

Possible Snags and Solutions - Responding to difficult behaviour

Rambling: wandering around and off the subject

- Restate the relevant point to refocus attention, or ask them to summarize their point
- Direct question to the group that is back on the subject
- Ask how the topic relates to the topic being discussed

Shyness or Silence: lack of participation

- Give strong positive reinforcement for any contribution
- Ask students questions directly; make eye contact

Talkativeness: manipulation, whining, knowing everything

- Give limited time to express viewpoint or feelings
- Make eye contact with another participant and move toward that person
- Say "That's an interesting point. Now, let's see what other people think."

Sharp shooting: deliberate comments aimed at "shooting you down" or confusing your point

- Admit that you do not know the answer and redirect the question to the group or the individual who asked.
- Acknowledge that this is a joint learning experience.
- Ignore the behaviour

Heckling/Arguing: disagreeing with everything you say; making personal attacks

- Recognize participant's feelings and move on, "It looks like we disagree", now lets hear from the others
- Acknowledge positive points

Grandstanding: getting caught up in one's own agenda or thoughts to the detriment of the others in the class

- Say "You are entitled to your own opinion, but now it's time we moved on to the next subject" or "We'd like to hear more about that if there is time after the presentation"

Side Conversations: may be related to the subject or may be personal. This distracts the group and the presenter.

- Don't embarrass the talkers
- Casually move towards the talkers and make eye contact with them
- Stand near the talkers and ask a near-by participant a question so that the new discussion is near the talkers

