



Volume 1, Issue 2

Kiernan
Consulting

Driving business profitability through people.
908-852-0291

How to Disagree Without Being Disagreeable

Do you have what it takes to disagree without being disagreeable? When you disagree with someone at work, ask questions such as these to help move the debate into a problem-solving dialogue:

The goal of Kiernan Consulting is to help employers get the most and best from their employees.

Services include group or individual coaching, organizational assessments and planning, training, and employee relations consultations.

Kiernan Consulting welcomes you to distribute (or post) this newsletter as a “staff tip” for managers and/or employees.

- **Visualizing:** “Could you give me an example or analogy?”
- **Exploring:** “Can you tell me more about why you feel so strongly about this issue?”
- **Summarizing:** “Is this what you mean to say? ...”
- **Challenging:** “Doesn’t that go against what you said before?”
- **Coaching:** “Could you express your ideas less personally?”
- **Connecting:** “Doesn’t that point connect to what I said earlier?”
- **Reorienting:** “I think we’re getting off the track here. Are we discussing the real issue?”
- **Uniting:** “Why are we discussing this issue? What do we have in common?”
- **Problem solving:** “What are some possible solutions?”
- **Mediating:** “What would it take to resolve our differences?”

The next time you disagree with someone, keep these “**nots**” in mind:

- **Hearing is not listening.** Many workplace disputes begin – or get worse – because people hear what others say, but they’re not really listening. The three basics of good listening: Clear your mind of distractions. Concentrate on the words. Pay careful attention to the nonverbal gestures, including voice tone.
- **Acknowledging is not agreeing.** Use acknowledgement phrases to recognize others’ positions and feelings. “I understand why you’re upset.” “If I’ve got this right, you believe we should.....” “That’s an interesting idea. Let’s look at it in more depth.”
- **Acknowledging is not yielding.** Once you acknowledge others’ views, it’s your turn to present yours. Offer constructive criticism and allow others to challenge you the way you challenged them. **Possible approach:** “I’ve listened to your views, and now I’d like you to hear what I have to say, OK? I doubt that plan will work, but here’s what we can do....”



www.kiernanconsulting.com
Louise@kiernanconsulting.com