

## **Resolving Conflicts in The Real World for Public Organizations**

What could be more peaceful than working in the library? And what should be more peaceful than your local school? Actually the truth is libraries, municipal offices, schools, social service organizations, anywhere where management and employees come face to face with the public can be very stressful places to work. All of these places have one thing in common the possibility of dealing with an irate sometimes even violent "guest".

Everyone also knows that conflicts in the work place are never just between employees and the public. A conflict starts with any two people, and that can also mean between co-workers and supervisors as well. In the high stress environment of public or municipal organizations such interpersonal conflicts between employees can be very common. Behavioral science professionals suggest that almost all conflict resolution training starts with identifying your personality type and developing an understanding of how it helps or gets in the way of your resolving your disputes or differences with others.

Well-known motivational trainer and keynote speaker Edmond Otis, a new resident of New Zealand, has developed comprehensive training programs for conflict resolution that have been implemented by schools, social organizations, and libraries throughout the USA. Says Mr. Otis in his *Dealing With Difficult People: Making Schools Safe and Sane* program; teamwork, clarity and consistency are the keys to conflict resolution in the public arena. The goal of Mr. Otis's approach is to teach the public organization how to develop a facility wide culture to deal with challenging people and situations. One of the keys to disarming conflicts before they escalate is to learn how to distinguish difficult people from dangerous people.

According to experts in communication and interpersonal relationships such as Mr. Otis, conflict resolution and positive customer relations in the public sector requires a team approach ensuring that all employees are on the same page and act cooperatively. Everyone in the public organization must have clarity and fully understand the rules and acceptable standards of behavior. And there must be consistency. Policies as regards customer service and conflict resolution must be reinforced the same way every time.

A recent study published by the National Association of Social Workers concluded that initiating conflict resolution skill building in schools, libraries, and other social settings can curb the tendency toward extreme acts of violence. The study stated that training about conflict resolution and knowledge of non-violent means to resolve conflict facilitated a more positive environment and reduced the frequency of violent confrontations.

*Edmond Otis is a keynote speaker and motivational trainer dedicated to giving entrepreneurs, business owners, and key executives the tools they need for success. He has recently reallocated with his family from California to Hawkes Bay New Zealand. To learn more about his services to go [www.EdmondOtis.co.nz](http://www.EdmondOtis.co.nz)*