sessions meaningful to end
The Broken Record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeps bringing up same point over and over • takes up valuable time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restate or write what person said • ask “Is there something else you want to add?”
The Doubting Thomas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aggressively negative • uses phrases like “It will never work.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set norms for “yes buts” • ask person if he/she could think of ways to make it work
The Dropout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sits at back of room • doesn’t say anything • corrects papers, read • disturbs presenter more than group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walk closer to him/her • establish eye contact • address questions to him/her
The Whisperer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whispers constantly to neighbor • irritating to group • breaks concentration of group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move closer and establish eye contact • confront directly, “Could I have everyone’s attention?”
The Loudmouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talks too much and too loud • dominates the session • pulls attention away from focus of session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move closer and maintain eye contact • talk with him/her after session • confront directly if behavior persists
The Know-it-All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • uses credentials, age length of service or status to argue a point “I’ve been teaching for 15 years, and that will never fly!” • limits creativity of group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acknowledge expertise <u>once</u> • give the person a job • if behavior persists, talk to person after session.
The Interrupter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • talks before others are finished • becomes impatient and overly excited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with interrupter immediately • jump in quickly and say, “Hold on Sue, let James finish what he is saying.” • speak privately to interrupter if behavior continues.