



Building a Legacy...

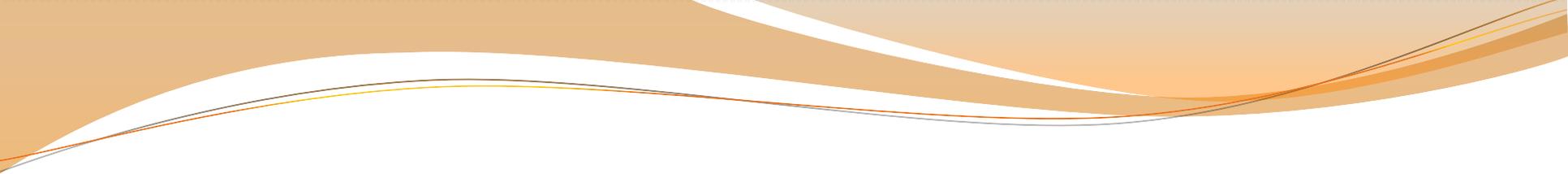
One Student at a Time!

SASFAA Annual Conference

Biloxi, MS February 12-15, 2017

Handling Unpleasant Situations: Techniques to Turn the Bad into Good





“

The ultimate measure of a man
is not where he stands in moments of comfort
and convenience, but where he stands at times
of challenge and controversy.

”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Agenda

1 Controlling Your Responses

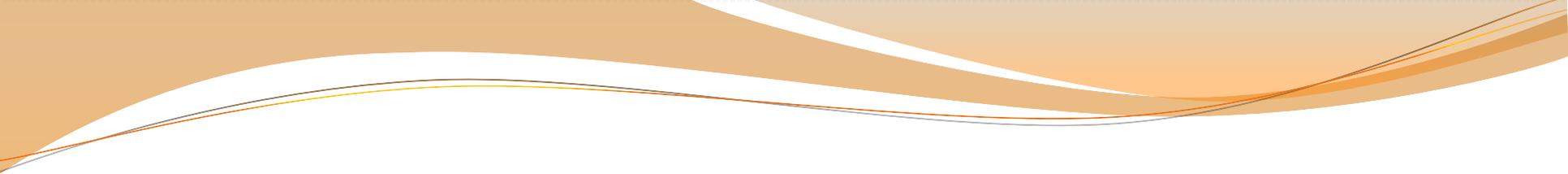
2 Strategic Use of Words

3 Using Reflective Listening

4 Delivering Bad News



Controlling Your Responses



“ You may not control all the events that happen to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them. ”

Maya Angelou

How Our Body Responds

- Adrenalin increases
- Heart pounds
- Blood pressure elevates
- Muscles tense
- Respiration intensifies
- Voice pitch gets louder or changes

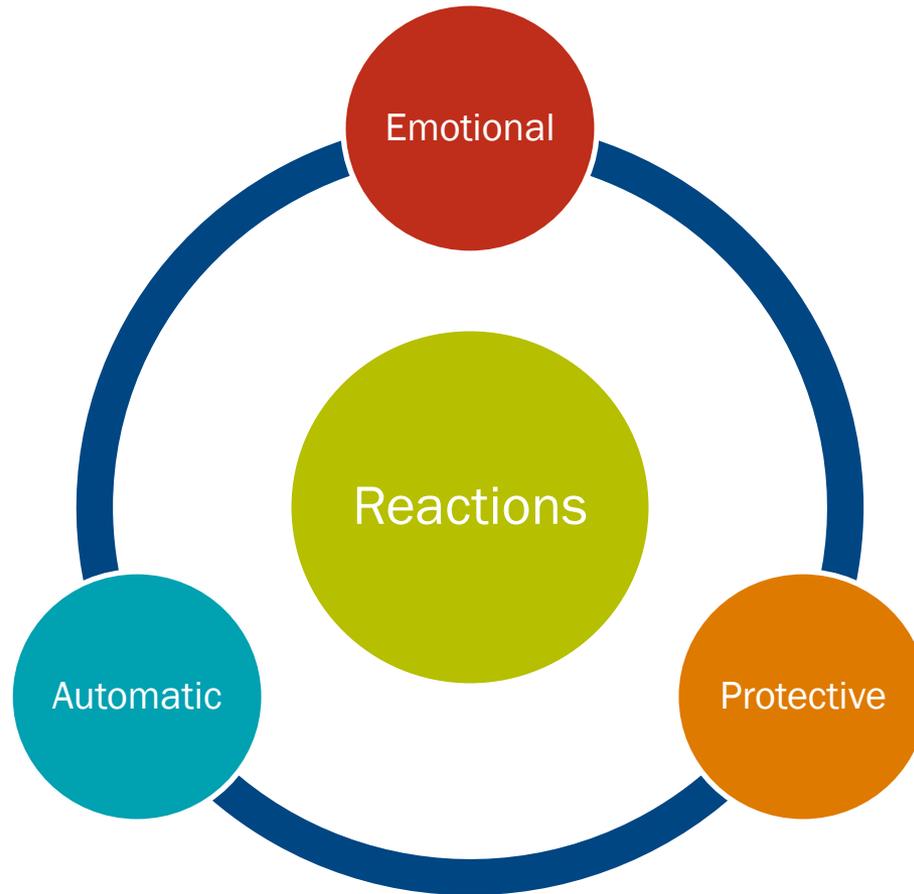


How Our Mind Responds

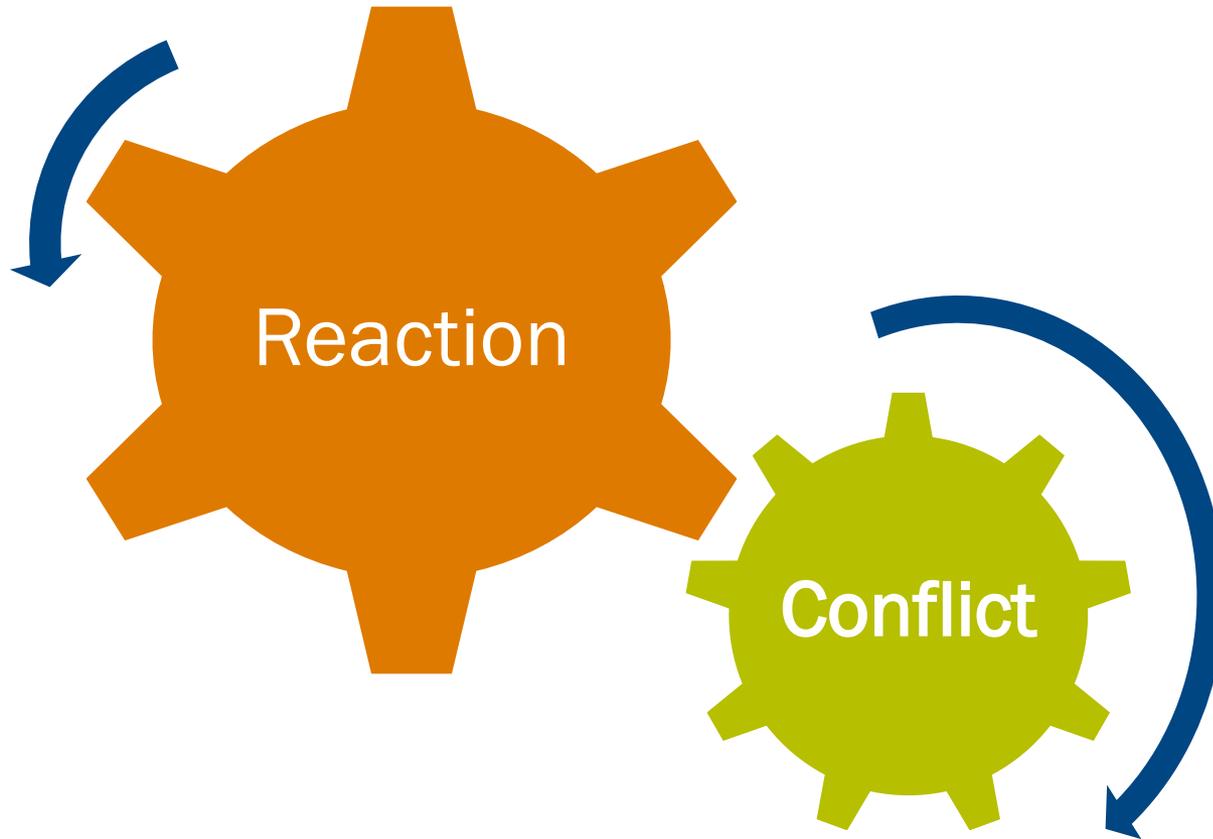
- Take it personally
- Become aloof
- Feel attacked
- Develop criticism and/or blame
- Prepare rebuttal and/or argument



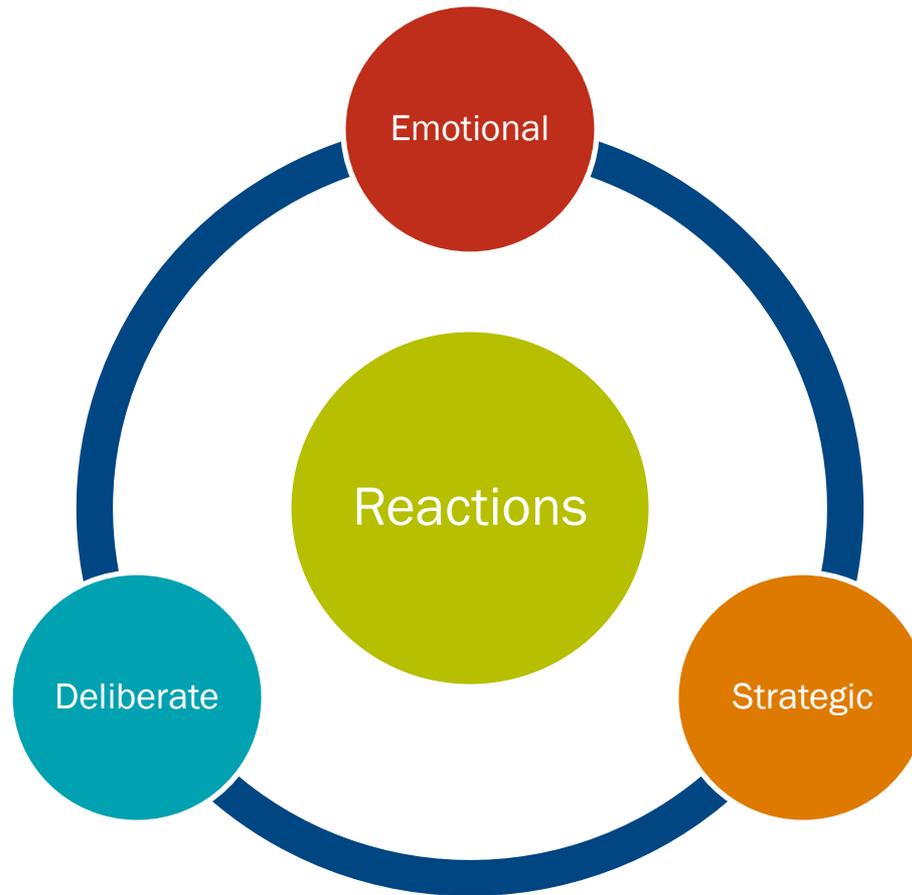
Traits of a Reaction



Results of a Reaction



Traits of a Response



Results of a Response



Shift from Reacting to Responding

Avoid reacting, instead

PAUSE



THINK



CHOOSE





Pause...

- Take a deep breath
- Resume a normal breathing rate
- Sip water
- Count to 10
- Step away from the situation
- If the situation is highly volatile, tell the person you will get back to them





Think...

- Give the person the benefit of the doubt
- Put yourself in their shoes
- Never assume anything
- Formulate responses
- Consider the information
- See the bigger picture

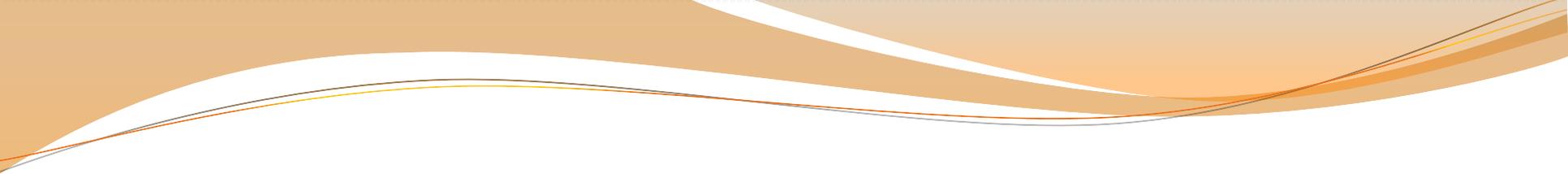




Choose...

- Make a conscious choice to respond with words and actions that are:
 - Thoughtful
 - Empathic
 - Intelligent
 - Calming
 - Action-oriented and less emotional





Strategic Use of Words



“

Words can inspire.
And words can destroy.
Choose yours wisely.

”

Robin Sharma

The Power of Words

The right words can defuse
almost any situation



Word Swaps

Words that work	Words that work better
I can	I sure can
I can't	I wish I/we could
You'll have to	Can I get you to...? Would you mind...?
I don't know	Good question, let me find out
You owe	Our records show a balance of...

Word Swaps

A parent tells you currently that she has been waiting on hold for a long time



What should you say to her?

- A. I'm sorry
- B. I understand
- C. We have been extremely busy today because it's the first day of the semester
- D. It sounds like you had a very long wait
Let's see what we can do to help from here

Words of Compassion

Feel, Felt, Found Strategy

“I know how you *feel* Ms. White...”

“Parents of incoming freshmen have said they *felt* this way....”

“Students have *found* that once they log in...”



Words of Reassurance

Provide reassurance that you're going to help, even if the answer is no

"I'm going to do my best to help resolve this quickly"

"You can be assured that I will get back to you with an answer by tomorrow"

"While we're not able to award additional grant aid, I can assure you that we will find..."



Words of Optimism

That is a
fantastic
alternative

Fantastic

You will
surely be
able to start
classes this
fall

Surely

I can
certainly
help you

Certainly

I will
definitely
make sure
that it gets
done

Definitely

I absolutely
agree

Absolutely

Words of Deterrence

“What you need to do...”

“What you should do...”

“What you must do...”

“Why can’t you?...”

“If I were you, I would...”



Words of Uncertainty

- During an unpleasant situation, communication should be clear with little room for ambiguity
- Try to avoid
 - *“As soon as possible”*
 - *“I’ll try....”*
 - *“The truth is...”*
 - *“To be honest....”*
 - *“Hopefully...”*



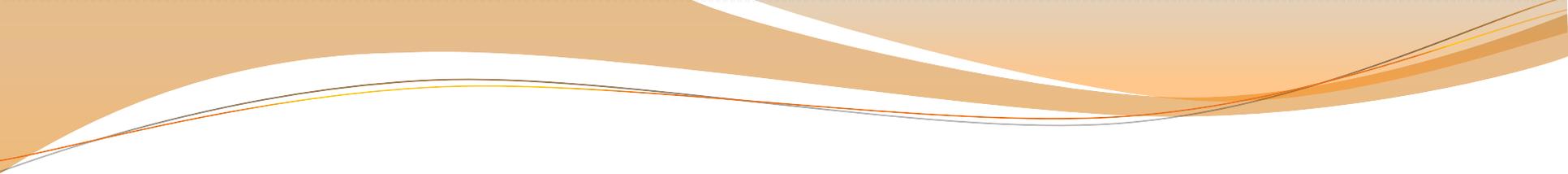
Words of Explanation

- Do not simply respond with
“it’s against our policy”
OR
“our polices and procedures do not allow us to....”
- Cite reasons for policies and procedures

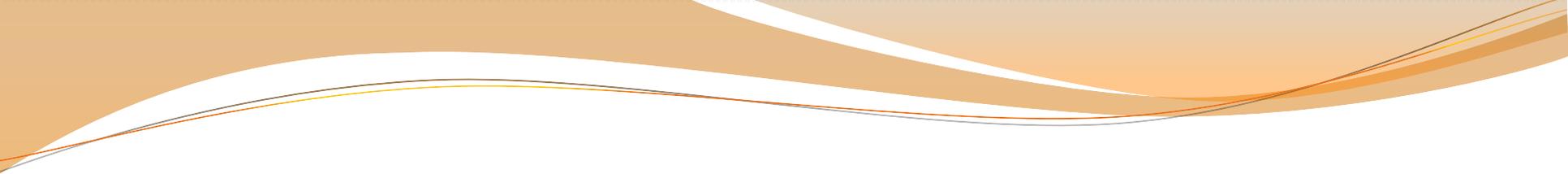


Give an example of how you would explain a policy and procedure to a student.





Using Reflective Listening



“

There is a difference between
truly listening and waiting for
your turn to talk.

”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Listening Defuses Conflict

- When done effectively, listening to try to understand another person . . .
 - Stops arguments and defuses strong emotions
 - Helps the other person feel heard
 - Helps the other person to listen to you
 - Helps you persuade the other person
 - Improves relationships



Barriers to Listening

- Often when we think we're listening, there are obstacles in the way
 - Being judgmental
 - Confusing understanding with agreement
 - Confusing listening with discussing
 - Confusing listening with problem-solving
 - Indulging the need to correct errors
 - Blocking



What is Reflective Listening?



- Reflective listening is hearing and understanding what the other person is communicating

Involves two steps:

Seeking to
understand

Confirming what
was understood

Process of Reflective Listening

1. Let the person speak; do not interrupt
2. Do not give advice...yet
3. Nod your head or use encouraging verbal phrases along the way
 - “Uh-huh”
 - “Go on”
 - “I see”
 - “I understand”



Process of Reflective Listening

4. Restate the problem
5. Use a verifying statement

It sounds
like...

It seems
like...

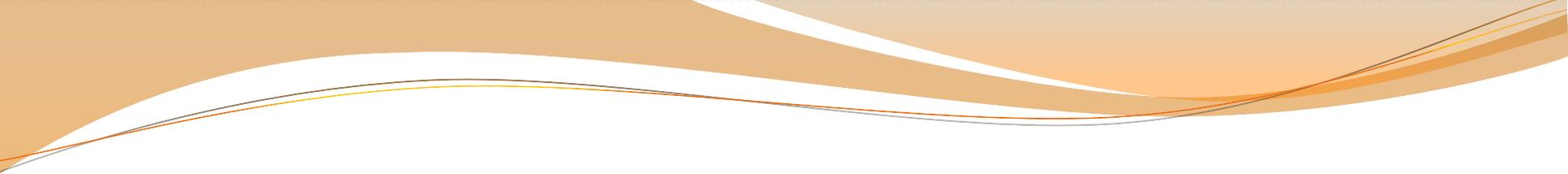
It must
be...

6. Ask for clarification when you do not understand

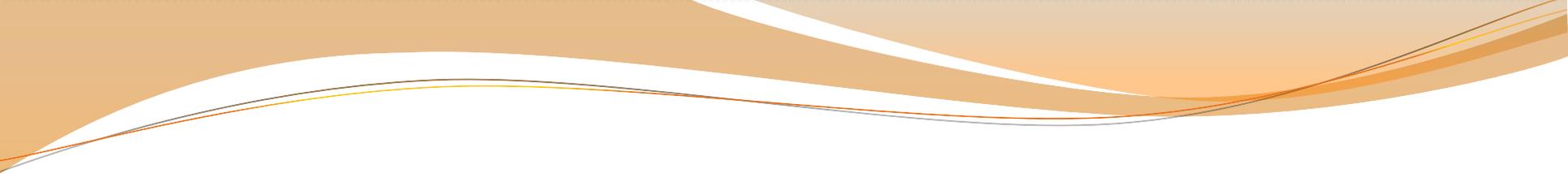
Process of Reflective Listening

7. Respond appropriately
 - Be candid, open, and honest in your response
 - Assert your opinions respectfully
 - Treat the other person as you would want to be treated





Delivering Bad News



“ Challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful. ”

Joshua J. Marine

Bad News is Inevitable

Professional

- Terminating staff
- Not receiving aid
- Reducing budget
- Changing job duties
- Cancelled project

Personal

- Loved one ill or died
- Moving
- Divorce or separation
- Wrecked automobile
- Financial crisis



Staging to Deliver Bad News

- By setting the stage to deliver bad news, it can help to manage the situation
 - Introduce what you're going to say before you say it
 - Explain the reason for what you're saying
 - Empathize with the person/audience's feelings after you have said it

Source: Parature, 2009



How Great Leaders Deliver Bad News

- Speak up
- Be accurate
- Take responsibility
- Listen
- Say what you'll do next
- Do what you say – and repeat as needed



Source: Forbes, May 2013



When the Situation Escalates

- Set ground rules
- Trust your instincts
- Bring a third party into the conversation, if needed
- Separate from the person
- Notify higher authority



Tell us about a time when
you had to deliver bad news
and how did you do it?



Turning the Bad into Good

- It's important to be prepared
- Respond instead of reacting
- Choose words carefully
- Listen to understand what the other person is truly saying and how they feel
- Take the time to train





Thanks for Attending