De-escalation and Conflict Resolution

Stay Calm. Lower the Temperature. Stay Safe.

De-escalation & Conflict Resolution: Skills & Action Checklist

Use this checklist with the De-escalation and Conflict Resolution online course. Check the habits you'll practice, and fill in your phrases and plan. No technique works every time, and you are never required to stay in danger. Educational only; not legal advice. Follow your employer's or organization's policies and emergency plans, and local laws. In an emergency, call 911.

Mindset

- ☐ Safety first, mine and others'. Calm over correct. I don't have to win
- ☐ Respect and dignity go a long way
- ☐ The best de-escalation is often the conflict I never step into. Leaving is not losing

Avoid the Confrontation Altogether

- ☐ I watch for rising aggression: raised voice, tense body, pacing, closing distance, a fixed stare
- ☐ I don't engage: I don't argue back, don't "just say one thing," and don't match their energy
- ☐ I use my outs: another line, another door, wait in the car, cross the street, or come back later
- ☐ When I notice tension, I move so I have a clear path out. Ego is not a reason to stay
- ☐ If I have a duty to stay (work, family, kids with me), I still keep my exit. Leaving later is still an option

Manage Yourself First

- ☐ I notice my stress response: fight, flight, or freeze; racing heart; tunnel vision; clumsy hands and cloudy thinking
- ☐ Box breathing: in 4, hold 4, out 4, hold 4. I pause before I respond
- ☐ I know my own triggers, and I don't take the bait

My personal triggers:

What I'll say to myself to stay calm:

Nonverbal Skills

- ☐ I give space: stay beyond arm's reach; don't corner them or get cornered; keep a clear path to an exit
- ☐ I stand at a slight angle, relaxed and balanced; hands visible, open, and out of pockets
- ☐ I don't touch an upset person. Neutral, attentive face and natural eye contact, not a stare
- ☐ I speak lower and slower, in short, simple sentences. I don't match their volume

Verbal Skills

[1] Listen: let them talk, reflect back, ask open-ended questions, and summarize before solving

[2] Empathy is recognition, not agreement: "I can see this is really frustrating."

[3] Offer two or three real choices I can actually deliver: "Would you prefer this, or that?"

[4] Set a clear, respectful limit: name the behavior, state the consequence as a choice, and follow through

- ◆ I won't say: "Calm down," "That's our policy" as the whole answer, "You need to…," a flat "I don't know," sarcasm, blame, or arguing facts at the peak

My go-to phrases (I'll practice these out loud):

© 2026 Train Protect Defend. All rights reserved.

info@trainprotectdefend.com | 940-222-8534 | trainprotectdefend.com

De-escalation and Conflict Resolution

Stay Calm. Lower the Temperature. Stay Safe.

When De-escalation Isn't Working

- ☐ It's failing when: intensity keeps rising, there are threats, a weapon or hands move to a pocket or waistband, someone closes distance or blocks my exit, or my gut says go
- ☐ I use a polite exit line, move toward exits, people, and help, and put barriers between us
- ☐ Immediate danger: call 911 and give my location first. At work: security or management; I know the codes and panic buttons
- ☐ If I'm a bystander: my safety first; get help; distract or interrupt only if it's safe; be a good witness
- ☐ Successful de-escalation, or leaving early, can prevent or reduce the need for any force. Force includes striking, grabbing, or threatening with pepper spray. For Texas law, take Carry Right

At Work, Afterward, and My Plan

- ☐ Angry customer: acknowledge first, then solve; focus on what I can do; bring in a manager early
- ☐ Coworker conflict or harassment goes to my manager or HR; threats or violence go to security or 911
- ☐ Phone and email: I slow down, keep it brief and factual, switch to a call when it helps, and save threats
- ☐ I document facts as soon as it's safe: who, what, when, where, exact words, witnesses, and actions taken
- ☐ Afterward, I talk with someone I trust, a pastor or a Christian counselor, or my EAP. In crisis, I call or text 988
- ☐ I'll practice three key phrases out loud this week and review my workplace procedures

At work, I call for help by contacting (name, number, or code):

My exit plan for the place I'm most likely to face conflict:

Next Steps: TPD Courses

- Situational Awareness: notice early, plan ahead, and avoid the confrontation when you can.
- Active Threat Awareness: Prepare, Escape, Restrict, Defend, when talking is no longer the tool.
- Safer at Home: habits and hardening, including a difficult-neighbor plan.
- Carry Right: Texas law if you may have to use force.

Questions or tech support: call or text 940-222-8534 or email info@trainprotectdefend.com. Visit trainprotectdefend.com.

© 2026 Train Protect Defend. All rights reserved.