



# Managing Complaints

How do you deal with team member complaints? Do you ignore them? Avoid them? Overreact to them? Or do you treat them as a way to solidify the team and improve team member self-esteem? Your own perception is not as important as the team member's view of the problem. What may seem trivial to you could be very serious to the team member. So, all complaints must be treated with fairness and dignity. Some complaints may appear to be minor—just irritations that might go away with time—but they will probably build up into larger problems. A small sore can fester and become a major wound. Also, a complaint is often a sign of a team member who is unmotivated

and, therefore, unproductive. Other complaints are serious to begin with, threatening the work environment. These can go from being an open wound to a fatality in terms of productivity and teamwork. It's important to see complaints as chances to enhance your relationship with team members. The simple act of listening to and really hearing the complaint goes a long way toward making the team member feel important. However, listening is not enough. In fact, if you listen and do nothing, the situation will get even worse. Instead, you need to deal with the issues and solve the problem, if possible.

## Impact

**Managers and team leaders will be able to:**

**Understand** why all team member complaints must be dealt with rather than ignored or dismissed.

**Demonstrate skills which are** more sensitive to all the problems...minor or trivial, real or imagined...that can lie behind complaints.

**Use** effective techniques to determine underlying problems...which are not always the same as those the team member thinks are responsible for his/her difficulties.

**Use** effective techniques to solve such problems while maintaining a positive relationship with the team

## Who In Your Organization Will Benefit?

Leaders at all levels in both office and industrial locations.

## Description

Leaders often hear team member complaints. And though sometimes they may seem unimportant, each complaint should be addressed and resolved. This module develops the skills to resolve simple complaints and identify the hidden agendas that so often underlie the chronic grievances.

## Course Length and Format

**Dealing With Complaints** is an interactive, 4-hour group workshop designed for 6-15 participants. The workshop includes:

- Video presentations of case studies.
- Group discussions that open opportunities to exchange views, experiences, and ideas.
- Exercises to develop and transfer skills.
- Extensive practice and role-plays.
- Immediate feedback and critique of the team leader's use of the skills and techniques taught in the workshop.

This module assumes the participants have acquired the skills from both the Essential Skills of Leadership and the Essential Skills of Communicating prior to this module.

## Course Materials

### **Facilitator Guide**

- Complete instructions on how to conduct the workshop.
- Explanatory text for the trainer, sample trainer narrative, transcripts of video segments and facilitation notes.
- Facilitator Resource CD-ROM containing PowerPoint presentation, additional resources, and reproducible pages from the facilitator guide as well as entire participant workbook.

### **Participant Workbook**

- Exercises, forms, skill practice aids, and a video synopsis.
- Job Aids section with tools and resources for applying the skills learned in the workshop.
- Memory Jogger Card providing a handy reminder of the workshop's skill points.

### **Video**

- Introduction followed by a scenario displaying positive use of the skill points discussed in the program.
- Video segments focusing on modeling positive behaviors for skill practices.
- Scenarios in both office and industrial settings.

## **About our Publisher**



Vital Learning's award winning programs have successfully helped organizations develop supervisors, leaders and front-line managers for over 20 years. The Vital Learning Leadership Series offers the most comprehensive and practical curriculum for building the management skill set required by 21<sup>st</sup> century managers.

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**Professional Development Associates, 866-230-3131; 325-692-1936; Fax: 866-673-6409**  
[www.prodevelop.com](http://www.prodevelop.com); [budc@prodevelop.com](mailto:budc@prodevelop.com)

