



Dealing with difficult people can be awkward and draining. The solutions however, can often be simple using your emotional intelligence.

### The non deliverer

You ask them to do something, they agree, their response is always positive and willing, but you know that they won't do what they promised. You ask: "Will you set up a meeting with...." When you check back they either deny that they were asked to do it or they have an excuse – not enough time – were busy – it slipped their mind!

Next time you ask for something to be done try asking **when**. "I need you to set up a meeting with...., **when** can you do this by?" Committing someone to a timeframe helps them to visualise fitting the task into their schedule and can establish early on whether there might be a problem, or whether they might need help to achieve it.

### Too easy going – or just frustrating!

You are asking for suggestions or preferences – "When shall we have the next team meeting?" – the response is "I don't mind" You suggest Monday – they pull a face and say "I'm not keen on that" so you say "OK, Wednesday morning?" they reply "I'm not so sure" and so on – **frustrating!** This is an example of someone not knowing or not committing to what they want, they can only react against suggestions. Their minds probably work differently to yours. Some people find it easier to describe what they don't want rather than what they do.

Next time, try asking what they **wouldn't** like or **can't** do and you will establish their preferences faster by a process of elimination.

### It's always someone else's fault

They are late – but it was "public Transports fault", the deadline was missed, but "so and so didn't return my call" or simply "it wasn't me!" Not only have you to deal with the situation but you also have to deal with their avoidance of responsibility.

Be **calm**, refer to their **behaviour** and the **impact** that it has "When you are late I feel pressured as I have to deal with your work as well as my own". Then discuss what you can *both* do to make things better – leave earlier – alter work hours.....

## Use emotional intelligence to foster better relationships



**Count to 10** – it's better to respond belatedly than inappropriately



**Stand in their shoes** – empathise with their perspective, their communications style, their values



**Know your mind** – make sure you are clear about what it is you want and that you have conveyed this clearly – check for understanding



**Respect** – you don't have to agree with others' opinions, but they have a right to them and it is your responsibility to show respect for them

