

Maintain your wits during conflict

Conflicts in the workplace are inevitable, but you can keep them from ruling your day. Follow these tips to maintain your control when conflict threatens to take over:

Focus on your work. When a conflict, such as a disagreement with a co-worker, occurs, dive into your work. Create a prioritized to-do list, and don't stop working until you complete it. You will be too busy to dwell on the conflict.

Stick to the facts. Conflicts tend to blow up when one person exaggerates or injects their own biases or opinions. Instead, describe the situation using neutral, honest objective terms. *Example:* Instead of "You're so unprofessional!" say "You missed the meeting, and the client decided to cancel because he was expecting the both of us."

Take notes. When a problem arises, draft a few notes of what was said, the situation leading up to it, the apparent root of the conflict and so on. Not only can that help you understand what went wrong, but if you need to discuss the issue again with the co-worker, your boss or HR, you will have a frame of reference for the discussion.

— Adapted from ["3 Ways to Gain Control of Yourself in Workplace Conflict,"](#) Lynette Reed, www.business.com.