
WASHINGTON HEALTH CARE RISK MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

Angry & Disruptive
Health Care Professionals:
Causes & Remedies

Presented by:

Wallace Wilkins, Ph.D.
1000 First Ave., Suite 1601
Seattle, Washington 98104
Success@Take-Risks.com
www.Take-Risks.com
(206) 284-1943

WALLACE WILKINS, Ph.D.

Wallace Wilkins serves as leadership coach, personal counselor, conflict mediator, organizational consultant and professional speaker. His practical, solution-focused services bring benefits to individuals and organizations across public and private sectors.

Leadership Coach

Wally's one-on-one coaching helps executives, managers and entrepreneurs take charge of their career advancement without unnecessary worry, procrastination or regret. New thinking strategies enable them to achieve outstanding goals without the demands of perfectionism. By maintaining can-do attitudes and win/win relationships, you can enjoy greater success and satisfaction without distress, conflicts, anger or negativity.

Organizational Consultant to Management

Wally shows how organizations can implement specific strategies to increase employee productivity and decrease workplace negativity. By examining and modifying organizational structures and operations, you can prevent conflicts, minimize stress and reduce the risk of financial losses—losses that occur when negativity and unresolved conflicts escalate into expensive grievances, disciplinary actions, healthcare costs, litigation or violence. Wally consults with you about your sensitive personnel issues.

Conflict Mediator/Trainer

Wally serves as mediator to resolve workplace conflicts—even long-standing disputes. As Senior Consultant and Master Trainer for the Resolution Resource Center, he also conducts on-site training programs. His workshops show managers how to mediate conflicts among their employees—and how to improve their own relationships. You can address conflicts early, resolve them effectively and prevent their recurrence.

Personal Counselor

As a clinical psychologist, Wally counsels adults with mood problems (depression, anxiety, anger), substance use (alcohol, tobacco, drugs, food), stress, behavior problems, impulse control, relationships and self-esteem. Clients develop insight, understanding and action steps to change their lives. They learn how to alter self-limiting behaviors, enhance self-image, improve confidence and advance their skills to deal with life's challenges.

Professional Speaker/Seminar Facilitator

Wally's practical, uplifting keynotes and skillshops are designed to enhance moods, relationships and performance at work—particularly during periods of rapid change. He writes and speaks about powerful strategies for individuals and teams to create low-stress, low-conflict, high achievement. His practical, "how-to" programs are filled with insights and peppered with humor. You can tailor-make your employee development programs and your executive retreats.

Wallace Wilkins: RECENT COACHING SERVICES TO WPHP PHYSICIANS

1. A family practice physician whose angry impatience with clinic administrators was disrupting an organizational change initiative.
2. An oncologist who was depressed and anxious after receiving alarming feedback from the hospital's executive committee about poor relationships with staff and reluctance to convert to EMR charting. This physician was also experiencing health problems, multiple family problems and financial difficulties.
3. An orthopedic surgeon who was removed from the executive committee by the hospital board for habitually yelling at administrators, colleagues and staff. Sexual involvement with a nurse had precipitated a recent divorce.
4. A cardiovascular surgeon whose PA filed a formal complaint about repeated anger, criticism and negativity—particularly during surgeries.
5. A depressed, stressed, disorganized anesthesiologist whose affiliation with a medical group had been abruptly terminated.
6. A family practice physician with angry, disruptive outbursts directed at administrators. This physician was also having difficulty charting with a new EMR system.
7. An occupational medicine physician whose harsh, perfectionistic and aggressive behaviors were disrupting the clinic's staff and patients.
8. A spine surgeon who was directing anger and dissatisfaction at the hospital's nursing staff.
9. A pediatrician with charting difficulties and questionable patient care who had received a formal complaint from a clinic MA.
10. An anesthesiologist who was required by the hospital's board to seek help in reducing angry outbursts toward administrators and nurses.
11. An anesthesiologist whose affiliation with a hospital was terminated after nurses filed complaints about disrespectful, aggressive behavior in the OR.
12. A family practice physician who threw a Kleenex box at a nurse during a staff meeting. This angry outburst resulted in a union grievance for a hostile work environment.
13. A surgeon who became very anxious and meticulous after having been named in two lawsuits. Excessive slowness during surgery was disrupting the hospital's surgery schedule and relationships with OR staff.

FOUR PARTIAL CAUSES OF ANGER, STRESS, DISRUPTIONS

1. BIOLOGY: Genetic, physiological factors.
2. PAST: Your childhood experiences.
3. EXTERNAL: Negative people, unwelcome incidents, turmoil.
4. INTERNAL: Your beliefs, perspectives, thoughts and attitudes.

$$\underline{\text{C}}\text{ATALYSTS} + \underline{\text{P}}\text{ERSPECTIVES} = \underline{\text{R}}\text{ESULTS}$$

CATALYSTS

Situations, happenings, events and cues that attract your attention

PERSPECTIVES

Attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, viewpoints and self-talk about Catalysts

RESULTS

Emotional and behavioral consequences of applying Perspectives to Catalysts

High confidence in a perspective creates the Illusion of a fact.

We don't struggle with our problems.

We struggle with our solutions.

ADVANTAGES OF ANGER & DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Identify the advantages that angry people gain from their anger and hostility. These will be the anticipated costs to them when they eliminate their anger.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

VIOLATING AN ENFORCEABLE ENTITLEMENT CAN PROMPT:
ANGER, RESENTMENT, GRUDGES, CONFLICTS & NEGATIVITY

Earned & Non-Earned Entitlements

- ___ Entitlement to Respect
 - ___ Entitlement to Courtesy
 - ___ Entitlement to Politeness
- ___ Entitlement to Control
 - ___ Entitlement to Authority & Power
 - ___ Entitlement to Obedience
- ___ Entitlement to Accurate & Timely Information
- ___ Entitlement to a Predictable Future—No Surprises!
- ___ Entitlement to High-Quality Performance & Products
- ___ Entitlement to Freedom from Control & Supervision
- ___ Entitlement to Fairness & Justice
- ___ Entitlement to Be Recognized, Appreciated & Valued
 - ___ Entitlement to Be Included in Decisions
 - ___ Entitlement to Be Heard
 - ___ Entitlement to Rewards for Excellence
- ___ Entitlement to Peace—No Aggravations, Interruptions or Stress
- ___ Entitlement to Privacy
- ___ Entitlement to Safety
- ___ Entitlement to Capable, Reliable, Knowledgeable, Well-Motivated People—No
Numbskulls, Idiots, Jerks or Stinkers!
- ___ Entitlement to _____

Recall a recent situation where you became angry. Identify the Enforceable Entitlements that were violated in that situation.

How will you modify your thinking so that you will pursue your aspirations without believing that you are entitled to have them fulfilled?

COST\$ OF WORKPLACE ANGER, CONFLICTS & DISRUPTIONS

1. Decreased Performance Quality
 - Lowered Motivation, Morale & Commitment
 - Decreased Innovation & Creativity
 - Reduced Decision-Making Quality
 - Accident Proneness
 - Workarounds to Avoid Contact with Angry People
 - Passive Aggressive Behavior
2. Lost Work Time (Opportunity Costs)
 - Time Spent Complaining and/or Listening to Complaints
 - Absenteeism Due to Conflicts, Stress
 - “On-Site Absenteeism” Due to Anger, Worry, Anxiety
3. Employee Turnover
 - Loss of Dollars (150% of total annual compensation)
 - Loss of Skills, Loss of Knowledge, Institutional Memory
 - Recruiting & Training Costs to Replace Employees
4. Decreased Management Productivity (Opportunity Costs)
 - Time Spent Investigating & Intervening
 - Disciplinary Hearings, Grievance Procedures
 - Organizational Restructuring
5. Healthcare Costs
 - Stress-Related Physical Illness
 - Workers' Compensation for “Soft” Injuries
 - Counseling for Stress, Depression, Sleep Disturbance, Alcohol & Drug Abuse
 - Increased Insurance Premiums
6. Sabotage, Theft, Damage, Blackmail
 - Repair & Replacement Costs
 - Computer Crimes (80% committed by an organization’s own employees)
 - Management Time to Investigate Retaliations (Opportunity Costs)
 - Increased Security Measures
7. Violence at Work
8. Damage to Organizational from Negative Image & Reputation
 - Reduced Confidence by Customers & the Public
 - Awareness of Shortcomings by Regulators
 - Image to Prospective Employees
9. Employee-Initiated Lawsuits for a Hostile Workplace
 - Legal Defense Costs—even for Frivolous Claims
 - Damages & Awards
 - Organizational Posturing as a Legal Defense

USE THE BUSINESS REASON TO FORM A COACHING TRIANGLE

The purpose of your coaching is not to find fault or blame. It is to work toward a solution that will benefit the organization—the **Business Reason** for behavior change.

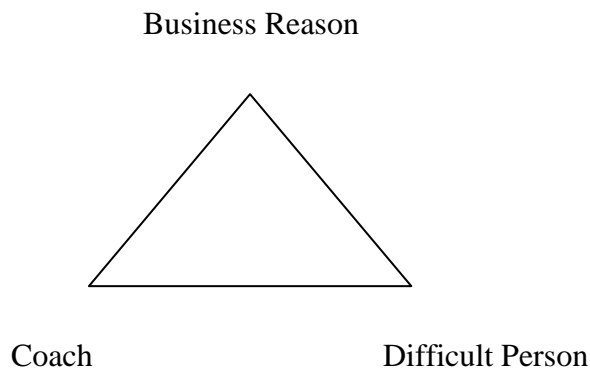
The **Business Reason** reflects the organizational costs that the unwanted behavior causes. It defines the primary agenda item for your coaching sessions.

The **Business Reason** changes the focus of your relationship from “Me versus You” to “You and I working together to increase organizational success.” The **Business Reason** offers a degree of face-saving for the difficult person to change.

Which assertion is most likely to engage a disruptive individual?

- You gotta quit doing that.
- Your conduct is unacceptable.
- Our organization cannot afford to tolerate your behavior
- You have to improve your attitude.
- Our organization needs your help in solving a business problem.
- You're the problem that needs fixing.

Use the **Business Reason** to establish and maintain the **Coaching Triangle**:



COACHING CHECKLIST

- Specify the **Business Reason**. Identify the costs to the organization if the difficult behavior persists. Describe the benefits to the organization for changing the behavior.
- Localize the specific situations in which the unwanted behavior is likely to occur.
- Ask how that person can change in order to reduce the costs and increase the success of the organization. What method or strategy does that person plan to implement? (If you order the difficult person to change, your demand might be perceived controlling and disrespectful.)
- Identify what barriers may impede success. What would make it difficult to adopt the new, positive behavior? Ask how the individual plans to overcome those barriers.
- Identify any additional, available resources that can help the difficult individual to change in order to benefit the organization.
- Identify any additional incentives for the difficult individual to change.
- Offer personal resources that you can provide to the difficult individual to help that person to change in order to benefit the organization.

How _____ ?

What _____ ?

How _____ ?

High Self-Confidence Can Increase Your Distress and Impede Your Advancement

SELF-CONFIDENCE: People who are highly self-confident believe:

Four factors artificially inflate a person's self-confidence: **EARP** (rhymes with burp)

Ego

"I'm right. Don't bother me with your flimsy opinions. I don't need to consider them, because I'm right."

Arrogance

"I'm right and I'm superior to you. You are so inferior to me that I don't even want to be in the same room with you or anyone like you, because I'm arrogant."

Righteousness

"In my conflicts, I hold the principled position. Unlike my adversaries, I am virtuous, moral and ethical. My point-of-view represents a higher standard than my opponent's. If my adversaries think they are morally correct, that just shows how wrong and reprehensible they are, because I have the righteous position."

Pride

"I'm proud of myself and my accomplishments. I've invested too much in my position to change my mind now. Even if it's not working, I'm committed to my position. I'm not going to swallow my pride and admit there's a better way, because I'm proud."

1. Which of the four components of EARP within yourself will be your biggest challenge to handle?

2. What are your commitments and action steps to reduce your EARP and increase your success?

THREE STEPS TO GRACEFUL SUCCESS

1. Accept things exactly as they are in the present.

Accept yourself exactly as you are.

Accept your world and other people exactly as they are.

2. Strive to improve things for the future. . .

Strive to improve yourself.

Strive to improve your world.

3. . . . without demanding that your efforts be successful.

The most recent time that you became distressed and rejecting, which step did you overlook?

How will you modify your thinking strategies so that you will not become distressed and rejecting in future situations?

Pulse 2001

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Overdoing Self-Confidence: Check Your EARP

By Wallace Wilkins

Optimal performance is not just high achievement. Optimal performance is high achievement with minimal distress.

High self-confidence usually enhances your career. Executives, managers, and entrepreneurs strive to maintain high levels of this attribute. They often generate greater success when they project self-confidence to their employees, customers, and colleagues.

You can, however, overdo a personal trait, including self-confidence. Some people inappropriately project artificially high levels of self-confidence. Unwarranted self-confidence can result in low performance.

Can you identify colleagues whose high level of self-confidence causes them to repeat their unsuccessful patterns and undermine their advancement? Wouldn't they enjoy greater support from their colleagues, customers, and vendors if they weren't so annoyingly sure of themselves?

We can more easily observe artificially high self-confidence in other people than we can in ourselves. We can see around other people's corners easier than we can see around our own. High self-confidence makes it especially difficult to see around our own corners.

How can you tell when you're over-expressing your self-confidence? It usually shows up along four dimensions: Ego, Arrogance, Righteousness, and Pride. Together, they spell EARP, which rhymes with burp. Check out these dimensions to see if any fit for you.

Ego sounds like this: "I'm right. Don't bother me with your opinions. I don't need to consider them, because I'm right."

Arrogance sounds like this: "I'm right and I'm much better off than you. You are inferior to me. I don't even want to be in the same room with you or anyone like you, because I'm better than you."

Righteousness sounds like this: "In my conflicts, I always hold the principled position. My point-of-view represents a higher standard than my opponent's. Unlike my adversaries, I am moral and ethical. If my adversaries think they are morally correct, that just shows how wrong and reprehensible they are, because I'm the one who's right."

Pride sounds like this: "I've invested too much in my position to change my mind now. Even if it's not working, I'm committed to my position. I'm not going to swallow my pride and admit there's a better way, because I'm too proud."

High levels of EARP can block your success, maintain your conflicts, and undermine your career. Even small amounts of EARP can perpetuate your blind spots and mis-perceptions.

Have you ever observed files repeatedly striking a pane of glass? They approach the window in the same unsuccessful manner over and over again. Have you ever left work with that feeling? Like you've been hitting a wall that just won't move? When people repeat the

same unsuccessful behavior, it's usually because they confidently believe their performance is optimal.

Optimal performance is not just high achievement. Optimal performance is high achievement with minimal distress. Aggravations and conflicts are signals that your performance may not be optimal even if your achievements are maximal.

If you end your workday feeling aggravated and distressed, it may be time for you to examine your EARP. Unlike files, you can learn new skills to get around the pane. The process may start with reducing your EARP and your self-confidence.

As you read about the four qualities of EARP (Ego, Arrogance, Righteousness, Pride), did you recognize any of those features in yourself? If you did, it's a good sign. Since your EARP artificially inflates your self-confidence, recognizing those four factors is a preliminary step to modifying them. Use them as indicators to see around your own corner.

Wally Wilkins serves as workshop leader, licensed psychologist, and personal coach for successful managers, executives, and entrepreneurs. He speaks coast-to-coast and internationally about powerful strategies for individuals and organizations to create low-stress, low-conflict, optimal achievement. Contact Wally at (206) 284-1943 or Success@Take-Risks.com. Visit his website at www.Take-Risks.com.

