

# Before you speak to HR, do this

Sometimes no matter how hard you try, you can't resolve a conflict with a co-worker or supervisor.

That's when you should turn to HR for support, guidance and coaching. However, don't run off to the HR department half-cocked and full of fury. Instead, take these steps to ensure that you have a productive conversation—and a quick resolution.

**Take a moment to compose yourself.** Take some time to calm down, gather the facts and get your story straight. Jot down some notes, describe steps you've already taken, and state specifically how you want to resolve the problem. Don't omit your part in the conflict, hoping to sway the HR representative to your side. Tell the whole truth. It will come out anyway.

**Speak only for yourself.** Complaining that the person "abuses everyone" or that "the entire team is unhappy" is likely untrue. Even referencing just one or two other people can backfire if they don't want to be involved. When a HR representative speaks to them, they may not support your claims. It's best to just focus on what you have observed and how you have been affected. Don't bring other people into it.

**Create some action steps.** You should have a resolution in mind, but you should also have a plan to reach that resolution. And you can't expect the other person to do all the work. You play a role in the conflict, and you're responsible for resolving it too.

As a final thought, consider sleeping on it. In the heat of the moment, it may seem worth it to involve HR. After you cool down, you may find that you can manage the conflict on your own.

— Adapted from ["Help Me Help You: Five Tips for Resolving Conflicts With Help From HR,"](#) Tracy Bittner, Forbes, [www.forbes.com](http://www.forbes.com).