

Everyone encounters difficult people and demanding circumstances at one point or another. From an angry customer to conflict with a co-worker, here are 5 tips you can use to diffuse a challenging situation:

1 – Listen – When people are angry, they need time to vent before they are ready to listen. Show them you are listening by empathizing and asking clarifying questions.

2 – Take a breath – If you feel yourself becoming tense or angry, take a moment to calm down before you respond so that your response is practical, not emotional. Sometimes it can be helpful to take a deep breath and count to 10.

3 – Watch your tone – Nonverbal communication makes up 93% of the way we communicate. Make sure your tone and body language matches your words. If others sense sarcasm or anger, you are more likely to escalate the situation rather than diffuse it.

4 – Apologize when warranted. Sometimes people make mistakes. It is important to recognize when you do and own up to it.

5 – ACT – Strategize a solution, put a plan in place, and follow up until the issue has been resolved.

For more tips on conflict resolution or to speak with a counselor about other work/life concerns, contact National EAP at [1-800-624-2593](tel:1-800-624-2593). Your **confidential** Employee Assistance Program is provided at **no cost** to you and your family through IBEW Local 25.