



THE ULTIMATE LEADER GUIDE

6 Strategies to Fix People Problems
or Avoid them Altogether



I AM SO GLAD YOU TOOK ACTION AND DOWNLOADED THE ULTIMATE LEADER GUIDE!

My name is Annie Perdue-Olson and I am passionate about showing leaders the way through people problems and messy team dynamics to work better together. Nothing gets in the way of accomplishing mission more than the people problems that unravel before our very eyes.

When people are working better together there is a sharing of ideas that inspires innovation, a mutual accountability that accelerates performance, and a sharing of resources that spreads everything a little bit further!

I have been through a few messy situations myself and they are not easy! From knowing how to address the problem, through the unexpected dynamics that catch us off guard, to the head scratching moments where we are unsure about what to do next. I can guide you through all of that!

Let's get to it!

Annie

PS. Follow me on Facebook right here: <https://www.facebook.com/leadingbettertogether>

THE ULTIMATE LEADER GUIDE:

6 STRATEGIES TO FIX PEOPLE PROBLEMS OR AVOID THEM ALTOGETHER

1

DEFINE THE CORE PROBLEM

STOP! Step back. Don't react in the moment. Call a time-out. Set a time to come back to whatever problem just bubbled to the surface and pause to think first. Ask yourself these thoughtful questions to identify what is really going on:

- What expectations are unclear?
- What lack of resources (money, time, support) contributed to the situation?
- How does this problem impact our mission or team purpose?

2

AVOID THE BLAME GAME

Our problems with people generally don't stem from one experience or one conversation. By the time it becomes a "problem" the core issues can be lost in layers of emotion, unmet expectations, and even costly mistakes. By simply changing YOUR part in the dance others have to follow. Effective and successful leaders own "their side of the street" no matter how big or small. Turn the mirror around and consider these 3 things:

- Know your strengths AND your blind spots.
- Always ask what part did I play in this — there is always your part, too!
- Decide how you want to be known and remembered going forward.

3

STRATEGIZE THE TOUGH CONVERSATION

Don't avoid the problem or mistake. If you shove it aside to deal with later you are simply adding a layer that will be harder to peel back the next time a problem surfaces. Start the conversation by entering into the "Third Story".

Face each tough conversation head on equipped with these 3 things:

- Write down the core issue embedded in the problem
- What is the "objective" truth about the situation
- Craft your lead in statement to invite conversation with your team or an individual

THE THIRD STORY

Start the conversation with the story from the view of an impartial observer. One that points out the difference between the tales of the two parties involved. For example, saying "It's hard for me when you don't meet the deadline" could lead to a mildly defensive response from a co-worker, "We get things done and I don't think it's a big deal." The tough conversation becomes about defending these two positions. A third story might sound like, "We need to work together to meet our deadlines, but it seems we go about that in different ways."

—adapted from *Crucial Conversations* by Stone, Patton and Heen.

4

ASK MORE QUESTIONS

The right question can be more powerful than giving answers or telling them what to do. To help people grow, sometimes we need to dig a little deeper. It's not debating facts, but staying curious about what you notice. Questions shift perspective. Great questions offer them that opportunity! Here are a few to try:

- What worked well? What didn't? How could we improve on that next time?
- What is your take on the situation and how it could be solved?
- What is at stake here if we do nothing? What is a risk if we do _____?

5

CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS

One of a leader's responsibilities is to solve problems. In fact, when problems arise others will expect you to have the answers. To create ownership in the solution changes the way things get done. Sometimes leaders need to give answers, but don't lose out on those opportunities when you can create buy-in by giving answers to quickly.

- Invite brainstorming for potential ideas — all ideas are okay at this point
- Add your unique perspective as a leader (you see things others can't)
- Be REALLY clear on the decisions made at the end of the discussion

6

ACCOUNTABILITY AND FOLLOW UP

The same problem will surface again and again and again adding layers to the people problems you get trapped by if you don't create accountability for the decisions made. For a while you will need to give extra attention to create new patterns that have the potential to stop the people problem before it starts.

- Set up a check-in for the decisions that have been made or actions decided
- Ask what is working and what is not regularly to make adjustments as needed
- If the problem surfaces again — address it right away!