

## What to Say When Colleagues Blow Up

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### **This is no fun!**



It's happened to all of us...a colleague gets mad. Either they blow up or clam up.

What to do?

### **Practice POWER LISTENING!**

Use the acronym: AMPP

**Ask** Meaning invite your colleague to express himself, i.e.:

1. "What's going on?"
2. "I'd really like to hear your opinion on this."
3. "Please let me know if you see things differently."

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**Mirror** Describe how they look or feel, such as:

1. “You seem angry at me.”
2. “You say you are okay, but by the tone of your voice, you seem upset.”

**Paraphrase** Acknowledge the other person’s point of view by putting what you heard into your own words. This is not parroting:

Example: “Let’s see if I’ve got this right. You’re upset because...”

**Prime** Sometimes people will just not open up and tell you their feelings even though you know they have something to share. In that case, take your best guess at what they may be thinking:

Example: “Are you thinking that....?”

## **REMEMBER YOUR ABC’S!**

**Agree** - Most arguments focus on the 5 to 10 per cent of the facts and stories that we disagree over. So, start with all the points you can agree on and stop arguing.

**Build** - If you agree with part of what someone has said, BUILD. Rather than saying, “Wrong! You forgot to mention...,” skilled people agree and then build by saying, “Absolutely. In addition, I noticed that...”

**Compare** - Finally, if you really do disagree, COMPARE your two views rather than suggesting that the other person is WRONG, i.e., “I think I see things differently. Let me describe how.”

*Adapted from: Crucial Conversation Tools for Talking When Stakes are High, by Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler.*

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